

# 2026 Handbook

**RIDE. COMPETE. CONNECT.**



The mission of the Ultimate Horsemen's Challenge Association is to provide a forum to unite all breeds, disciplines, and skill levels in a competitive obstacle course setting that emphasizes and rewards good horsemanship while encouraging sportsmanship, camaraderie, and, above all, fun and enjoyment with horses.

**[WWW.ULTIMATEHCA.COM](http://WWW.ULTIMATEHCA.COM)**

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Connect with us!Error! Bookmark not defined.

Connect with UHCA and its members on Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter).

Facebook: facebook.com/ultimatehca

X: @ultimatehca

Instagram: ultimatehca



## *Ultimate Horsemens Challenge Association*

(Hereinafter referred to as UHCA)

### *Founded 2008*

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Ultimate Horsemens Challenge Association is to provide a forum to unite all breeds, disciplines, and skill levels in a competitive obstacle course setting that emphasizes and rewards good horsemanship while encouraging Sportsmanship, camaraderie and, above all, fun and enjoyment with horses.

#### *Founding Directors*

Scott Sims	Josh Rushing	Paul Rasmussen	Debra Taylor	Jo Turner
Kate Fowler	Chris Mensch	Jason Stahl	Rex Buchman	Sharon Baux

#### **2026 Board of Directors**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Term Start</b>	<b>Term End</b>
Past President	Karen Rabe	2023	2026*
President	Shannon Washam	2023	2027*
President-Elect	Chris Redden	2026	2028
Treasurer	Chad Blunk	2023	2026**
Secretary	Jason Miles	2024	2026
Director	Lee Chapman	2024	2026
Director	Runt Rageth	2025	2027
Director	Twila Meier	2025	2027
Director	Ruth Owens	2026	2028
Director	Marcy Sobotka	2026	2028
Membership Director Non-Voting Member	Walter Redden	2024	

*\*Extra Year for Past President*

*\*\*Extra Year As Needed*

Term Start= Year Elected

Term End= Last Year of Service

## **Membership Levels**

### *Dues*

Adult= \$50.00 per calendar year

(18 and older as of January 1 of the competition year)

Youth= \$30.00 per calendar year

(17 and younger as of January 1 of the competition year)

Family= \$100.00 per calendar year

(Includes up to 2 adults, age 18 and older, in the same household and an unlimited number of children and /or legal dependents, age 17 and younger, as of January 1 of the competition year within the immediate family)

Lifetime= \$450

1<sup>st</sup> Year Young Guns and 1<sup>st</sup> Year Youth riders receive a complimentary UHCA membership for their first year of competition. This honorary membership applies to all scheduled UHCA rides within that first year. In subsequent years, riders must pay membership dues or additional non-member fees per division.

### *Benefits & Restrictions*

Adult membership entitles each member to one vote in any association motion presented to the general membership.

Membership entitles entry fees \$20 lower than non-members.

Membership entitles members to unlimited horse/rider teams to record points for year-end awards and recognition in unlimited divisions.

Points shall be counted from the date of membership and the first entry of the year.

No substitution of horses is allowed for year-end awards.

UHCA accepts cash, checks, money orders (made payable to UHCA), credit cards, and digital payments.

### *Sportsmanship*

Membership in UHCA is a privilege that comes with the responsibility to uphold good and honorable Sportsmanship. All participants must display respect toward everyone during and after UHCA events, including hosts, competitors, and judges. This standard of respect applies equally to interactions at the event and in all related communications.

Poor Sportsmanship shall include but not be limited to:

- profanity directed toward members, hosts, or judges
- physical harm to any animals or persons
- behaving in a manner that creates risk for others, including aggressive riding or driving
- causing damage to property
- public criticism directed at the Association, members, hosts, or judges, whether in person, in writing, or by social media.

To address disputes or concerns, contact a board member in person at the event or reach out by phone or email as soon as possible to ensure prompt attention. If a member finds the resolution unsatisfactory, they can file a grievance form online.

### *Disciplinary Action or Sanctions*

The Board of Directors may enact disciplinary actions or sanctions against individuals, members, or judges who violate the rules or bylaws of the Association.

### **Divisions**

Each event shall offer eleven challenge divisions: Young Guns, 1st-Year Young Guns, Youth, 1st-Year Youth, Novice, Lead Line\*, Ride Smart, Colt, Intermediate, Non-Pro, Pro, Ultimate Open, and Schooling\*.

