

**Quick-Start
Guide for
IHSA
Coaches**

This guide is designed to assist you as you begin working with your team and while starting a new show year. Many questions can be answered by reading the IHSA Rule Book and checking the IHSA website for information.

The IHSA is divided into Zones and Regions. Each Zone consists of four or five regions based on geographical location of schools, team size, horse show hosting sites, and historical placement of teams. Once your school has been assigned a zone and region, you should contact your Regional President to be sure you are on their mailing list for information. They are also the go-to person for any question you cannot find an answer to in this guide or the IHSA Rule Book. New coaches must be approved by the Regional President before they can officially join the IHSA.

Starting the school year:

- The IHSA Web Site will go live around August 1st of each year to allow schools to begin their yearly membership paperwork.
- The team coach must go onto the IHSA Web Site and update all necessary information for their membership before they can update the school membership.
- Be prepared to pay for the coach membership with a credit card.
- **If you cannot remember, or find, your log in information, the Regional President can supply this information for you.**
- The current yearly membership dues for each school are \$300.00. This must be remitted on an official school check or a school club check. Personal checks are NOT accepted for team memberships. If your school requires an invoice, use the Official College/University Membership Invoice available on the IHSA Web Site under Resources/Coach Information.
- Print out the school membership application and have it signed by the official school representative.
- Please note the Coach Membership Requirements according to IHSA Rule 1102.
- All coaches are required to take the Coaches Test and print out the certificate to mail to their Regional President.
- All coaches are required to carry professional liability coverage for coaching activities at IHSA events, show a college/university Certificate of Insurance, or be a college or university employee.
- You may obtain professional liability insurance through Equisure. Information is available on the IHSA Web Site.

Enrolling new riders:

- **Before your NEW riders join and fill out the online Rider Placement Form, it is advised that you watch your riders in action to determine their level of skill.**

- All new riders should also fill out the Rider Placement Form Worksheet to give you an idea of their placement level. The Rider Placement Worksheet is available on the IHSA Web Site under Resources/Coach Information.
- Make sure you understand the questions being asked on the Rider Placement Form! The definition of a “recognized competition” can be found in the IHSA Rule Book.
- Go over the worksheets with each rider to determine their placement level for IHSA competition. It may be very different from where you or they think they should be placed.
- Rider membership information can be found on the IHSA Web Site under membership/individual membership.
- If the rider has competed in a “recognized competition”, you will need to print out a “rider report” from the USEF, AQHA, USEA, or USDF depending on which organization applies to them. The report(s) that apply to each rider MUST be submitted to the Regional President along with the rider’s membership form.
- Rider reports MUST be complete. Everything a rider has done in their lifetime should be accounted for.
- It is advised that riders who place into Class 2B should also do a rider search and retain the resulting “No rider record” search for their records.
- Please note: Riders who have competed over fences 3’ or higher, will be placed into Novice even if they have not competed in a recognized show.
- If you have a student who needs to have a record verified through the USEF, or needs records from prior to 2010, please contact customercare@usef.org and describe the situation. Please copy the National Steward, Sherri West, on any emails.
- When you transfer the information on the worksheet to the Rider Placement Form online, please be sure the students answer the questions accurately. If you find a mistake, contact your Regional President as soon as possible to correct the placement.
- If you are unsure about a rider’s placement, contact your Regional President. You may request a rider evaluation by the Stewards at an evaluation day or during a horse show.
- After a new rider completes the online Rider Placement Form, they will need to accept or deny the placement. If the rider doesn’t accept the placement, it will say “Rider Pending” on the team member list under the coach log in.
- If the rider accepts the placement, the coach must review the form and also accept or deny the placement. If the coach feels the rider should be reviewed, they should deny the placement. The Regional President will then review the form and discuss placement with the coach.
- Be sure each rider prints out their membership form and signs it mail to the Regional President. Please note that any rider under the age of 18 must have this form signed by a parent or legal guardian.

Enrolling returning riders:

- All returning riders must sign into their IHSA rider account and update their information for the current year. They can access this by clicking on membership/individual membership or the login button on the IHSA Web Site.

- Returning rider usernames and passwords are available to the coach under the “riders” tab on the coach’s home page.
- Once the rider’s information is updated, they must print out the membership form, sign it, and give it to their coach to mail to the Regional President.

