



The USEF Horse of the Year Awards

Awarded to two horses, one (1) National and one (1) International, that have excelled above all others in equestrian competition for the current year.

Criteria:

- Each USEF Recognized National or FEI Affiliate may nominate one horse or pony per their representative breed or discipline. Additionally, each USEF Breed/Discipline Committee may also nominate one horse or pony per their representative breed or discipline.
- The nominated horse or pony must be at least 3 years old.
- The nominee must have won a national championship at a Federation-licensed competition held within the U.S., an FEI-rated four-star competition or higher (or an FEI-rated three-star competition for dressage and driving), or medaled in an FEI continental, regional, or world championship in its respective discipline. (The only exceptions are Welsh Ponies, Connemara Ponies, and Hunters, for which the Affiliate will set the criteria for their nomination.)
- Must have competed in a USEF-licensed competition or FEI competition in 2026.

Selection of Winner and Timeline:

The Awards Desk will send requests to National Breed/Discipline Affiliates and USEF Breed/Discipline Committees requesting nominations.

**** In the event insufficient nominations are received by the Breed/Discipline Affiliates and Committees, USEF Marketing and Sport staff may put nominations forward. ****

Nominations will include the following:

- Owner's Name and Contact Information
- Age, Breed, Sire, Dam, Trainer
- Short biography
- Highlights of past accomplishments
- Current year's competition accomplishments
- Three (3) high-resolution pictures that could be used in promotion of the award

Nominations will be accepted starting in September and will close on October 30, 2026.

(Nominations may be accepted past the published deadline in special circumstances if the Awards Desk is notified in advance. Please Contact Jera Jordan, jjordan@usef.org with any questions regarding late nominations.)

All nominations must include biographical accomplishments. USEF staff will verify eligibility and that nominees meet the criteria on the nomination form. After each Affiliate/Committee submits its nominee, the USEF Awards Committee, comprised of individuals representing virtually every recognized Affiliate, will analyze each nominee's 2026 accomplishments and overall career credentials and vote for up to 6 (at least 3 National and 3 International) horses or ponies. These selections are subject to approval by the CEO, President, and General Counsel at US Equestrian. These horses will then be presented to the public and submitted for popular vote via the Federation website and email promotions.

The semi-finalists will be voted on in a secret ballot by the public.

Voters will rank the National and International semi-finalists in order of preference. Duplicate or incorrect ballots are void. Voting closes December 31, 2026.

Votes tabulate as follows:

1st: 5 points

2nd: 3 points

3rd: 1 point

The National candidate with the most points will be the National Horse of the Year and the International candidate with the most points will be the International Horse of the Year. *In case of a tie, the candidate with the most 1st places in the block ranking wins, then the most 2nd places, then the most 3rd places until the winner is determined.*

The Horses of the Year will be announced during the Horse of the Year Awards Dinner.

Perpetual Trophy: Alexa King Bronze

Horses of the Year

Past Winners & Finalists

2020

Gazelle

Dolton

Pritchard Hill

Vivaldi de Besilu

2021

Balou du Reventon

Dolton

Suppenkasper

Big Shot

HS Daydream's Heads Up

Sjaan

2022

Salvino

Off the Record

Orafina

Cannon Creek

Shezaffirecracker

Quiana

2023

HH Azur

Albrecht's Hoeve's Lars

Mai Baum

Paradigm

VL Todd Michael

Heirs Noble Love

2024

Caracole de la Roque

Diabolo

Diamond Dunes

Floratina

McQueen

CH The Crowd Went Nuts!

2025

Greya

Larcot Z

Bisquetta

Athenian Lady

Dicoblue PS

Graycliff Tony Hawk



2026 Horse of the Year Nomination

Please submit this form by the deadline, October 30, 2026, to:

Jera Jordan, Marketing Department

USEF, 4001 Wing Commander Way, Lexington, KY 40511. jjordan@usef.org,

Tel: (859) 225-6939

Criteria for nomination:

Each USEF Recognized National or FEI Affiliate may nominate one horse or pony per their representative breeds or disciplines. Each USEF Breed/Discipline Committee may also nominate one horse or pony per their representative breed or discipline.

- The nominated horse or pony must be at least 3 years old.
- The nominee must have won a national championship at a Federation-licensed competition held within the US, an FEI-rated four-star competition or higher (or an FEI-rated three-star competition for dressage), or medaled in an FEI continental, regional, or world championship in its respective discipline. (The only exceptions are Welsh Ponies, Connemara Ponies, and hunters for which the Affiliate will set forth the criteria for their nomination.)
- Must have competed in a USEF-licensed or FEI competition in 2026.

Name of Breed/Discipline Affiliate or Committee: _____

Name of Nominated Horse: _____

USEF Horse ID Number: _____

Affiliate Horse ID Number: _____

Owner(s): *(If more than one, please attach all names and addresses)*

Name: _____

Street Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Nominee's Notable Accomplishments in 2026:

Nominee's Notable Career Accomplishments Prior to 2026:

Horse's Age _____ Breed _____

Sire _____ Dam _____

Trainer: _____

****Three (3) high-resolution photos of the nominated horse MUST be included with the submission**

Executive Director/President of Affiliate or Chair of USEF Committee submitting the nomination:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Daytime Phone Number: (_____) _____

Email: _____

** Also please include any additional criteria used to determine your Affiliate's nominee.*