\* Due to time constraints, the UHCA Board reserves the right to eliminate these division at anytime

The UHCA expects you to ride up to your skill level. At its discretion, the UHCA Board reserves the right to require a rider to move up to a more advanced division. The horse-rider team forfeits any year-end points earned in the lower division for the current season. Professional trainers must ride in the Open, Ultimate Open, Colt, or Schooling Divisions. A horse-rider team may compete in multiple divisions at an event, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for each selected division.

**Rider ages are determined as of January 1 of the competition year,  
and all divisions are based on the horse-rider team.**

### *Lead Line*

Riders age up to 6

Open to all riders under the age of 6 as an introduction to obstacle competition. The Lead Line division will consist of 6 obstacles with a 4-minute time limit. Obstacles designated for this division will be clearly marked. No scorecards will be used, and runs will not be ranked or tracked for points. This division will have its own course walk-through before the competition. Entries will be accepted on the day of the event. A parent or guardian must accompany each rider on the course.

Additional division fees and non-member fees do not apply to this division. Riders in the Lead Line division are not eligible for placings, payback, or year-end awards, and no points will be recorded or tracked.

Due to time constraints, the UHCA Board reserves the right to eliminate this division at anytime.

### *Young Guns*

Riders age 5-11

10 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

Young Gun riders aged 9-11 can "ride up" into the Youth Division with a signed parental permission and waiver with each entry.

### *1st-Year Young Guns*

Riders age 5-11

10 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

This division is designed for new riders, including members of 4-H, FFA, and saddle club organizations, to explore obstacle racing. Riders may use the same horse more than once, provided it is ridden by a different rider each time in this division.

1<sup>st</sup> Year Young Guns riders receive a complimentary one-year UHCA membership and are eligible for year-end awards. For more details, see Annual Year-End Awards. This division is intended for individuals who are new to the sport of obstacle or challenge competition. Current, past, or former UHCA Young Gun riders are not eligible to compete in this division.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Year Young Guns division allows an exception: the same horse can be ridden more than once within the division, but not by the same rider.

### *Youth*

Riders age 12-17

13 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

### *1st-Year Youth*

Riders age 12-17

The 1<sup>st</sup>-Year Youth division will have 13 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

This division is designed for new riders, including members of 4-H, FFA, and saddle club organizations, to explore obstacle racing. Riders may use the same horse more than once, provided it is ridden by a different rider each time in this division.

1<sup>st</sup> Year Youth riders receive a complimentary one-year UHCA membership and are eligible for year-end awards. For more details, see Annual Year-End Awards. This division is intended for individuals who are new to the sport of obstacle or challenge competition. Current, past, or former UHCA Youth riders are not eligible to compete in this division.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Year Youth division allows an exception: the same horse can be ridden more than once within the division, but not by the same rider.

## *Novice*

Riders 18 years or older

13 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

The Novice division welcomes entry-level riders who have developed fundamental riding skills, such as loping, backing, and side passing but have achieved limited success in competitive equestrian events.

Novice riders demonstrate basic horsemanship abilities but may lack the confidence and expertise of more advanced riders. They may not have accepted any payment for riding, showing, training, schooling, or conducting horse-related lessons, clinics, or seminars within the last 36 months. Additionally, they must not have earned performance points in any breed or equine-related association (e.g., AQHA, APHA, Pinto, Buckskin, 4-H, etc.). Third-party payment of entry fees does not count as accepting payment.

Riders approved as judges in any obstacle association, including UHCA, are not eligible to compete in the Novice division.

Novice riders who place in the top two for year-end awards become ineligible to compete in the Novice division in future years. Once a rider advances beyond the Novice division, that advancement is permanent, and the rider may not re-enter the division in subsequent years, regardless of the horse being ridden.

Novice participants must acknowledge that they meet the qualifications for the Novice division.

*Note: Being new to this sport does not automatically qualify a rider for the Novice division.*

## *Colt*

Open to all riders, regardless of age, experience, or status.

13 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

The Colt division includes horses that are 3 or 4 years old, with their age determined as of January 1 of the competition year. Horses, ponies, or mules advance one year in age each January 1. Example: A colt foaled in September would become one year old on the following January 1.

A colt may compete in the Colt division for only one competition year. A colt that has participated in any UHCA, EXCA, AHCA, or other obstacle competition in a previous competition year is ineligible for the UHCA Colt Division, regardless of the number of races entered that year.

