

**MHJA AD HOC RULES COMMITTEE:
DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR 2011 RULE CHANGE**

At the 2009 year-end meeting, members submitted a number of rule change proposals related to adopting USHJA standards for MHJA shows and horse welfare. Because of the number and complexity of the rule change proposals, an ad hoc rules committee was created. This committee includes Elaine Coller, Gayl Russell, Barb Pearson, Ashley Wren, Kylie Izzi and Deanna Hovland. The goals of the committee are: 1) to create a class list for MHJA that will be compatible with USHJA classes, thus moving our organization toward the national standard; and 2) to address the issue of horse welfare during MHJA competitions.

After discussion among committee members and review of USHJA rules, the committee has developed the following class list proposal for members to consider for adoption as part of the 2011 rules for MHJA. The committee members believe there are many advantages to this class list for MHJA and our members.

- It provides MHJA with a vision for moving toward national standards.
- It increases award opportunities for our members.
- It makes MHJA-recognized horse shows more attractive to out-of-state competitors.
- It separates junior and amateur riders from professionals, providing more opportunities for success for our younger and amateur riders.
- It takes into consideration the welfare of our equine athletes during MHJA competitions.

This proposed class list for hunter classes exceeds the requirements for USHJA affiliation. You will notice a strong similarity to the MHJA class list that is now in place. The changes will allow our members, who choose to join USHJA, a chance to win USHJA awards and also to accumulate national points here in Montana. Those members who choose not to join USHJA will be minimally affected.

As a committee we would strongly recommend that show managers utilize the new USHJA class list if it is adopted by members, although it is not required. You will notice that the proposed USHJA class list includes the same number of classes as the present MHJA class list. I have included a list of frequently asked questions at the end that may help answer your questions. If you still have unanswered questions you may contact me and I will do my best to answer them for you.

Remember: this is a **DRAFT PROPOSAL**. A formal rule change proposal along the lines of what is outlined here will be put before members for voting at the end of the year. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and questions.

Deanna Hovland (dmhmontana@msn.com)
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DRAFT PROPOSAL:

Hunter Divisions

A Hunter division consists of at least two Hunter Over Fences classes at the same height and one Hunter Under Saddle class. Some divisions are eligible for a USHJA medal class. That information will be noted under the individual divisions. Divisions that are eligible for the medal classes can either have the medal class added to the division or the medal class can replace one of the over fences classes in that division.

The champion and reserve champion horses for each division are determined from the four horses that have accumulated the most points in the over fence classes..... it continues on as previous rules.

Hunter Warm-Up: To be judged and awarded ribbons, but no points. This class does not have to be judged by a certified judge. A horse/rider combination may only ride one round during Warm-Up class.

Low Warm-Up: 2'-2'3"

High Warm-Up: Up to 2'9"

18" Hunter Division: This division will consist of Walk/Trot under saddle and two classes of Walk/Trot over 18" fences with cantering optional. This division is restricted to horse/rider combinations that do not compete in classes with fence heights above 2'3" in any Hunter or Jumper divisions at that show.

2'0" Short Stirrup Hunter Division: This division is restricted to junior riders where the horse/rider combination does not compete in classes over fences above 2'3" in the hunter divisions at that show. **A rider may not compete in this division for more than two years.**

2'0" Long Stirrup Hunter Division: This division is restricted to adult amateur riders where the horse/rider combination does not compete in classes over fences above 2'3" in the Hunter divisions at that show. **A rider may not compete in this division for more than two years.**

Green Hunter Division (Horse and Pony): This division is restricted to ponies (14.2 hands and under) and horses in their first or second year of showing. The maximum height is 2'3". Ponies and horses will be judged together as one class. Ponies and horses that have not shown above 2'3" in their first year of showing are still eligible to compete in the Green Hunter Division in their second year of showing.

Pony Hunter Division: Fence ht. 2'3". This division is restricted to ponies (14.2 hands and under) and is open to all pony riders, subject to suitability, pony to rider, as determined by the judge's discretion. Exhibitors in the Pony Divisions must submit a pony card when entering their ponies. (USEF, MHJA or Canadian cards will be accepted).

2'3" Working Hunter: This division is restricted to junior and adult amateur riders. It is eligible for an USHJA Bronze Medal Hunter Class. It is open to USHJA members and non-members.

Points for USHJA year end awards will go only to USHJA members. The judge will place the entire class to 12th place. USHJA members will then be placed separately to determine the points that they receive. An additional \$5 will be charged for the Bronze medal class to cover end of year awards. Horse/rider combinations that are entered in the Bronze medal class are limited to jumping no higher than 2'6" at the same show as per USHJA rules.

