HOPEFUL HUNTER SERIES – GENERAL RULES

***Mission Statement***

To provide a safe and enjoyable experience to all participants of equestrian activities. To promote good horsemanship and sportsmanship skills and practices, to enrich members’ experiences with their horses and also to promote the use of horses for personal and family enjoyment and competition.

Competitor Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the contestant to ensure that he/she is entered in his/her proper classes with respect to age group, use of horse etc.

Ribbons/Colour/Points

1st Red 6

2nd Blue 5

3rd White 4

4th Yellow 3

5th Green 2

6th Pink 1

1. Stallions regardless of age are to be shown only by a Senior (18 years and over).

2. Participants in all classes and events are to be attired in generally accepted English apparel or western apparel as applicable for that event.

3. ASTM approved helmets are required in all events.

4. In timed events, the contestant must enter the ring wearing a hat or helmet. It must remain in place for the duration of the run. For western riders if the hat is lost and it falls to the ground a 1 second penalty shall be assessed. If English riders lose their helmet during their event, they will be eliminated.

5. No re-rides are permitted due to breakage of equipment or fall of horse/rider.

6. Excessive use of whips, bats, spurts or abuse of horse or pony anywhere on the grounds will be cause for dismissal/disqualification from the class.

7. Decision of the judge is final. Direction from Stewards,/Ringmasters to be considered final.

8. No tie downs, draw reins or bandages allowed in warm up or hack classes. Standing martingales allowed in hunter over fences classes only in sand ring. No martingales allowed for any hack classes. For cross country - Protective Boots, Irish martingales and Running martingales allowed. Breastplates and breastcollars are allowed for all classes. NO flash nosebands are allowed but figure 8s are allowed. No twisted wire bits, Waterford bits.

9. Dress Code

Proper English Attire/Western Attire as allowed in all events. No mixing of attire. Dress code may be relaxed at the discretion of the judge in warm/severe weather to allow for the removal of jackets.

**English Attire** – ASTM approved helmets/ English breeches or jodphurs – long or short boots as appropriate. Conservative English jackets with collared shirts or choker shirts. Gloves either white, brown or black. Hair must be pulled back and under control if long hair – hairnets or a single braid. No earrings that dangle. Conservative saddle pads – white or black for Hunter classes; cross country saddle pads can be bright colours. Saddle pads can be contoured or square. Jackets are recommended but if they are removed, the shirt must be long or short sleeved with a regular shirt collar with a tie, or a choker collar shirt with choker or stock tie. No sleeveless shirts or T-shirts or dickies unless under jackets. Short jumping bats are optional as are unrowelled spurs for over fences classes.

**Western Attire** – Contestant to wear western boots, western hat or helmet (preferred), dress or western long or short sleeve shirt with a collar, western pants or jeans. Vest, coat, sweater, belt, chaps or equitation suit optional. Lariat optional/slicker optional.

**GLOVES ARE REQUIRED FOR RIDING CLASSES.**

**ASTM APPROVED HELMETS ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL ENGLISH CLASSES and for JUNIORS UNDER 18.**

**ASTM APPROVED SAFETY VESTS ARE ENCOURAGED FOR ALL OVER FENCES CLASSES.**

***Attire NOT ALLLOWED***

No sleeveless shirts, T-shirts, shorts, capped sleeve shirts, yoga or exercise pants.

10. An unruly horse will be dismissed from the class by the judge/steward/ringmaster for the safety of all competitors and their horses.

11. If there are junior/senior/mature classes, the age of the rider will be computed as of the 1st of January of the current year.

12. A horse or pony may be used by up to 3 riders in each show but may only compete with one rider in equitation classes. Limit of 3 flat classes back to back.

13, Classes will be split if they are too large or at the discretion of judge/ringmaster.

14. Note: Any act of discourtesy or disobedience to the officials on the part of the owner/contestant or contestants will disqualify the horse and rider for the remainder of the show and the owner/contestant shall forfeit his/her entry and other fees.

15. EXPLANATION OF CLASSES/DRESS

Equitation/Hunter Under Saddle/Hunter Hack/Road Hack/Show Hack

Rider should have an efficient comfortable and workmanlike appearance, hand light and supple and convey the impression of complete control of his/her horse/pony/mule. The rider should show the equine to its best advantage. The attire and tack should be suitable, fit well and be safe. Class will be to enter the ring and proceed around the ring at each gait, and on command, reverse and repeat. The order to reverse may be executed by turning either towards or away from the rail. Entries shall line up on command. Any or all riders may be asked by the judge for additional work. A pattern may be substituted or supplemented with rail work. Backing may also be asked for. Light contact with the horses’ mouth is encouraged. Spurs of the unrowelled type and short bats are allowed. Martingales not allowed. Boots not allowed. Riders will not be asked to dismount.

For Hack and Under Saddle classes, horses will be judged on way of going, manners, suitability and correct gaits. Manners and gaits are to be considered highly. For Equitation classes, riders will be judged on seat, hands, legs, ability to control and show the horse.

Extended Gaits.

For any of the flat classes, horses may be asked to extend the gait at the walk, trot or canter. Horses will not be asked to change leads except as part of an individual pattern.

Way of Going – Horse

Horses will generally be judged on performance, apparent ability to give a good controlled ride. Contestants and their horses will be penalized for excessive speed, wrong leads, wrong diagonals, general disobedience, bucking rearing etc. Horses are expected to stand quietly and back readily. Light contact with the horses mouth is recommended.