A colt may participate in the UHCA Schooling division without affecting its eligibility for the Colt division. Horses entered in the Colt division cannot compete in other divisions during the same challenge.

This division allows new, less-experienced horses to develop competitive skills in a supportive environment.

### *Ride Smart*

Riders age 55 or older

13 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

Ride Smart riders must not have accepted any payment for riding, showing, training, schooling, or conducting horse-related lessons, clinics, or seminars within the last 36 months. Payment of entry fees by a third party does not qualify as accepting payment.

### *Intermediate*

Riders age 18 or older

13 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

Intermediate riders must not have accepted any payment for riding, showing, training, schooling, or conducting horse-related lessons, clinics, or seminars within the last 36 months. Payment of entry fees by a third party does not qualify as accepting payment.

The top 20%, no more than 2, of horse/rider teams in Intermediate at year-end will be moved to Non-Pro for the following year.

### *Non-Pro*

Riders age 12 or older

13 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

Non-Pro riders must not have accepted any payment for riding, showing, training, schooling, or conducting horse-related lessons, clinics, or seminars within the last 36 months. Payment of entry fees by a third party does not qualify as accepting payment.

Note: If a Non-Pro rider elects to compete in the Pro division, they shall assume Pro status for the remainder of the current competition season and must comply with all rules governing the Pro division before becoming eligible to return to the Non-Pro division.

### *Pro*

Riders age 18 or older

13 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

An individual is considered a professional rider if they are 18 years of age or older and receive direct or indirect compensation for riding or training horses, ponies, or mules. A professional may ride an unlimited number of horses in the Pro, Ultimate Open, Colt, or Schooling divisions. To return to a lower level of competition, a professional must not have received direct or indirect compensation for a



minimum of 36 months. The UHCA Board reserves the right to review and determine professional status as needed.

Note: If a Non-Pro rider elects to compete in the Pro division, they shall assume Pro status for the remainder of the current competition season and must comply with all rules governing the Pro division before becoming eligible to return to the Non-Pro division.

### *Ultimate Open*

Riders age 12 or older

13 obstacles plus a horsemanship score.

The Ultimate Open division always competes last each day. To enter this division, the horse and rider must be entered in another division on the same event day. Obstacles will meet Pro-level requirements, with the order of obstacles varying and/or at least two new obstacles introduced in the Ultimate Open division.

### *Schooling*

Open to all riders, regardless of age, experience, or status.

The Schooling division is designed to allow riders and/or horses to gain experience in a non-competitive environment. If desired, this division may be completed in hand or as a lead line. Sideline coaching is permitted, but the coach cannot enter the course. A parent or guardian may accompany a minor child on the course.

Riders are judged and timed, and score sheets are provided at the end of the event. However, there are no rankings, placings, or awards for riders in this division, and no points are recorded or tracked for year-end awards.

Riders MUST leave the course after 8 minutes, regardless of whether they have completed it.

Additional division fees and non-member fees do not apply to this division.

A colt may participate in the UHCA Schooling division without affecting its eligibility for the Colt division.

Due to time constraints, the UHCA Board reserves the right to eliminate this division at anytime

## Entries and Paybacks

UHCA or event host reserves the right to refuse any entry or to refund fees for any reason.

### Entry Fees

All entry forms must be completed in their entirety and signed.

The standard entry fees for UHCA members are:

Division	Price	Division	Price	Division	Price
Young Guns	\$30	Novice	\$50	Non-Pro	\$65
1 <sup>st</sup> Year Young Guns	\$30	Ride Smart	\$50	Pro	\$65
Youth	\$35	Intermediate	\$50	Ultimate Open**	\$50
1 <sup>st</sup> Year Youth	\$35	Colt	\$55	Schooling*	\$35

*Non-Members will pay an additional \$20 per division.*

*\*Non-Member fees do not apply.*

**\*\*** Entry into the Ultimate division requires each horse and rider team to first compete in another division, excluding the Colt division and Schooling/Lead-Line/In-Hand division.

For a rider to transfer points to any co-sanctioning organization(s), point transfer fees must be paid at the time of entry before the rider engages the course. Transfer points are not available for 1st-Year Young Guns or 1st-Year Youth.

Entry fee refunds must be requested prior to or on the day of the event. Refunds will not be issued after the event has concluded, except at the discretion of the UHCA Board or Event Host in extenuating circumstances.

