



USEA FUTURE EVENT HORSE SERIES RULES

These rules were developed to preserve the integrity of the USEA Future Event Horse (FEH) program as well as provide for the safety of the handlers, horses, judges and spectators.

The FEH Rules were updated February 2022 with new Championship format change for 3-year-old division. See pages 2-6 for changes.

Mission Statement:

The United States Eventing Associations (USEA) FEH Program's mission is to educate: (1) American event horse breeders on the type (conformation, build, movement and athletic abilities) needed for a young horse to be developed into a successful upper level event horse; (2) USEA FEH judges to be able to determine whether or not a young horse is the right type to be developed into a successful upper level event horse; and (3) upper level event riders that the horses they are looking for can be found right here through the USEA's FEH program.

Purpose:

To encourage the selection and breeding of young horses suitable for Eventing. Judges will score horses based on what is seen on the day. The horses presented at FEH competitions may not all be deemed as upper level event horses, but could be suitable to the "mid-levels" of eventing. Those horses showing upper level potential will be scored the highest.

DIVISIONS AND CLASS FORMATS FOR QUALIFYING COMPETITIONS:

If entries warrant, separate classes for colts/geldings and fillies in each age group may be held. However, if there are insufficient entries in a particular age group, classes can be combined. This decision is left up to the organizer of the competition.

Yearlings (fillies, colts and geldings)

Two-Year-Olds (fillies, colts and geldings)

Three-Year-Olds (fillies, colts and geldings)

Four-Year-Olds (fillies, colts and geldings)

If a show/horse trials decides to give qualifier championship/high score ribbons, Champion and Reserve Champion FEH horses will be determined using the following procedure:

The highest and second highest scoring horses from ALL of the previous classes will be named as the Champion and Reserve Champion and presented with ribbons (and trophies if the competition chooses). The horses are NOT asked to come back in to the arena; their original percentage scores will be used to determine the Champion and Reserve Champion horses. This procedure has been chosen because we do not want to require the young horses to stand around for extended periods of time after their original classes have been completed.

Each hosting competition is responsible for providing the ribbons and any prizes they wish to award for these classes.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL FEH CLASSES:

Criteria:

Horses will be judged on type, conformation, correctness and movement. At FEH Qualifiers, a triangle will be used to facilitate the evaluation of movement for yearlings, 2-year-olds, and 3-year-olds. 4-year-olds will show their gaits under saddle. Classes will be open to any horse regardless of breed, size, or origin.

New in 2022, the FEH Committee and the USEA Board of Governors approved a format change to the 3-year-old division for the championships only. During Championships, 3-year-olds will not be presented in-hand around the triangle, but will instead be judged in-hand and at liberty in the jump chute enclosed area. This means that the 3-year-olds will be stood in-hand for conformation and walking movements in the jump chute, and then will be let loose at liberty for trot and canter evaluation. This format change is for the Championships only, and 3-year-olds will continue to be judged in-hand in the triangle format for all qualifiers.

At Championships, a triangle will continue to be used to judge the movement for yearlings and 2-year-olds. 4-year-olds will continue to be judged on movement under saddle.

Judging Standards:

The standard is that of a top quality event horse with the 'whole picture', as well as the 'parts', being considered. Conformational weaknesses that may predispose to structural unsoundness in an event horse's development, training and use will be noted and scored based on severity

Grounds for Dismissal:

Any unruly horse of any gender or age which endangers its handler, other horses, their handlers, the judges or the ring crew will be dismissed.

Score Sheets:

FEH score sheets are unique to this series and consist of: type, conformation (frame, legs and feet), movement (walk and trot) and general impression.

Drug Testing:

FEH horses may be subject to drug testing and must be made available for testing if requested by officials.

Handler/Assistant Handler/Rider:

Handler – A person who holds, walks or trots a horse in the competition area during the presentation for judging.

Assistant Handler – A person used by any competitor to carry a whip and to help encourage the horse forward. It is NOT required that there be an assistant handler, but is permitted.

Handler and assistant handler requirements:

- Conservative attire is required, with safe footwear suitable for running. The shirt must have a collar and long or short sleeves. Polo shirts are acceptable. No T-shirts allowed. It is required that handlers and assistants wear protective headgear. Gloves and safe footwear are recommended.
- A release must be signed by all handlers and assistant handles.