2'6" Working Hunter: This division is restricted to junior and adult amateur riders. It is eligible for an USHJA Silver Medal Hunter Class. It is open to USHJA members and non-members. Points for USHJA year end awards will go only to USHJA members. The judge will place the class to 12th place. USHJA members will then be placed separately to determine the points that they receive. An additional \$5 will be charged for the Silver medal class to cover end of year awards. Horse/rider combinations that are entered in the Silver medal class are limited to jumping no higher than 2'9" at the same show as per USHJA rules.

2'6" Open Working Hunter: This division has no restrictions.

Children's/Adult Amateur Working Hunter: Fence ht. 2'9". This division is restricted to junior and adult amateur riders. It can be separated into juniors and adult amateurs when placing the class if there are at least 3 completed rounds by juniors and adults in each class. USHJA junior members can acquire national points for Children's Hunter if the horse show fulfills the rest of the requirements for a "C" rating.

Adult Amateur Hunter: Fence ht. 3'. This division is restricted to adult amateur riders. It is eligible for an USHJA Gold Medal Hunter Class. It is open to USHJA members and non-members. Points for USHJA year end awards will go only to USHJA members. The judge will place the class to 12th place. USHJA members will then be placed separately to determine the points that they receive. An additional \$5 will be charged for the Gold medal class to cover end of year awards. Horse/rider combinations that are entered in the Gold medal class are limited to jumping no higher than 3'3" at the same show as per USHJA rules. USHJA members can also acquire national points for Adult Amateur Working Hunter if the horse show fulfills the rest of the requirements for a "C" rating.

[Note: we're still working on offering opportunities for **juniors at the 3' level** outside of the open division against professionals.]

3' Open Working Hunter: This division has no restrictions.

Junior/Amateur Owner Working Hunter: Fence ht. 3'3". These classes may be separated into junior riders and adult amateur riders when placing the class if there are at least 3 completed rounds by juniors and AAOs in each class. This division is restricted to junior riders and adult amateur riders who own the horse entered. It is eligible for an USHJA Platinum Medal Hunter Class. It is open to USHJA members and non-members. Points for USHJA year end awards will go only to members. The judge will place the class to 12th place. USHJA members will then be placed separately to determine the points that they receive. An additional \$5 will be charged for the Platinum Medal Class to cover end of year awards. Horse/rider combinations that are entered in the Platinum Medal class are limited to jumping no higher than 3'6" at the same show as per

USHJA rules. USHJA junior members can also acquire national points for Jr. Working Hunter if the horse show fulfills the rest of the requirements for a "C" rating.

Regular Working Hunter: Fence ht. 3'6". This division has no restrictions.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING PROPOSED CLASS LIST:

Q: I want to stay in my current division. Will I be forced into higher divisions?

A: The only divisions that have limits to how long you can stay in them are Green Hunter, Short Stirrup and Long Stirrup. These limits are set to provide beginning horses and riders a fair chance at success.

Q: Our shows already go so late. Won't adding more classes make it worse?

A: No, actually the number of classes on the proposed class list is the same as the present class list.

Q: As a show manager, I don't care about having a "C" rating at my show. Do I need to follow all these requirements?

A: No, if this proposed class list is accepted by members, show managers are not required to follow it. They'll simply have to continue meeting the MHJA requirements already in place.

Q: As a trainer I want to be able to school my horses in classes before my students compete. Can I still do this?

A: Yes, you could ride the horse in one of the warm-up classes. You could also enter 2'6" open or 3' open.

Q: In the classes that the judge is required to place to 12th place will ribbons have to be awarded to 12th place?

A: No, the ribbons can be awarded to the same placing as the rest of the classes at the show.

Q: As a show manager, I wonder how I'm to score USHJA members separately from MHJA members?

A: The classes that are eligible to be USHJA medal classes are open to USHJA members and non-members. However, only members can accumulate points. Therefore these classes have to be awarded two ways. The first way includes all exhibitors in the class. The second way is only the USHJA members. Example: Exhibitor #100 is placed 4th in a class of 10. The top three exhibitors are USHJA non-members. Exhibitor #100 is a member. So, #100 will get a 4th place ribbon, MHJA points for 4th place and USHJA points for 1st place. The board member assigned to point keeping will be able to help show managers that have questions with this matter.

Again, if you have further questions please contact me.

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