### Entry Deadlines

Entries for the Young Guns, 1<sup>st</sup>-Young Guns, Novice, and Colt divisions close at 9 a.m. Entries for the Intermediate, Non-Pro, Youth, 1<sup>st</sup>-Year Youth, Ride Smart, and Pro will close at 10 a.m. Ultimate Open and Schooling division entries will close at the conclusion of the Pro division.

A late entry may be allowed to compete with the approval of the event secretary, but the rider shall ride first go. No late entry shall be approved after the class has started.

### Division Run Order

Divisions will run in the following order:

Young Guns, 1st-Year Young Guns, Novice, Lead Line, Colt, Intermediate, Non-Pro, Youth, 1st-Year Youth, Ride Smart, Pro, Ultimate Open, Schooling. Each division will have an opportunity to walk the course on foot before the competition.

### *Suggested Walkthrough Order*

Walkthrough 1: Young Guns, 1st Year Young Guns

Walkthrough 2: Novice

Walkthrough 3: Lead Line

Walkthrough 4: Colt, Intermediate, Non-Pro

Walkthrough 5: Youth, 1st Year Youth, Ride Smart, Pro

Walkthrough 6: Ultimate Open

### *Payback and Prizes*

Payback will be at least 50% of all entry fees in each division.

No payback or prizes are offered in the Lead-Line and Schooling Division.

### **Horses, Riders, and Gear**

#### *Horses*

The age of all horses, ponies, or mules is determined as of January 1 of the competition year. Horses, ponies, or mules advance one year in age each January 1. Example: A colt foaled in September would become one year old on the following January 1.

All horses must be at least 3 years old to compete in any division, except in the Schooling/Lead-Line/In-Hand Division, where horses can be of any age. Riders under 18 may not ride or exhibit stallions in any division. All stallions must remain well-mannered and under control at all times.

Horses must be serviceably sound. Judges may excuse or disqualify any horse demonstrating obvious lameness or distress, either during or immediately after the run, and their decision is final. If the judges disqualify or excuse a horse and rider team, no points will be awarded for that event or toward year-end awards.

A horse may be ridden a maximum of three times per UHCA race, regardless of the number of riders. Additionally, a horse may only be ridden once per division, except in the Young Guns/1st Year Young Guns and Youth/1st Year Youth divisions. In these divisions, the horse may be ridden up to three times, provided each ride is by a different rider. All rides, regardless of division, count toward the overall maximum of three total rides per race.

#### *Riders*

Riders must wear a long-sleeved collared shirt, boots with a heel, and a western-style hat or certified protective headgear. Outerwear is allowed when the temperature requires it. All riders are encouraged to wear protective helmets.

Judges will penalize or disqualify any rider who endangers the safety of their horse or themselves through reckless riding. Disorderly conduct, rudeness, or poor sportsmanship is not tolerated among competitors or spectators. Any cruelty or abuse is strictly prohibited. UHCA, the host, or the event manager may bar any offender from the remainder of the event.

An individual is considered a professional trainer if at least 18 years old and receives direct or indirect compensation for riding or training horses, ponies, or mules. A professional may ride an unlimited number of horses.

To return to a lower level of competition, a professional must not have received direct or indirect compensation for riding or training horses, ponies, or mules for 36 months prior. If questions arise regarding a rider's status, the UHCA Board reviews the matter and determines if any action is necessary. False statements or representations may result in loss of membership.

### *Gear*

All horses are to be exhibited in western style gear. A horn on a western style saddle is not required but may be very helpful or needed in some dragging obstacles.

The following gear is prohibited in all divisions:

- Cavessons
- Tie-downs
- Martingales
- Gag bits
- Mechanical hackamores
- Quickstops
- Wire used as a curb device or across the nose or poll
- Anything extending below the bars of the bit in the mouth

Bridle-less riding is prohibited.

If you have questions about gear, consult a UHCA Board Member.

### *Courses*

Courses shall be set to challenge horse/rider teams.

Any concerns of course safety should be brought to the attention of the host facility and officers/Board members present.

Order of go shall be determined by electronic draw. Draw will be for specific horse/rider teams.

Once the run order has been posted, it is the rider's responsibility to check in with the announcers if they believe they will have a conflict. The announcers can bump the rider up or down two places in the run order to resolve the conflict.

A rider of multiple horses in a division should have at least two horses between runs.

Riders will have the opportunity to walk the course, on foot, prior to the start of the event with the host and judges in the order the obstacles will be negotiated, noting any specific patterns or directions.