- The handler, assistant handler, and/or a whip assistant may each carry only one whip or one standard lunging whip (without attachments, i.e. plastic bags, etc.). In addition, disruptive noisemaking devices are not permitted in the competition ring or the warm-up area.
- Handlers and assistant handlers must be 16 years old as of January 1 of the current year.
- A handler or groom may only hold one horse at any given time during the competition in or near the competition areas.
- The assistant handler may also hold/walk a horse during the Championship round. The assistant handler may not show the horse in trot.
- It is recommended that owners bring their own team of handlers that are familiar with their horse to show them. In the case that an owner does not have a team, a handler may be available to show horses for an additional fee at the qualifier.

Rider – A person who presents a 4-year-old under saddle.

- **Rider Requirements:** See 4-year-old directives sheet.

Equipment and Turnout:

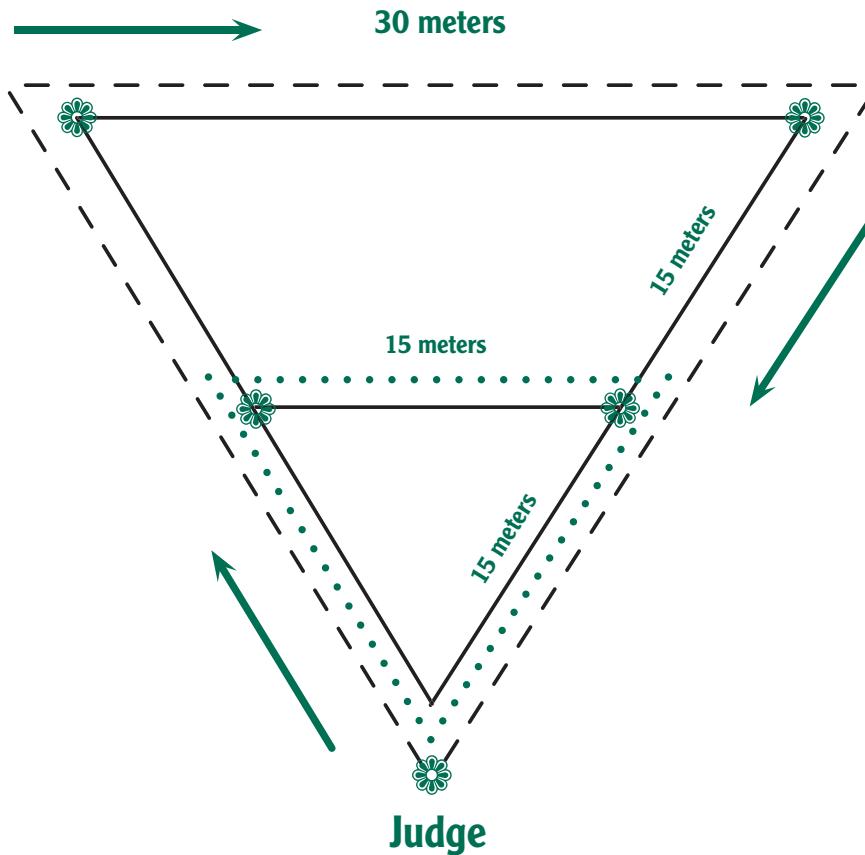
Yearlings: A clean well-fitting halter, or a snaffle bridle, and lead.

2-Year-Olds and 3-Year-Olds: MUST be presented in a bridle. A clean, well-fitting snaffle bridle with headstall and throatlatch with reins attached is mandatory. Reins must be attached only to the bit. Nosebands are optional. A snaffle type bit is required. A split or single chain with a lead may be used instead of, or in addition to, reins.

- The mane should be clean, brushed, and pulled. Braiding is recommended at Regional Championships.
- Coat and legs clean, feet trimmed.
- Condition – that of a healthy growing youngster, not carrying abnormal weight or noticeably under-conditioned.
- Shoes, or glue on shoes are permitted as needed with no penalty.
- For 3-year-olds, at Championships only, reins will be detached when let loose in the jump chute arena for the trot, canter, and jumping sections.

4-Year-Olds: See directives sheet

JUDGING TRIANGLE – DIAGRAM AND DIMENSIONS: USEA Future Event Horse Set-up



Presentation of horse for conformation.

Horses are presented for conformation, then asked to walk a 15 meter triangle, followed by trotting a 30 meter triangle. Return to presentation area for final review.

..... Walk

--- --- --- Trot

🌸 Flower box or other solid marker.

Two basic triangle designs are acceptable for presenting horses to the judge. Competition management may choose the triangle best suited for local conditions, however, the back side of the triangle must be at least 25 meters in length and the other two sides must be at least 20 meters in length.

Triangle corners should be well defined. Footing must be firm. Ground poles may be used to define the triangle. Plants or flowers are allowed. Horses must travel to the right.