Rider Payments:

- Riders may NOT be entered into a show until they are marked “Paid” on the IHSA Web Site.
- Rider memberships can be paid by credit card or with a school or club check. Individual checks will NOT be accepted! It is easiest for everyone to pay by credit card to be sure that the riders are enrolled properly and eligible to show.
- If riders are paying by credit card, the coach must click the “approve credit card payment” option on the coach’s page.
- If the rider memberships are being paid by a college or club check, the coach must print out the Individual Membership Invoice found on the resources/coach information page of the IHSA Web Site.
- The Individual Membership Invoice must be completely filled out with a check for the entire amount due attached, and mailed to the Regional President. Be sure the names are neatly printed or typed and agree with the name the student used when completing the membership form. Be sure the correct membership type is circled for each student as well.
- Be aware that memberships paid by check may not be processed rapidly due to the schedule of the National Treasurer.
- Memberships are NON REFUNDABLE.

What the Regional President needs from each school and coach:

- Team membership application with all signatures.
- Team membership check for \$300.00 made out to IHSA, Inc. on an official school or school club check.
- Signed coach membership application for each coach listed on the IHSA Web Site.
- Certificates of completion of the Coach Rule Test for each coach listed on the IHSA Web Site.
- Proof of insurance for each coach listed on the IHSA Web Site.
- Signed rider membership applications for each student.
- Rider Reports for any new riders who have competed in “recognized competitions”.
- Individual Membership Invoice, and check, for any rider memberships being paid by check.
- Rider Eligibility Form – this form can be accessed from the coach log in page. It will automatically populate with the riders on your team once their memberships are paid. Print out the form and submit it to the school’s registrar, bursar, or other qualified school official who can verify that each student listed is a full-time undergraduate in good academic standing. This must be done at the beginning of each semester.

- Please send all of the above to your Regional President before the deadline! It is very important to turn in all paperwork on time so that your riders are eligible to show.

General Show Protocol:

- All shows will be entered online. Please see the “How to Enter a Horse Show” guide located under the Coach tab under the coach login on the IHSA Web Site.
- Represent your school in the most professional manner possible.
- Arrive at the horse show with your team in time to learn the show grounds and observe any schooling sessions that may take place before the show begins.
- Attend the coaches meeting at the designated time and place.
- Check the official program to be sure your riders have been entered correctly.
- Fill out your team’s Point Rider Sheet, sign it, and turn it in before the first draw takes place. You will designate a point rider for each division – only one rider for class 2 or class 12, not both.
- Pay for your entries if you have not done so prior to the show date.
- If the draw is to be held during the coaches meeting, know your rider’s heights and weights in case there are horses with limits.
- Walk the course with your students at the designated time.
- Look at the horse description sheet to see what aids accompany the horse your rider has drawn. The option to use any of the suggested aids is provided by the horse provider and only as stated on the horse description sheet. The horse provider may make any changes in these options at any time during the competition. You, as the coach, may also choose not to use the suggested aids if you don’t feel they are safe for your rider.
- Be sure to check the IHSA Rule Book for legal spurs in Western classes.
- If you feel a horse’s tack needs adjusting, ask the horse provider to make the adjustments if they deem it necessary. A visiting coach or rider is NOT allowed to adjust the horse’s tack or equipment in any manner, except to adjust the stirrups.
- Remind your students to be polite to the horse handlers and refrain from any negative comments regarding the horses, tack, or facility. Many horses are loaned to these shows and may be being held by their owners.
- Be sure your riders understand the class protocol per IHSA rules and are familiar with the USEF and AQHA Tests that may be asked in their respective divisions.
- Read IHSA Rule 4601 to understand what constitutes a request for a re-ride.
- A re-ride must be requested prior to the lineup in a flat class or prior to the last horse leaving the ring in an over fences/reining class.
- Only the show stewards can grant a re-ride.
- REMEMBER – A CROP MAY NEVER BE USED OUTSIDE THE RING. This action will cause a rider to be eliminated.
- Remind your riders to walk through the in and out gates. Going through the gates at any other gait is cause for elimination.