If a rider falls or loses control of their horse on the ground, the rider must regain control of their mount without assistance within 60 seconds. Failure to regain control results in disqualification.

Only official personnel are allowed on the course during a run for all divisions. A Course Ambassador will be on the course for the Young Guns and 1st Year Young Guns divisions. The Ambassador will be either a Board member or appointed by the host. The Ambassador will participate in the walkthrough with the judges and riders for guidance.

The Ambassador will be able to tell a rider what obstacle is next, if they are going in the wrong direction, or to move past an obstacle if they are struggling. The Ambassador will be the only person allowed to talk to the rider while on the course.

## **Time**

Time will be used as part of the judging and will be weighted for each division as follows:

If an obstacle is missed, not attempted, or completed out of order the rider will receive a zero (0) score plus a 60 second penalty on overall time.

All divisions will have a time score added to the total of the judge's scores. If two judges are used, both judges' scores will be added together and divided by two for a final score.

Time will be awarded point value in this manner:

Each rider starts with 18.900 points at 60 seconds. For every additional second beyond 60 seconds, 0.045 points are deducted. For example, a time of 61 seconds earns 18.855 points, and a time of 62 seconds earns 18.810 points. If the rider's time exceeds 8 minutes (480 seconds), they will receive no time points, as no points are awarded for times over 8 minutes.

In case of a tie, after all points have been totaled, the faster of the two horse/rider teams will be ranked in the higher position.

Any team running over 10 minutes may be asked to leave the course. The time limit for the Schooling class is 8 minutes.

At its discretion, the Board or Executive Committee may waive the 10-minute time limit for any division due to the length of the course, course conditions, or weather factors. Riders taking longer than 8 minutes will not receive time points but will not be disqualified if their run exceeds 10 minutes. The decision to waive may be made before the first run in the division or after the last run in the division.

An audible notification should be sounded 4 and 8 minutes from the start.

### Division Obstacle Restriction

Division	Bareback	Dallying	Roping Livestock	Trailer Loading	Shooting	Jumps	Step up/down
<b>Young Gun &amp; 1<sup>st</sup>-Year Young Gun</b>	No	No	No	No	Cap/ Water	Max 12"	Max 12"
<b>Youth &amp; 1<sup>st</sup>-Year Youth</b>	No	Not Required	No	Yes	Cap/ Water	Max 18"	Max 24"
<b>Novice</b>	No	Not Required	No	Yes	Cap/ Water	Max 18"	Max 24"
<b>Ride Smart</b>	No	Not Required	Yes	Yes	All	Max 18"	Max 24"
<b>Colt</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	All	Max 18"	Max 24"
<b>Intermediate, Non-Pro, Pro, Ultimate Open</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	All	Max 24"	Max 24"

**Keep safety for horse and rider in mind in all divisions!**

Bridges: At the minimum width of 18", the maximum height allowable is 7". Bridges higher than 7", must be at least 24" wide. If used in a combination obstacle, bridges must be 24" wide minimum.

No combination obstacles are allowed on the Young Guns and Novice courses.

### Annual Year-End Awards

Recognition for rider/horse teams in all 11 divisions will be presented at the annual General Membership Meeting/Awards Ceremony. The date, time, and location shall be announced and advertised on the UHCA website ([www.ultimatehca.com](http://www.ultimatehca.com)).

Year-end awards will be given to all qualified riders in each division, up to a maximum of ten places.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for year-end awards each horse/rider team must be registered on the official membership registry form with the UHCA.

The rider must be in good standing with the UHCA.

The horse/rider team must have at least 5 qualified rides in the division for which they are registered, at 5 or more events. If a rider is disqualified at a race, they will be given 0 points for the race but it will count as 1 of the 5 required races for year-end eligibility.

Any checks returned to the UHCA due to insufficient funds shall void any points earned until restitution is made.

### *Year-End Award Point Tabulation*

Year-end awards will be calculated according to a competing team's best 5 placement points out of the events for the season.

Placement points are tabulated in this manner: First place in a division earns 10 points towards year-end awards, 2nd place receives 9, 3rd receives 8, and so on until 9th place receives 2 points and all others completing the course receive 1 point.

Tie-breaker rule: decided first with all head-to-head competition placement points during the season. If still tied, then all head-to-head times during the season. No head-to-head riders will remain tied.

Points will be posted on the website.