The purpose of the triangle is to provide a right-hand visual boundary for the horse to maintain a straight line away from, across the base line of the triangle, and towards the judge. Moving away and coming toward allows the judge the opportunity to view the horse's correctness and straightness, or lack thereof, in movement. Across the baseline, the quality of the gaits and the self-carriage is evaluated.

Entry – Be ready when called by the ring steward for entry to the judging area and triangle.

Standing Position – Stand horse in an 'open', not a 'squared' stance. The near side foreleg (to the judge) should be advanced, and the near side hind leg to the rear.

Purpose – To evaluate the structure of the frame and legs.

Walk – All movement is executed in a clockwise direction and the walk utilizes the shorter (15m) triangle (if provided); otherwise the 25-30m long side is used.

Purpose – To evaluate the quality, correctness/faults in the front and hind legs, (which may affect soundness) when moving in walk, away from and towards the judge. On the side the rhythm, use of the top line, freedom of the shoulders, activity and use of the hindquarters, length, evenness, and levelness of stride, are evaluated based on the needs of the sport of eventing. The walk is the gait that relates to the canter and is indicative of that gait's promise.

Trot – The trot utilizes the longest sides of the triangle for yearlings and 2-year-olds only. *Please see page 6 for the 3-year-old trot.

Purpose – To evaluate the quality, correctness/faults in the front and hind legs (which may affect soundness) when moving in trot, away and towards the judge. On the side the rhythm, use of the top line, freedom of the shoulders, activity and thrust forward and upward by the hindquarters with length, evenness, and levelness of stride are evaluated based on the needs of the sport of eventing. Suspension, in moderation, is acceptable.

4 Year-Old Under Saddle Class - as per directives sheet.

Scoring for FEH Qualifiers

If there are two (or more) horses with the same score—i.e. “tied scores” then ties will be broken by highest type score. If there is still a tie, the judge will decide the winner.

REGIONAL FEH CHAMPIONSHIPS

A horse qualifies for the Regional FEH Finals and Championships by earning a score of **72% or better** in his/her age specific class in at least one USEA sponsored FEH competition during the year.

For Regional Championships of yearlings to 3-year-olds, there will be two judges, each with a scribe. Each judge will score every horse on a separate score sheet and the points on each score sheet will be calculated and then averaged to determine the final score for each competitor. For 4-year-olds see directive sheet.

The procedure and equipment rules will be the same as used in the FEH qualifying shows (as far as the use of the triangle and handlers, assistant handlers and rider specifications for 4-year-olds are concerned.)

For each age group Championships, the top two horses from each age will be named as Champion and Reserve Champion. The horse that scored the highest percentage in his/her original class will be named the Champion; the horse that scored the second highest percentage in his/her original class will be named Reserve Champion. If there are two (or more) horses with the same score—i.e. “tied scores” then yearlings and 2-year-olds ties will be broken by highest type score and 3- and 4-year-olds will use highest jumping score. If there is still a tie, the judge will decide the winner.

For the Regional Championships, USEA provides the ribbons and trophies for these classes.

Regional FEH Championships Classes for Yearlings and 2-Year-Olds:

Yearlings

1. Fillies
 2. Colts and Geldings
- Championships for this age group

2-Year-Olds

1. Fillies
 2. Colts and Geldings
- Championships for this age group

Regional FEH Championships for 3-Year-Olds and 4-Year-Olds:

Additional Criteria: These classes will be open to any qualified horse regardless of breed, size, or origin.

3-year-olds: Horses will be judged in hand for type, conformation, correctness, and the walk movement. In addition 3-year-old horses will be judged at liberty at the trot, canter, and for jumping. An enclosed arena approximately 120' x 72' will be used to facilitate the evaluation of these three parts of the testing.

4-year-olds: Will be judged for the walk, trot, and canter under saddle. Then the 4-year-olds will be judged at liberty for jumping. An enclosed arena approximately 120' x 72' will be used to facilitate the evaluation of their jumping.

Additional Judging Standards: The standard is that of a top quality event horse with the ‘whole picture’, as well as the ‘parts’, being considered. Conformational weaknesses that may predispose to structural unsoundness in an event horse’s development, training, and use will be noted and scored based on severity. In addition, weaknesses in the canter and jumping will be noted and scored accordingly based on severity.

At Regional Championships, these classes will be offered for 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds:

1. Mares
 2. Colts and Geldings
- Championships for this age group*

*Horses must participate in the free jumping to be eligible for the 3-year-old and 4-year-old Championships.

Equipment:

- In the jump chute arena, helmets are required to be worn at all times by all participants.
- Horse will be presented in a snaffle bridle with a lead rope. A headstall, throatlatch and snaffle type bit is required; Nosebands are optional. No full cheek snaffles.
- Protective boots are allowed on the front legs only for the jumping portion, but must be conservative in color; black, brown or white.

