

UPHA Challenge Cup
and
UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup
(Open-are classes not designated for a particular breed)

Qualifying Classes

1. Who is Eligible to Ride?

- a. UPHA Junior membership is required prior to competing in any UPHA Challenge Cup class.
 - i. UPHA Challenge Cup
 1. Open to all saddle seat equitation riders 17 years of age and under, riding a mare or gelding of any breed.
 2. A win of an open UPHA Challenge Cup qualifier eliminates the rider from further competition in that class for the remainder of the qualifying season. The rider may then elect to compete in any other UPHA Challenge Cup classes for which they are eligible in order to comply with the “separate qualification” rule if the rider intends to compete in more than one UPHA Challenge Cup National Finals.
 3. The winner of the open UPHA Junior Challenge Cup National Final may compete for the open UPHA Senior Challenge Cup National Final in any subsequent year but is ineligible for further competition in the open UPHA Junior Challenge Cup classes.
 4. The open UPHA Senior Challenge Cup National Final winner is ineligible to compete in any future open UPHA Challenge Cup qualifying classes or the open National Final.
 - ii. UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup
 1. Open to riders 10 years of age and under riding a mare or gelding of any breed.
 2. Rider may not have ever been judged in a class at a recognized or non-recognized competition that required a canter. This also includes Tournament and Academy classes.

3. A win of a qualifying class does not eliminate that rider from further competition in qualifying classes that season.
4. The winner of the UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot National Final will be ineligible for further competition in UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot qualifying classes and national final. They will be eligible to compete in the other UPHA Challenge Cup classes at that time.

2. How are classes judged?

- a. UPHA Challenge Cup
 - i. Riders compete at the walk, show trot, and canter in both directions of the ring and lined up.
 - ii. The top four (or more at the judge's discretion) must complete the mandatory individual workout.
 - iii. Showmanship is paramount throughout the class.
 - iv. Judging is based 60% on rail work and 40% on the individual workout.
 - v. No minimum number of entries is required to fill a class.
- b. UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup
 - i. Riders compete at a walk and trot in both directions of the ring and line up.
 - ii. Headers will be permitted in the lineup and will be called in by the announcer after the class has lined up and before they are judged. One attendant without a whip is permitted to head each horse during the line-up. The header may stand the entry on its feet and then must stand three paces back from the horse and is only allowed to touch the horse for safety purposes.
 - iii. It is imperative that the horse stand quietly. A judge must order from the ring any unruly horse or one whose actions threaten to endanger the rider, other exhibitors, or their entries.
 - iv. No minimum number of entries is required to fill a class.

3. Mandatory Workout

- a. The mandatory workout for all qualifying classes is: "Trot a serpentine consisting of four half circles to the opposite end of the ring. Return down either rail at a show trot."
- b. Judges are not permitted to alter the mandatory workout in any manner.
- c. It is recommended, at the discretion of the judge, to instruct the ringmaster to line riders up to create a clear area for the serpentine.
- d. Exception: No tests shall be called for in the UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup classes.

4. What Classes are Offered?

- Walk/Trot 10 & Under
- 17 & under

Or

The class may be divided into age groups as follows, with separate awards:

- Walk/Trot 8 years of age and under
- Walk/Trot 9 to 10 years of age
- Junior for riders 13 & Under
- Senior for riders 14-17

Chapter Championships

1. Chapter Championships are optional.
2. Residency requirements pertain only to UPHA Challenge Cup Chapter Championships. Rider must compete within the UPHA Chapter in which they reside (residence to be determined by the legal voting residence of the rider's parent or guardian).
3. The first four places in open UPHA Challenge Cup qualifying classes are eligible to compete in the UPHA Chapter Championships.
4. The top four (4) riders must be worked individually; more may be worked at the judge's discretion.
5. The judge(s) may use any of the recognized tests 1-15 (refer to EQ120); exchange of horses cannot be requested.

National Championship

1. History

- The UPHA Challenge Cup was established in 1972 and has been held at the American Royal Horse Show in Kansas City, Mo., since its inception.
- A Junior Championship was added in 1979.
- The UPHA 10 & under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup was established in 1986, and the National Championship began in 1988. The National Championship was originally held at the Kentucky Fall Classic Horse Show and is now held at the UPHA/American Royal National Championship.

2. Location

- UPHA/American Royal National Championship in Kansas City, MO, November 16-21, 2026.
- Information about the show and how to enter is available on their website: <https://americanroyal.com/events/upha-american-royal-national-championship-horse-show/>

3. How Does a Rider Qualify to Compete?

- a. UPHA Challenge Cup National Championship
 - i. By placing first through fourth in an open UPHA Challenge Cup qualifying class
 - ii. By placing first through fourth in an open UPHA Challenge Cup Chapter Championship.
 - iii. Riders showing in breed-restricted or the pleasure UPHA Challenge Cup qualifying classes do not qualify for the Open Finals.
 - iv. Any rider, regardless of age, who is qualified has the option of showing in the open UPHA Challenge Cup National Final, but a 13 & under rider may not compete in both the open UPHA Junior Challenge Cup National Final and the open UPHA Challenge Cup National Final.
- b. UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup National Championship
 - i. All ribbon winners in UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup qualifying classes will be eligible to compete in the UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup National Final.
 - ii. The winner of the UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot National Final will be ineligible for further competition in UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot classes. They will be eligible to compete in the other UPHA Challenge Cup classes at that time.

4. Qualifying Period

- a. The qualifying period for all UPHA Challenge Cup National Finals closes seven (7) days prior to the beginning of the competition at which the Championship will be held. At that time, the qualifying season for the following year will begin.