Upon the conclusion of a UHCA event, should a rider be determined to have participated in a division for which either the rider or the horse was ineligible, his/her ride shall be disqualified. That horse/rider team would not receive year-end points in that division for that particular ride. The remaining rider year-end rank will be moved up as deemed necessary.

### **UHCA Judges Guidelines**

Review the UHCA Mission Statement. It is the judge's responsibility to uphold the tenets of our mission statement. Judges are expected to familiarize themselves with the UHCA Handbook and are asked to complete the online Judges Test offered by UHCA. Requests to access the test should be directed to [ultimatehca@gmail.com](mailto:ultimatehca@gmail.com).

Horsemanship is a broad term, but it includes sound judgment, ability, boldness, and the responsibility never to endanger your mount or yourself. Horsemanship encompasses utilizing skills, knowledge, and understanding to establish a partnership with the horse founded on mutual trust and respect for its natural instincts. This entails demonstrating soft, considerate hands, fair pressure application, and clear communication to navigate obstacles while prioritizing the horse's welfare. Good horsemanship fosters a positive demeanor in the horse, evident teamwork, and smooth coordination between horse and rider. In contrast, poor horsemanship is marked by rough handling, disregard for the horse's capabilities, and a lack of partnership, resulting in tension and inconsistency.

As a judge for UHCA, you will be expected to be fair and impartial. While UHCA events are competitive, the goal is to reward performances emphasizing a working relationship between a horse and rider. The object of these challenges is to exhibit the ability to negotiate obstacles with finesse, to ask for speed, and to display control and willingness.

Judges shall not judge any family members and should not judge any long-term clients.

Safety: As a judge, you should walk/ride the course before any competition with two UHCA Board members. The Board members are to give guidance on scoring criteria, etc., as needed. If you feel any

obstacle or area is unsafe for a horse or rider, you must notify the host/event manager. Substitution or alteration of an obstacle before competition can be done. Safety is of paramount importance.

The judge(s) and host/event manager must be consistent with their understanding of the course layout. The Event Secretary shall provide the judge's cards with the course obstacles listed in order of the pattern, a place for points earned, horsemanship score, time, and an area for comments.

The course requires only one judge. If there are multiple judges on the course, the judges shall position themselves apart from one another. They shall not confer with one another in any fashion during the competitor's run or following the run except to discuss a competitor being disqualified for that specific round of the challenge. Should a discussion of disqualification be necessary, the discussion will take place immediately following the completion of the run-in question. Each judge must have in their immediate vicinity the services of a scribe responsible for recording the judge's scores and comments.

Rider and horse verification: Judges must verify the rider and horse team before the start of the run via announcer, directly asking, or another form of confirmation.

UHCA events welcome a wide variety of equine breeds and types. When judging these diverse entries, it is essential to evaluate them according to their breed standards, particularly in terms of style (e.g., head position and related attributes).

If a horse or rider struggles to complete a particular obstacle, the judge may instruct the rider to move on to the *next obstacle in the interest of time*.

### *Scoring*

Scoring is on the scale of 0-10. Judges are allowed, at their discretion, to score in .5 (1/2) increments. The following gives more detailed descriptions.

10= Flawless, done with speed and control, displaying superb horsemanship on a willing horse. Perfection in the judges' opinion.

9 = Exceptional, completed the approach, obstacle and departure with absolutely no hesitation. Smooth and willing.

8 = Excellent, rider completes obstacle with confidence, speed and accuracy.

7 = Very Good, accomplishes the task cleanly.

6 = Good, obstacle completed well with slight room for being smoother, faster and/or more accurate.

5 = Satisfactory, obstacle completed with minor flaws.

4 = Rough, and choppy. Obstacle completed with multiple flaws

3 = Very Rough, obstacle completed with major flaws, refusals and/or hesitations.

2 = Poor, obstacle not completed but rider exhibits good horsemanship and communication with the horse. Rider attempted the obstacle.

1 = Very Poor, obstacle not completed. Rider attempted the obstacle.



0 = 0 = Failed. An obstacle is failed when an obstacle is missed, not attempted, or completed out of order the rider will receive a zero (0) score plus a 60 second penalty on overall time.

The UHCA judging system starts at 6 points and will be judged up or down from that point. In Young Guns, dallying is not allowed. Any dallying will result in a score of '0' for that obstacle.