Individual Point Keeping:

- Points are now being kept online, however, it is the coach's responsibility to be sure they are correct!
- Points are accumulated in the following manner:
 - 1st Place 7 points
 - 2nd Place 5 points
 - 3rd Place 4 points
 - 4th Place 3 points
 - 5th Place 2 points
 - 6th Place 1 point
- Individuals begin at zero when first starting IHSA competition, but carry over points each year until they qualify for the next division by earning 36 points in all divisions except Open. When they earn 36 points they qualify for Regionals.
- Riders who begin showing in a beginner section (2A or 12A) must move to the advanced section (2B or 12B) when they have accumulated 18 or more points in the beginner division. These points are carried over within the class from the beginner to the advanced section. Riders are qualified for Regionals once they have earned a total of 36 points in class 2B or 12B.
- If a rider qualifies out of their division. **DO NOT AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME THEY ARE SAFE TO COMPETE IN THE NEXT HIGHER DIVISION.** Each coach must use their judgement when moving a rider up to the next level, and safety should be the primary concern. If you have any concerns about a rider, feel free to speak with your Regional President about them.
- Open Flat/Open Fences/Open Horsemanship/Open Reining and Alumni riders start from zero each year and qualify for Regionals when they accumulate 28 points in one season.
- Aggregate point totals earned by riders in Classes 7 and 8 for Hunter Seat, and Classes 15 and 16 for Western Horsemanship shall be kept to determine the Regional High Point Rider in each discipline. In order for the Hunter Seat Regional High Point rider to advance to Zones or Nationals, they must also qualify for Regionals as an Individual in Class 8, Open Fences. The Hunter Seat Regional High Point Rider is the only rider eligible to represent their Region in the USEF/Cacchione Cup Qualifying class at their Zone Finals and no other rider shall be substituted. Points transferred from another region will not count toward Regional High Point Rider. In the event of a tie, there will be a ride-off at the Regional Horse Show to determine the High Point and Reserve High Point Rider.
- Open and Alumni riders continue to ride in their classes throughout the season, even after they are qualified for Regionals.
- All points recorded by the Region President will become final and not subject to protest at the close of each show seasons. Any adjustments or corrections must be made before the last show of the season.

Team Point Keeping:

- All teams start each new show year with zero points.

- At each show, team points are tabulated from the “Point Rider Sheets”. The coach lists one rider from each division to count as the team point rider for that division and the points earned by that rider count toward the team points for the show.
- At hunter seat shows, 7 out of the 8 scores are totaled to determine the High Point Team at the show. Schools that do not have a point rider designated in each of the 8 classes do not drop a score.
- Western shows do not drop the lowest score.
- The team with the highest number of points at the end of the day is the Champion Team.
- The team with the second highest number of points at the end of the day is the Reserve Champion Team.
- All points recorded by the Region President will become final and not subject to protest at the close of each show seasons. Any adjustments or corrections must be made before the last show of the season.

Post Season Competition:

Individual Riders:

- Individual riders who have earned 36 points in their division are eligible to compete at Regionals in their respective divisions.
- The top two placing riders in each division at Regionals will be eligible to compete at Zone finals.
- The top two placing riders in each division at Zone finals will be eligible to compete at the IHSA National Horse Show.
- In the event that an individual rider qualified for Regionals is unable to show, they will forfeit their eligibility for that competition and continue to compete at their appropriate level in the future.
- In the event that an individual rider qualified for Zone finals or the IHSA National Horse Show is unable to compete at that show, the next qualified rider, in order of placing at the Regional or Zone show will be eligible to compete in their place.
- Aggregate point totals earned by riders in Classes 7 and 8 for Hunter Seat, and Classes 15 and 16 for Western Horsemanship shall be kept to determine the Regional High Point Rider in each discipline. Points transferred from another region will not count toward Regional High Point Rider. In the event of a tie, there will be a ride-off at the Regional horse show to determine the High Point and Reserve High Point Rider. The Regional High Point Hunter Seat Rider from each Region **must** compete at their Zone Finals in a **USEF/Cacchione cup Qualifying** class.

Teams:

- Hunter Seat team points are carried forward to the end of the season where the team with the highest score throughout the entire show season is designated as the High Point Team for the region and is eligible to compete at Zone finals for the chance to earn a team spot at the National Horse Show.

- The top two Hunt Seat teams in each Zone will advance to the IHSA National Horse Show.
- Western team points are carried forward to the end of the season where the team with the highest score throughout the entire show season is designated as the High Point Team for the region/zone and is eligible to compete at Semi-Finals for the chance to earn a team spot at the National Horse Show.
- The top three Western teams in each Semi-Final will advance to the IHSA National Horse Show.