5. Conduct

- a. A judge must excuse from the ring any unruly horse or one whose actions threaten to endanger the rider, handler, other exhibitors, or their entries.
- b. The same horse must be used in both Phases of the UPHA Challenge Cup National Finals, unless the animal is sick or lame, in which case a veterinarian's certificate is required.
- c. UPHA Challenge Cup National Championship

- i. If the UPHA Challenge Cup National Finals are divided because of its size, it is to be split by every other number. All riders must compete at the walk, show trot and canter both ways of the ring and line up. The divisions are to be dismissed on standby, with the individual workouts executed immediately following completion of the rail work. On completion of the individual workouts, the riders in that group shall be excused and the next division shall begin the rail work and individual workout phase and so on for each section of riders.
 - ii. The preliminary work is called Phase I, in which all contestants must work in a group (or in groups) of 20 or less on the rail and complete an individual workout. A minimum of twelve (12) riders and a maximum of fourteen (14) riders will be chosen for Phase II which is the championship class. If there are less than twelve (12) riders judges are required to bring all riders back for the championship class. No predetermined number need be selected from each group.
 - iii. Phase I and Phase II must be judged as a continuous class and must be evaluated using a 1/3-1/3- 1/3 analysis. In Phase I, the rail work portion and the individual workout shall each constitute 1/3 of the overall judging, or 2/3 of the total class. Phase II (the Championship), in which only rail work is performed, shall constitute the remaining 1/3 of the total class. Therefore, the rail work portions constitute two thirds (2/3) of the entire class and the individual pattern constitutes one third (1/3) of the class.
 - iv. There will be no less than four (4) hours between the end of Phase I and the beginning of Phase II, and no more than two (2) consecutive days between the two Phases. When the riders return to the ring for Phase II, the announcer is to state that they have been previously judged on rail and figure work.
 - v. No individual workouts will be requested in Phase II, however, at the judges' discretion, selected riders may be requested to do additional rail work as a group for the purpose of breaking a tie. They may not be asked to exchange horses or to ride without irons in this phase.
 - vi. A champion and reserve champion will be chosen, with the next eight (8) riders placed in numerical order. Two unannounced reserves should be tied. The "Top Ten" will be announced first, followed by the reserve champion and the champion.
 - vii. All riders must be retired to a holding area outside of the ring and then brought back in individually and numerically for the "Top Ten" awards and the presentation of the reserve champion and champion.
- d. UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup National Championship
- i. Riders will work in groups of twelve (12) or less and will not be asked to perform an individual workout.
 - ii. Ten (10) riders shall be chosen to return for Phase II.

- iii. The UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot National Final shall be judged 50% on Phase I-Preliminary and 50% on Phase II-The Championship.

6. Workout

- a. The UPHA Saddle Seat Committee encourages judges to select individual patterns that highlight showmanship as opposed to intricacy.
- b. In the UPHA Challenge Cup National Final, the judge(s) may use any of the recognized tests 1-14 (refer to EQ120).
- c. In the UPHA Junior Challenge Cup National Final (*Riders 13 & Under*), judges are cautioned not to ask for an inappropriate or illegal workout. Riders 13 and under may be asked to perform USEF tests #1 through #12. They are not permitted to change leads on or off the rail. Simple serpentines and figure eights are acceptable; however, diagonal line changes (which include a canter or any line cantering off the rail) are not permitted in any manner. The basic figures, or combination of the basic figures, are the intent in all UPHA Junior Challenge Cup National Finals.
- d. Individual copies of the Judge's Phase I workout must be available to each rider in the competition office no less two (2) hours prior to the performance in which the class is run.
- e. The workout pattern in all championship classes shall not be posted online or on social media prior to being posted in the horse show office.
- f. Individual workout instructions must be written down by the judge and delivered to the announcer at the beginning of the class.
- g. Competitors must be allowed ample access to the competition arena in order to walk on foot the posted workout. A minimum of ½ hour is recommended.
- h. Exception: No tests shall be called for in the UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup National Championship.

7. Judging Specifications

- a. UPHA Senior and Junior Challenge Cup National Championship
 - i. All UPHA Challenge Cup National Championship contestants must be current UPHA members and have qualified at least seven days before the show begins. In the Preliminary work, Phase 1, all riders must work as a group (or in groups) on the rail at the walk, show trot, and canter, in both directions of the ring and line up. Riders will then be dismissed to a holding area and brought back one at a time for their

individual workout. In Phase 2, the Championship, no individual workouts will be requested. However, at the judges' discretion, selected riders may be asked to do additional rail work as a group to break a tie. They may not be asked to exchange horses or to ride without irons in this phase. Showmanship is paramount throughout the class. Judging is based 60% on rail work and 40% on the individual workout.

- a. UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup National Championship
 - i. All UPHA 10 & Under Walk/Trot Challenge Cup National Championship contestants must be current UPHA members and have qualified at least seven days before the show begins. To be judged on the rail at a walk and trot only, and lined up. Headers will be permitted in the lineup and will be called in by the announcer after the class has lined up and before they are judged. One attendant without a whip is permitted to head each horse during the line-up. The header may stand the entry on its feet and then must stand three paces back from the horse and is only allowed to touch the horse for safety purposes. It is imperative that the horse stand quietly. A judge must order from the ring any unruly horse or one whose actions threaten to endanger the rider, other exhibitors, or their entries. The National Championship shall be judged 50% on Phase I-Preliminary and 50% on Phase II-The Championship.

8. Judges

- a. The judge(s) must be Saddle Seat Equitation Registered or Recorded in Saddle Seat Equitation with USEF.
- b. Judges for the UPHA Challenge Cup National Finals are recommended by the UPHA Equitation Committee and a list will be furnished to respective competition managements annually. In all UPHA Challenge Cup National Finals, judges shall be selected from nominations by the UPHA Challenge Cup/Equitation Committee.