Handlers: A team of handlers including a leader and two whip persons will be provided at Regional Championships for 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds during the trot (for 3-year-olds only), canter and jumping sections. Owners may present their 3-year-old horses in-hand themselves in the jump chute area or they may utilize the professional jump chute team to present in-hand for conformation and walk. The owner should provide the person to hold the treat bucket and catch the horse at the end of the jump chute. The judges have the final say about the height and width of the fences.

Grounds for Dismissal: Any unruly horse of any gender or age which endangers its handler, other horses, their handlers, the judges or the ring crew will be dismissed.

Score Sheets: There is a separate score sheet for the 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds at Regional Championships that deals with the canter and the jumping. Each 3-year-old horse’s overall conformation score and overall canter/jumping scores will be converted to a percentage, to the third decimal; then averaged for the final score from each judge. These scores will then be averaged to determine the FINAL overall placings to determine the Champion and Reserve champion horses. The 4-year-old under saddle and conformation score sheet will be converted to a percentage to the third decimal. This score sheet will then be averaged with the jumping score to determine the winner.

Trot and Canter:

The trot and canter for 3-year-olds will be judged loose in an enclosed arena approximately 120’ x 72’ with a jump chute with poles ground poles removed on one of the long sides. The horse will enter the arena and will first be judged in hand for conformation and the walk. After the walk, the reins will be detached from the bridle and the horse will be let loose, guided by the professional jump chute team of handlers. The handler and assistants may carry a dressage or lunge whip to encourage the horse to move forward and change direction in the arena to show the horse off to the best of its ability. This loose schooling will also serve as a warmup for the free jumping and will have a maximum time of five minutes.

Judging Trot: The trot for 3-year-olds utilizes the jump chute area in a figure eight pattern.

Purpose – To evaluate the quality, correctness/faults in the front and hind legs (which may affect soundness) when moving in trot, away and towards the judge. The rhythm, use of the top line, freedom of the shoulders, activity and thrust forward and upward by the hindquarters with length, evenness, and levelness of stride are evaluated based on the needs of the sport of eventing. Suspension, in moderation, is acceptable.

Judging Canter: Includes rhythm, balance and ground cover

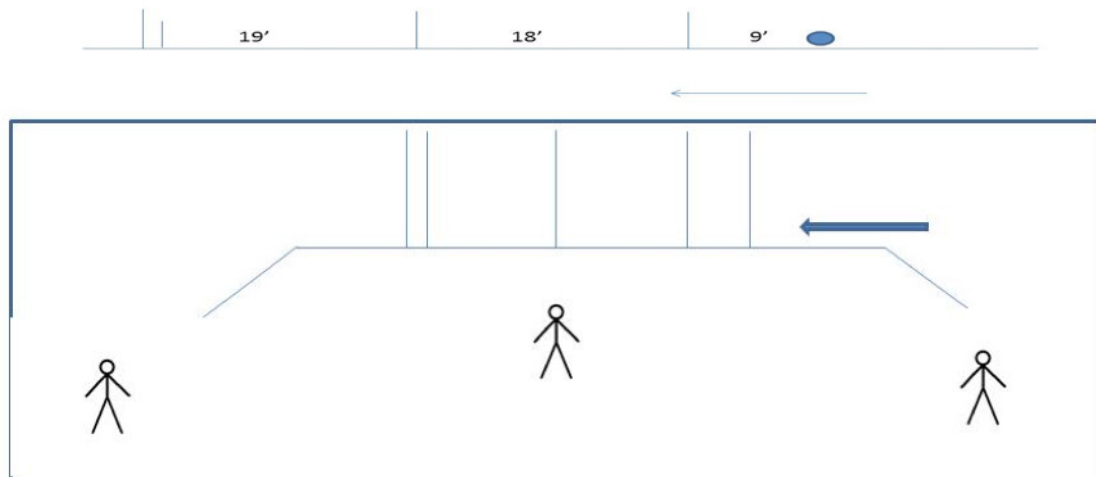
Purpose – To evaluate the quality, balance, ground cover, agility, activity, range and scope.

Jumping:

Judging Jumping: Includes Technique and Ability/Scope

Purpose – Evaluate the use of the neck and back, forelegs and hindlegs. The overall behavior of the horse: carefulness, willingness, agility and ability to learn from mistakes.