Appointments/Dress

Clothing and tack shall be clean, workmanlike, neat and conservative. Saddle and bridle should fit the horse and be comfortable and safe.

**Jumping Classes**

Working Hunter/Hunter Hack/Jumper/Cross Country Classes/Classic Hunter

General:

Arrangements of the jump course will be at the discretion of the show organizers, keeping in mind the ability of the contestants.

A schooling area will be provided with at least one practice jump. Directional flags if posted will be

WHITE – left

RED - right

In jumping classes no horse may enter the allotted jumping area until the course and judges are ready. However, riders may be permitted to inspect the course on foot prior to the commencement of the class at the discretion of the show organizer.

HUNTER OVER FENCES CLASSES TO INCLUDE

Cross Rail, Beginner Hunter, Handy Hunter, Open Working Hunter, Classic Hunter/Hunter Pairs/Hunt Teams

A hunter course is any course of obstacles that is deemed a fair test of a hunter by the show organizer. Horses will be required to navigate a minimum of 8 obstacles with a minimum of one change of direction. A minimum of 4 obstacles are to be set for these over fences classes except for Hunter Hack Classes.

Hunter Hack classes are in the hack division however they usually comprise a minimum of one jump or obstacle that is to be successfully navigated by the horse and rider team. This class is a flat class that often has an individual pattern within the class. Horse and rider will complete the flat class as per an under saddle class and line up in the centre of the ring. They will then be called out one at a time to ride an individual pattern. Hunter Under Saddle rules apply.

Types of fences include post and rail, brush, walls, coops, poles over box fillers. Normally standards with wings are used. Most obstacles will be 48 ft apart; 60 ft apart, or 72 ft apart unless they are combination jumps of two to three strides.

HEIGHTS OF CLASSES

Cross Rail classes will be no more than 20 inches tall unless specified

Open classes will be no more than 2 ft 6 inches tall unless specified

16. Judging

Horses and riders will be judged on performance, manners and way of going with preference to horses covering the course with free flowing strides and which jump the fences from these strides without interrupting the rhythm. Preference will be given to horses which meet the fences squarely and jump at the centre of each fence. **Rushing and excess speed will be heavily penalized**. At the conclusion of the class, horses will be brought back in the order of highest score first and asked to jog for soundness and then line up. Tack is not to be removed.

Horses must be serviceably sound. Any horse showing noticeable lameness, broken wind or vision issues will be refused an award.

**Scoring:**

**Ist refusal/knockdown/runout 4 pts**

**2nd refusal/knockdown/runout 8 pts**

**3rd refusal/knockdown/runout elimination**

**Fall of horse and/or rider elimination**

**Leaving the course prior to end elimination**

**Course disobedience 3 pts**

Notes: in combinations (like in and outs) each fence is counted separately for faults but if there is a refusal/run out at one of the fences, the competitor must take both fences again.

Circles: One circle at the commencement of the course and one circle at the end is permissible however if there is a circle which is performed while on course and the horse and rider ‘cross their own line’ it is considered a runout and will be penalized with a 4 pt penalty.

17. **Equipment and Personal Appointments**

Personal tack, optional and prohibited are the same as the hack division except that leg wraps are not permitted but boots are allowed. Standing martingales are allowed. Breastplates are allowed.

Suitable show hunter riding coat, hard ASTM certified helmet, breeches and high boots or jodhpur boots and jodphurs. Stock tie, choker and suitable shirt. Hair to be neat and contained in a hair net or single braid if longer. Horses to be braided if possible. English snaffle bridle, with snaffle bit, Pelham, double bridle or kimberwick. Reins laced, plain, braided or rubber backed. No web reins. Spurs and bats are optional along with figure 8 nosebands, breastplates, breastcollars, protective boots (over fences classes only). Flash nosebands are not allowed. Draw reins are not allowed. Irish martingales optional.

**ASTM certified Helmets are required**. ASTM safety vests are encouraged.

**Braiding is encouraged and will be scored under the appointments and general dress category.**

18. Start and finish markers will be at least 12 ft prior to the first obstacle and 12 ft after the end of the last obstacle.

19. Obstacles to be navigated as well as jumps in the Open Hunter/Hunter Hack and Classic Hunter may include gate(s) and bridge(s).

20. **Jumping Faults – definitions**

Knock Downs

When a horse attempts to jump an obstacle and knocks down the obstacle or any portion of it. Penalty 4 faults

NOTE: When a horse knocks down the obstacle all or a portion of the obstacle while refusing it shall be given only the penalty for a refusal.

Refusal

When a horse stops in front of an obstacle. It is a refusal unless the horse then immediately jumps the obstacle without backing a step backwards. If this happens it is a pop not a refusal.

If the horse then moves toward the obstacle and refuses to jump it is considered another refusal.

In the case of a refusal on an in and out fence the horse must re-jump both obstacles.

Run-Out

When a horse evades or passes the obstacle to be jumped, jumps an obstacle not on course or knocks down an obstacle without jumping it while veering to the side.

Loss of Forward Movement is considered a disobedience if executed while on course. Penalty is 3 pts

Unnecessary circling while on course is considered being off course if the horse crosses their own line within 25 feet of an obstacle the horse and rider will be eliminated.

Fall of horse/and or rider – Elimination

Failure to complete the course/off course – Elimination

Failure of Equipment – rider can stop to have it fixed – 3 pt penalty

These are general guidelines, if you have any questions please ask. We hope you have a great show and look forward to welcoming everyone to this great discipline.