### *Uncorrectable Errors*

In the event the UHCA Board representatives on site determine a situation has occurred and deem it not correctable the rider will be given the option to:

- 1) Receive a refund of his/her entry fee for that ride (Rider becomes a non-participant), OR
  - 2) Decline the refund and receive a score according to the following procedure:
    - a. The rider will receive a default score of 6 on any obstacle that was unable to be scored.
    - b. The rider will receive a default time that is equal to the average time for all competitors in the division less 15 seconds if the actual time cannot be determined. If the judge indicates a specific time credit on the scoresheet, the actual time less the credit may be used if the time was recorded.
    - c. The rider is to select either option 1 or 2 upon being notified of the choices available. (Minor children may confer with the parent or adult responsible for the individual at the event).
- The event host is responsible for issuance of the entry fee refund if the rider selects option 1 above.

Examples of an uncorrectable error which might affect the rider's performance may be, but are not limited to situations such as:

- Malfunction or failure of the timing device(s)
- Failure of the person responsible for timing to accurately record the time
- Failure of the course steward to reconstruct an obstacle thereby making the obstacle non-negotiable for the rider
- Failure of a judge to have viewed a portion of the ride
- Failure of a scribe to record a score
- Other errors uncorrectable but not listed herein

### *Missed Obstacles*

During course walkthrough, the judge will indicate how they expect each obstacle to be navigated. This will include the approach, speed, direction, duration, departure, and the acceptable path to and from the obstacles.

If an obstacle is missed, not attempted, or completed out of order, the rider will receive a zero (0) obstacle score plus a 60-second penalty added to their overall time.

The course is to be completed as instructed by the judge. Completing more than one obstacle out of order or missing more than one obstacle shall result in disqualification. The judge and rider should continue and complete the course.

Missing or completing one obstacle in the series out of order does not define the remaining obstacles as out of order.

If a rider forgets or misses an obstacle, they may return and complete it unless they have already engaged in the next obstacle.

Any obstacle not approached or faced with an apparent attempt to navigate the obstacle shall be considered missed.

It is acceptable for a rider to reattempt an obstacle after a refusal; however, the refusal will be factored into the score for that obstacle even if the second attempt is correct.

An obstacle is considered engaged, attempted, or started when either the horse, rider, or both have made contact with the obstacle or the rider is obviously trying to direct the horse to complete the obstacle. Entering the space of another obstacle while navigating the current one does not deem it engaged, though the rider's score may reflect the rider being off course.

### *Roping*

Standing in the stirrups and remaining seated while roping shall be scored equally. There are two schools of training: neither is right or wrong.

No roping challenges are pass/fail depending on a successful catch; however, a catch should be rewarded. The conduct of the horse is a consideration.

Riders will be graded on correct and smooth handling of the rope, appropriate loop and spoke, swing of the loop, *position to target, control and steadiness of horse, and keeping stock quiet if livestock is used.*

### *Leads*

Correct leads on approach and departure should be rewarded.

Incorrect leads on approach and departure should be penalized.

### *Trailer Loading*

Anyone loading their horse by grabbing the top of the trailer and sliding off the back as the horse goes in will receive a zero for that obstacle.

Anyone riding their horse into a trailer will receive a zero for that obstacle.

### *Other*

Negotiating obstacles: Riders are rewarded for straightness, following judges' directions, maintaining control of the obstacle (not dropping parts), not stepping off obstacles, and being mindful of the safety of the animal and rider.

Jumps: While jumping a rider should maintain balance independent of the reins. Ideally jumps should be cleared and left standing.

Spurs: Use of spurs is not a deduction if used as a cue and in a controlled manner. It is only a deduction if used in what is thought to be a cruel or excessive degree.

Gaping mouth: "Being in the horses' mouth," or gaping mouth is a reason for score deductions at each obstacle with the amount proportional to the rough handling or unwillingness of the horse.

A rider showing a higher skill level i.e., one hand in the bridle (shank bit) should be rewarded.

Originality and flare are encouraged but excessive showboating or excessive delay of progress should not receive additional points.

### **Board of Directors and Officers**

The UHCA governing body is a Board of Directors composed of a Past President and nine (9) Board Members with terms expiring according to the class in which they are elected or appointed.

#### *Duties and Selection*

Board Members, except for the Past President, are elected by the General Membership at the Annual Meeting and serve a three-year term. If a Board position becomes vacant during the year, the Executive Committee will appoint a replacement to serve for the remainder of the current year. Any remaining term beyond the current year will be filled by an election at the next Annual Meeting.

