



United States Hunter Jumper Association concludes by parsing many rule change proposals.

On Dec. 14, the United States Hunter Jumper Association concluded its 2017 Annual Meeting, presented by World Equestrian Center and held Dec. 10-14 in San Antonio, TX, with the final session of the USHJA Board of Directors meeting. The Board of Directors voted on recommendations for 79 rule change proposals, and their recommendations will be considered by the US Equestrian Board of Directors for a final vote during their Annual Meeting in January.

The USHJA Board of Directors voted to recommend approval on 46 rule change proposals, recommend disapproval on 10 rule change proposals, and referred 17 rule change proposals to the January USHJA Board of Directors meeting for further revision prior to a vote at that meeting. Six rule change proposals were withdrawn over the course of the five-day conference.

Among the rule change proposals discussed by the Board of Directors on Thursday, a few key themes arose: fairness, safety, responsibility and accountability. Several rule change proposals produced significant discussion throughout the USHJA Annual Meeting and/or specifically during the Board of Directors meeting.

A Hunter Breeding rule change proposal was recommended for approval that struck a compromise after it generated several days of passionate discussion during the five-day conference. In the end the rule change proposal recommends that at Premier and National rated competitions a handler may not exhibit more than one horse in Hunter Breeding classes, while at Regional I and Regional II rated competitions a handler may exhibit multiple horses in Hunter Breeding classes.

A set of rule changes were proposed by stewards to align schooling rules across the Hunter, Jumper and Equitation schooling rings at competitions. The USHJA Board of Directors discussed these changes at length, and while they found many of the changes appropriate, they disagreed with the premise that we could apply the same changes uniformly to Hunter, Jumper and Equitation schooling rings. They felt that there were fundamental differences in how members prepare Hunters, Jumpers and Equitation horses. Therefore, they ultimately recommended approval of some changes to schooling rules, but the changes they recommended were slightly different for each discipline.

Collapses & Completions

The Board recommended approval of a set of rule change proposals that would require judges to notify the steward any time a horse falls in a show ring. Further, the proposal requires that the details of the incident be reported on the steward's report to the Federation.

Another important topic addressed throughout the Annual Meeting was the definition of competing and a rule change proposal that shifted the focus of competition from entering the ring to completing a course. The Board of Directors recommended approval of a rule change proposal that states, "a horse has completed an over fences class when the horse completes the posted course and a score is recorded on the judge's card. A horse failing to complete the entire course is not eligible to receive points, awards, or prize money, nor will it be counted in the number of entries necessary to fill a class or section. A horse has completed an under saddle class when the horse has executed all the gaits required and remains in the ring until the class has lined up." Further, the rule change proposal requires that championship points will not count unless a minimum of three entries complete at least two over fences classes and one under saddle class. Additionally with this change, Champion and Reserve Champion will not be awarded except in classes where three entries complete at least two over fences classes and one under saddle class.

January 2018 - USHJA Meeting Rule Change Recap

Written by CRM

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The Board recommended approval on a rule change proposal that would require that a horse or pony that experiences a collapse wait for 24 hours before returning to competition. Their approval came with a comment to the Federation that the USHJA recommends the rule change proposal be expanded to prohibit a collapsed horse or pony from competing for the remainder of the competition.

The 17 rule change proposals that were referred to the January USHJA Board of Directors meeting generated significant discussion during the Board meeting. Referred rule change proposals included a requirement for trainers to complete Safe Sport and a background check, a change to the definition of a special competition, a requirement that competitions report more detailed results regarding why a horse did not place (did not compete, voluntarily withdrawn, off course, etc.), and more. The Board referred these proposals to allow more time for consideration and possible amendment before making a recommendation to the US Equestrian Board of Directors.

In addition to the rule change proposal discussions, the USHJA Annual Meeting included a variety of committee meetings, educational sessions and keynote addresses. Dr. Lola Chambless, assistant professor of Neurological Surgery at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and Roy Burek, managing director of Charles Owen, led an informative session on concussions in equestrian sport. Lisa Roskens, founder of the Omaha Equestrian Foundation, and Daniel Stewart, equestrian sport psychologist, delivered keynote addresses during the conference celebrating the theme of building an equestrian community.

Full coverage of this year's Annual Meeting will be included in the upcoming special digital edition of USHJA In Stride, which will be emailed to members the first week of January.

The 2018 USHJA Annual Meeting, presented by World Equestrian Center, will be held in Tampa, FL, Dec. 9-13, 2018.

Report provided by the USHJA.