



Taking the Shine Off

Following Armand Leone's article on the proliferation of CSI4* and CSI5* shows in the United States — [which you can read here](#) — he was invited to participate in "The Horse Show," ClipMyHorse.TV's new magazine show.



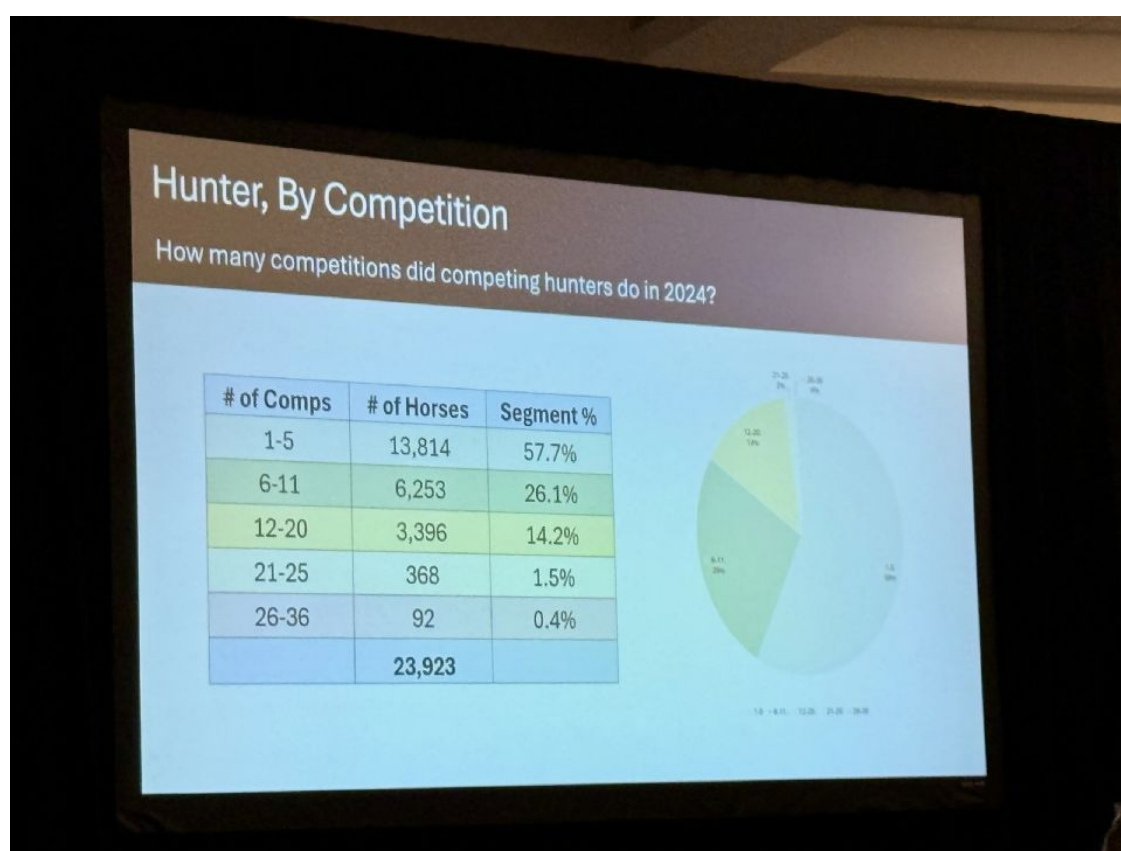
[Click to watch the episode.](#)

Alongside the host, Frederik De Backer, Armand and the panel guests — Belgian Olympic jumper Niels Bruynseels and British jumping athlete Joe Clee — discussed the impact of having so many highly ranked jumping shows on the U.S. show calendar, how that hurts national shows, and what steps might be taken to mitigate the situation.

[Watch The Horse Show](#)

[Read All of Armand's Opinion Pieces on the Chronicle of The Horse](#)

Horse Overuse Data Presented



A slide from USEF's data presentation

In the summer of 2025, Armand wrote a piece about capping the number of jumping classes a horse may participate in during a single day/show/month — [which you can read here](#).

Now, US Equestrian (USEF) has presented preliminary data on horse show overuse at the United States Hunter Jumper Association (USHJA) Annual Meeting, analyzing 2024 results to understand how many classes horses actually compete in.

The data shows that hunters typically average more classes per year than jumpers, and only a small percentage of horses compete excessively. USEF isn't yet proposing limits on classes or shows because the data is still being evaluated.

Officials emphasized the need for deeper analysis and education rather than setting fixed rules prematurely, noting that preparation and context matter as much as the number of classes entered.

[Read About USEF's Presentation on Overuse Data](#)

[Read Armand's Original Article on the Chronicle of the Horse](#)

In Praise of the Difficult Ones

By Armand Leone

In this article Armand reflects on how American show jumping has changed and argues that the sport once built greater resilience and skill by exposing riders to genuinely challenging horses and courses.

Recently, several prominent trainers and riders have discussed how the discipline of show jumping has changed, and it has.

Prior to 1950, American show jumping, with its standing martingales and rub classes without time allowed, was a vastly different sport than the one practiced in Europe. Then in the 1970s, Jerry Baker and Gene Mische, along with the renowned course designer Pamela Carruthers, brought European-style grand prix jumping to the United States, and U.S. show jumping embarked on a meteoric rise.



Armand (pictured) laments the loss of some of the formidable jumping challenges of yesteryear.

The Cleveland Grand Prix and the Tampa Invitational introduced width, water, walls, combinations, and banks to our grand prix riders. Many barns built simulated natural obstacles at home, and the professionals at that time had to learn how to ride, train, and jump them. Double ditches, slides, tables, devil's dykes, and open waters were all routine jumps in our day.

Starting in the 1970s, the American Grand Prix Association developed a year-long series of events across the country. The fences were big, the water wide, and the riding was physical. The American Invitational and the International Jumping Derby in Rhode Island, modeled after the Hickstead and Hamburg Derbies in Europe, tested the scope and courage of riders and horses. Today, I doubt any one of our U.S. grand prix riders could jump a clear round over that course.

Our younger riders today don't have the necessary experience, toughness, and knowledge to jump those courses. They may tell you that their horses are too valuable or too good to risk injury in such an event. That is not true. The horses today are no more valuable in relative terms than ours were then, and their legs were no less susceptible to injury back then.

[Read the Full Article](#)

[Read All of Armand's Opinion Pieces on the Chronicle of The Horse](#)

For advice and counsel related to the equestrian industry, contact Leone Equestrian Law at info@equestriancounsel.com.

Led by Armand Leone, Jr., MD, JD, MBA, Leone Equestrian Law LLC provides legal services and consultation for equestrian professionals ranging from riders and trainers to owners and show managers in the FEI disciplines on a wide variety of issues.

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