



2026 National Finals Qualifying Criteria.

FUTURITY: The Futurity horse must be 4, 5 or 6 years old. The HORSE is the qualifier and must compete in 1 (one) ABHA Affiliated Futurity Event at a ABHA Affiliated day. Must be within the Qualifying period of 1st August 2025 – 31st July 2026. Horse is permitted to turn 7 on 1st August 2026 and compete in the Futurity event at the National Finals if the horse qualified during the said qualifying period. The Futurity horse may be ridden by any rider. Said rider must be a current financial member of the ABHA.

2019 Foaled Horse (Born in-between the 1st August 2019 and 31st July 2020) = 7 Year old on the 1st of August 2026 – Competes as a 6 year old at the 2026 National Finals.

2020 Foaled Horse (Born in-between the 1st August 2020 and 31st July 2021) = 6 Year old on the 1st of August 2026 – Competes as a 5 year old at the 2026 National Finals.

2021 Foaled Horse (Born in-between the 1st August 2021 and 31st July 2022) = 5 Year old on the 1st of August 2026 – Competes as a 4 year old at the 2026 National Finals.

MATURITY: The Maturity horse must be 7, 8 or 9 years old. The HORSE is the qualifier and must compete in 1 (one) ABHA Affiliated Maturity Event at a ABHA Affiliated day. Must be within the Qualifying period of 1st August 2025 – 31st July 2026. Horse is permitted to turn 10 on 1st August 2026 and compete in the Maturity event at the National Finals if the horse qualified during the said qualifying period. The Maturity horse may be ridden by any rider. Said rider must be a current financial member of the ABHA.

2016 Foaled Horse (Born in-between the 1st August 2016 and 31st July 2017) = 10 Year old on the 1st of August 2026 – Competes as a 9 year old at the 2026 National Finals

2017 Foaled Horse (Born in-between the 1st August 2017 and 31st July 2018) = 9 Year old on the 1st of August 2026 – Competes as a 8 year old at the 2026 National Finals

2018 Foaled Horse (Born in-between the 1st August 2018 and 31st July 2019) = 8 Year old on the 1st of August 2026 – Competes as a 7 year old at the 2026 National Finals

OPEN DIVISIONAL: To qualify for the Open Divisional event at the National Finals, it is the RIDER who qualifies, the rider must have ridden in 4 (four) ABHA Open Divisional event at 4 (four) separate ABHA affiliated days. Juniors may compete the in Open Divisional provided they have ridden in 4 (four) Open Divisional events at 4 (four) separate ABHA affiliated days during the qualifying period of 1st August 2025 – 31st July 2026. Once rider is qualified, they may enter any number of horses in the Open Divisional.

JUNIOR DIVISIONAL: To qualify for the Junior Divisional event at the National Finals, it is the RIDER who qualifies, the rider must have ridden in 4(four) Junior events at 4(four) separate ABHA affiliated days during the qualifying period of 1st August 2025 – 31st July 2026. Once qualified, Juniors may enter any number of horses in the Junior Divisional. For a competitor to compete in the Junior Divisional at the National Finals they must be under 18 years at the commencement of the event. If the competitor is 17 years for round 1 and turns 18 years prior to round two, the competitor shall remain in the Junior Divisional until the completion of the 2026 National Finals. If a Junior competitor meets the National Finals qualifying criteria in Junior Divisional but turns 18 years prior to the National Finals, the competitor is deemed to have qualified to compete in the Open Divisional.

OPEN POLE BENDING: To qualify for the Open Pole Bending event at the National Finals, it is the RIDER who qualifies, the rider must have ridden in 1 (one) ABHA Open Pole Bending event at 1 (one) ABHA affiliated day. Junior Pole Benders may compete the in Open Pole Bending provided they have ridden in 1 (one) Open Pole Bending event at 1 (one) ABHA affiliated day during the qualifying period of 1st August 2025 – 31st July 2026. Once rider is qualified, they may enter any number of horses in the Open Pole Bending.

JUNIOR POLE BENDING: To qualify for the Junior Pole Bending event at the National Finals, it is the RIDER who qualifies, the rider must have ridden in 1(one) Junior Pole Bending event at 1(one) ABHA affiliated day during the qualifying period of 1st August 2025 – 31st July 2026. Once qualified, Juniors may enter any number of horses in the Junior Pole Bending. For a competitor to compete in the Junior Pole Bending at the National Finals they must be under 18 years at the commencement of the event. If a Junior competitor meets the National Finals qualifying criteria in Junior Pole Bending but turns 18 years prior to the National Finals, the competitor is deemed to have qualified to compete in the Open Pole Bending.

LITTLE DRUM RUNNERS: Little Drum Runners must ride unassisted and be under 8 years old at the commencement of the 2026 National Finals. Little Drum Runners do not need to attend any events to compete at the 2026 National Finals. All Little Drum Runners must be current financial members of the ABHA. Little Drum Runners are not permitted to compete in any other event at the 2026 National Finals.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.

If I compete in 4 (four) Golden Oldies, Novice or Up And Coming events at an ABHA affiliated day do I qualify for the Open Divisional at the 2024 National Finals? No, you must compete in 4 (four) separate ABHA affiliated days in the Open Divisional event to qualify for the 2024 National Finals.

If I qualify my horse for the Futurity or Maturity, can I have someone else ride my horse at the 2024 National Finals? Yes, it is the horse that qualifies for Futurity and Maturity. The rider competing on the Futurity or Maturity horse must be a current ABHA financial member.

I am currently a Junior competitor. If I complete all the Junior qualifiers prior to turning 18, can I compete in the Junior Divisional at the 2024 National Finals? No. However, if you are 17 at the start of the 2024 National Finals and turn 18 prior to round 2, you can finish the National Finals as a Junior.

If I only compete in the Junior Divisional but I turn 18 after the qualifying period, do my Junior Divisional qualifiers roll over to the Open Divisional? Yes, but this is the only case this type of roll over will be approved.

Are medical exemptions being accepted this year? This hasn't been decided yet.

Does my Futurity or Maturity horse have to be registered to qualify and compete at the 2024 Nationals Finals? No. Unregistered horses will be eligible to compete at the 2024 National Finals with a ABHA proof of age form signed by a registered veterinarian as per the ABHA rule book.

If I compete as a Day Member, will my event count as a qualifier? No, only Full Members qualify for the 2024 National Finals.

If I become a Full Member, will my previous events count as qualifying events? No, you must be a Full Member for any events to count as qualifiers for the 2024 National Finals.