The Board consists of three classes, each with staggered terms:

- Three Board members have terms expiring at the end of the current year.
- Another three Board members have terms expiring at the end of the following year.
- The final three Board members have terms expiring two years after the current year.

#### *Past President*

The past President will serve a term of one year immediately following their presidency. The Past President is a voting member of the Board and a member of the Executive Committee. If their class on the Board has not expired, *a replacement will be elected to serve that Board class's remaining year(s).*

#### *President*

Will serve a term of one year as President and then automatically assume the duties and responsibilities of Past President. As President they will preside over the meetings but will not be a voting member of the Board unless there is a tie. The President may sign UHCA checks and commit funds to pay for approved UHCA debt. The President will be a voting member of the Executive Committee and head the Executive Committee.

### *President Elect*

Elected by the membership at the Annual Meeting from the eligible Board Members. They will serve a term of one year as president elect and will then ascend to the position of President. President-Elect is a voting member of the Board and the Executive Committee.

### *Secretary*

Elected by the Board of Directors at their December meeting of each year to serve a one-year term beginning January 1 of the following calendar year. The eligible candidates for the position of Secretary are all Board members not serving as Past President, President, President Elect or Treasurer. The Board Secretary will be responsible for writing, disseminating and keeping minutes of all Board Meetings and the Annual Meeting. The Secretary is a voting member of the Board and a member of the Executive Committee.

### *Treasurer*

Elected by the Board of Directors at their December meeting of each year to serve a one-year term beginning January 1 of the following calendar year. The eligible candidates for the position of Treasurer are all Board members not serving as Past President, President, President Elect or Secretary. The Treasurer will be responsible for maintaining the financial records of the Association, maintaining a current list of assets, meeting IRS and State of Kansas Income Tax requirements, obtaining insurance for the board and the organization, file corporate status reports required by the Kansas Department of State, and providing reports to the Board member on a monthly basis by email and a written report at each Board meeting. The Treasurer will provide a copy of the reconciliation report from QuickBooks monthly by email and bank statements monthly to the Google Drive shared with current board members. The Treasurer may sign UHCA checks and commit funds to pay approved UHCA debt. The Treasurer is a voting Board member and a member of the Executive Committee.

### *Executive Committee*

Composed of the current Past President, President, President Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. From a list of board nominations, and applications from the membership, the Executive Committee shall select candidates for vacant Board positions and officers to be presented to the general membership for voting at the Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee shall assume other powers and responsibilities when the Board cannot be convened in a reasonable amount of time.

### *Nominations Process*

Highly interested persons having been a member of UHCA for at least two (2) years who wish to serve on the Board are encouraged to notify the Board President of their interest. The President should be notified no later than September 15 of the calendar year.

### *Chairman- Selection and Duties*

The President may appoint a committee chairman for a term not to exceed the current year. These committees *may include but are not limited to: Membership, Sponsors, Annual Meeting, Marketing, Event Host, and Awards.*

### *Recurring Duties*

UHCA shall maintain a non-profit corporation status in the state of Kansas.

UHCA shall host a minimum of one Annual Membership Meeting, with election of President-Elect and Board Members by the general membership.

UHCA will strive to have events spread out in terms of time and geographical location.

UHCA Officers and Board Members:

- 1) Should strive to meet a minimum of four times per year.
- 2) Review the UHCA Handbook annually for rule revisions, deletions, additions, and clarifications.
  - a) Rule changes, deletions, and/or additions
    - i. UHCA members and Board members may submit requests for modification by submitting a proposal to the Board for consideration. Proposals can be submitted online through the UHCA website. The Board reserves the right to modify the proposal before adoption.
    - ii. Proposals will be presented to the Board in sufficient time to allow for study, discussion, and modification before the Handbook is revised.
  - b) The board shall address rule clarifications as needed throughout the year. (The Handbook will not be edited mid-season)
- 3) Shall publish the updated Handbook on the UHCA website and/or make available printed Handbooks by January 1 of the current season.
- 4) Shall nominate candidates for vacant board positions to the Executive Committee.

### *Removal*

The Board of Directors, at its discretion, may remove any officer or director for cause by a three-fourth vote of the entire Board. Removal shall occur only after the member complained against has been given ample notice and an opportunity to respond to the Board. If a Board Member misses 50% or more of scheduled meetings and/or UHCA events, the Executive Committee will evaluate whether he/she shall maintain their position on the Board the following year.

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