JUMP CHUTE-DIAGRAM AND SPECIFICATION:



At FEH 3-year-old Championships, a distance of 9'-12' between the ground pole and obstacle 1, 18'-22.5" between obstacle 1 and 2, and 19'-25' between obstacle 2 and 3. The maximum height of the first fence is 2'7", the second is 2'9" and the last fence is 3'3" in front, 3'7" in back and 4' in width. The range of distance is to accommodate different types of horses at different stages of development. At 4-year-old Championships the distances are the same as the 3-year-olds, but heights are: first fence at 2'9", second fence at 3'3" and the last fence is 3'7" in front and 3'9" in the back and 4'3" in width.

- Breakaway safety cups are required for use on all fences.
- No decoration or boxes used as groundlines.
- Additional placement poles may not be added.
- Fences are to have at least a 10' face and poles are made of wood.
- Jumping will be done off of the left rein.
- Tape on standards will mark the height.
- No placement poles are allowed.

At the conclusion of the canter session, the poles will be added to the open chute. The horse will be allowed to go through the chute five times. The first being over poles on the ground set at the distances desired by the handler within FEH specifications. The second time through, the fences may be set as small fences or cross poles. The remaining trips through, the heights will be set according to the decision of the handler and the owner with input from the judges.

The handler will lead the horse into the chute each time setting it loose as it rounds the corner. The handler may carry a whip and will be expected to use a short, smooth cotton rope with no snaps attached or a leather strap with no snaps attached that he can let slide through the bit as he sends the horse through the chute. There can be two assistants to help encourage the horse forward through the chute and another assistant with a treat bucket (provided by owner) to catch the horse and return it to the handler to be led through again. The horse should be caught and led with a strap or lead rope back to the handler.

In the event that a horse has a refusal or mishap on the fifth attempt, a sixth attempt will be permitted at a lower height to allow the horse to leave the arena on a positive note.

A supervised jump chute practice clinic will be held the day prior to Championships. All 3-year-old and 4-year-old entries are strongly recommended to participate in the clinic to encourage a positive experience in the Championships.

USEA FUTURE EVENT HORSE 4-YEAR-OLD CLASS DIRECTIVES

4-year-old horses will be evaluated under saddle at the walk, trot and canter in both directions. Horses will be asked to show their gaits and rideability.

Saddlery

- English type saddle and snaffle bridle as for dressage, in USEA Levels BN—Prelim. See the *USEF Rules For Eventing* for permitted snaffles and nosebands. No martingales or side reins are allowed.
- Boots and bandages are prohibited.
- Ear bonnets are permitted.
- Rider must wear an approved helmet, boots, and dress per the One Day Horse Trials guidelines in the *USEF Rules for Eventing*. (i.e. jackets will not be required).
- Riders would also be allowed to use one dressage whip and/or spurs; their specifications per the current *USEF Rules for Eventing*.

Class Standards

- Each rider will only be permitted to ride one horse in this class at an event. An owner may own more than one horse in the class, but there **MUST** be different riders for each horse.
- 4-year-old horses may choose to compete in qualifiers for the FEH 4-year-olds, and in the YEH 4-year-olds the same year, but they may only compete in **EITHER** the FEH 4-year-old, **OR** the YEH 4-year-old qualifiers at any one competition—**NOT BOTH**. At the end of the season, if they have qualified for both sets of Championships, the owner must choose which **ONE** they will compete in; they may not do both FEH and YEH.
- Mares may not compete during pregnancy. Mares may not compete until 6 months after having a foal.
- The arena for these classes must be enclosed in such a way that a loose horse would be contained.
- Unauthorized assistance by individuals outside of the arena is not permitted. If done, the horse is subject to elimination at the discretion of the judge.
- The horse will be evaluated in small groups; the size of group will depend on the size of arena provided. The classes will have no more than 6 horses competing at one time.
- The judge will direct the riders as to gait and direction. Lengthenings in either the trot or the canter will **NOT** be required.
- The classes may be split by gender, or combined if the numbers are small. Stallions will **NOT** be mixed in a class with mares.
- Horses may be asked to canter individually or in a small group.
- After the under saddle section, all horses will be unsaddled for the judging of conformation.

Scoring

- At qualifiers, the winner will be the horse with the highest average of the under saddle score and conformation score. If there is a tie, it will be broken by the score for “Type”. If there is still a tie, the judge will choose a winner.
- A qualifying score of 72% or higher will make a horse eligible for the FEH 4-year-old Regional Championships.
- At Championships, when 2 or more judges are officiating, they are to use the same score sheets for the under saddle section and agree on each score before informing the scribe. No comments are made on the under saddle scoresheets, only points awarded. For the conformation section and the jumping section, there should be two judges each using a separate score sheet. These scores will be averaged for the final results. Ties will be broken using an average of the two scores for “Jumping”. If there is still a tie, the judges will choose a winner.