

A riders First Lesson for Jumping.

The Lesson Topic:

Teach a group of riders that have never jumped before, the Forward Seat and 2 point seat.

It is of utmost importance to teach riders the Forward Seat/Two Point seat to any riders if they wish to jump. Riders and horses cannot jump safely and harmoniously together if the rider doesn't have a good secure 2 point seat. As with all lessons there should be progression. Firstly teach and establish the rider in the Forward Seat then move onto the 2 Point Seat.

The Structure of the lesson.

Set Up: Your set up can be as simple as using witches hats to define an area. A circle or a rectangular area is suitable. Have this set up beforehand so it doesn't take time from your lesson.

Time: This lesson could be from 20mins to 30mins in duration.

Introduction: Introduce yourself and find out the names of the riders.

Horse & Rider information: Find out information that will be helpful for you as the instructor for this lesson. Here are some relevant questions you can ask.

- Have the riders ever ridden in the 2pt seat.
- How old are the horses
- How old are the riders
- How much work have the horses had in the last week leading up to the rally day
- Is your horse used to being ridden with other horses in a group situation
- Does the horse have any vices you should be aware

Gear Check: The gear check can be done while asking the rider about their horse and themselves. Also this might be a good time to shorten the rider's stirrups (particularly the younger riders who may need help)

Explanation of the Lesson: Explain what the Forward Seat and 2 point seats are, why we use them and when they are appropriate to use.

Initially you can teach the Forward Seat. The stirrups should be shortened around 2 holes from their flat riding length.

- The Forward Seat the rider leans forward with the upper body from the hip creating an angle that increases or decreases depending on what the situation requires.
- The reins are shortened as the riders hands move forward up the horses crest.
- The eyes are up looking to where they are going.
- The heel is deep and there is a closing of the angle of the knee.
- The knee is soft and the lower leg and heel take more of the riders weight (no gripping with the leg)
- There should be a light contact with the rider's seat.

The forward seat is the first stage of learning how to ride in a 2 point seat. The riders should be secure and in control in the Forward Seat before using the 2 point seat.

Forward seat can be used for pole work.

Two Point Seat.

Once the riders are secure and comfortable and in control in the Forward seat you can progress onto teaching the 2 Point Seat.

The Two Point Seat is used when we are jumping, travelling faster eg. Riding Cross Country. It is a very useful position and even if riders are not going to jump there are times they may be required to use this position. It makes riders more versatile, helps to strengthen their position and improve their balance.

The Two Point Seat is basically the same as the Forward seat but in the 2 Point Seat the rider's seat now comes off the saddle and above the movement of the horse. Also the upper body may tend to be more inclined forward. The reason it is called the Two Point Seat is that there are only two points of contact with the rider to the horse, those being the rider's two legs.

In Showjumping the Two Point Seat is mainly used when Jumping over the jump and if travelling a bit faster between fences.

In Cross Country the Two Point Seat is used when galloping between jumps and over the jumps.

Demonstration: One of the most effective demonstrations for this lesson is to bring a rider from the troop line out in front of the group. Stand them side on to the group and have the rider go into the position of the Forward Seat and then the 2 Point seat. Point out to the riders each part of the demonstration riders position and explain why we ride in this position.

Teach the Lesson

Make sure all the riders know about the emergency stop.

10 minute **warm up** in walk and trot. (Circles, bending, transitions etc.)

The lesson can be taught on a circle or rectangle, firstly in walk in forward seat then walk in 2 Point seat.

Then progress to trot in forward seat rising, and then 2 point seat.

If you feel the riders and horses are at the appropriate level to be able to do this exercise in good control and the horses are working well you can then proceed in canter. You may wish to do one horse and rider at a time at first to see how they cope.

Cool down: Allow the horses to walk on a loose rein before bringing them into the line up.

Summary

At the end of the lesson you need to go over the definitions of the forward and 2 point seat. Ask the group a few questions about the positions.

Also give each rider some helpful information as to how they can work on their positions and also a positive aspect of their lesson.

Aim: To improve the security of the rider's position. Introduce them to the forward seat so they are then able to use this position to improve their general riding and versatility. Then to move on to being secure enough to do poles and then to be able to jump a small jump. This may happen over a period of time, probably not all in the first lesson.

COACHES CORNER

Sample Lesson Plan 3:

10 Metre Circles

This lesson plan has been written by Sarah Venamore, one of the Associations State Coaches, as a guide to Pony Club Instructors. Sarah Venamore has also published a couple of resource books featuring additional lesson plans which can be purchased through the State Office for \$40; 'The Right Track' and 'The Right Track II'. Simply download a copy of the Merchandise Order Form from the website under the Club & Zone Management tab.

This lesson plan is for 6 students.

10 metre circles

Set up: In a 60 x 20 metre dressage arena set up witches' hats either side of X to allow riders to ride straight down the centreline.

Introduction: Introduce yourself to the ride and commence the gear check of each rider whilst asking their names and the history of the horse/rider partnership.

Explanation: Explain to the ride the exercise. The ride will commence on the large arena track on the left rein in walk and upon reaching A turn left and ride straight down the centreline.

Before X trot and pick up the desired canter lead after X.

At C track left or right and ride a 10 metre circle at H and M, then go large

At B or E ride a 10 metre circle then go large.

At the K and F markers ride a 10 metre circle then go large and down the centreline at A and begin the exercise again.

If riders need more space they can ride extra 10 metre circles at any of the circles. The exercise will be then set up at walk, trot and when safe, in canter.

Demonstration: Whilst explaining the exercise, draw the diagram on the ground so the riders understand the direction and the exercise plan. Explain the necessity of one horse's distance between each rider for safety.

Execution: Nominate a leader (who responds by saying 'I am leading' so that the ride knows who will lead the group to the track).

The instructor commands the ride to 'ride straight to the large arena track and track left in walk, and go large, upon reaching A turn left and ride straight down the centreline.'

Before X trot and pick up the desired canter lead after X.

At C track left or right and ride a 10 metre circle at H and M, then go large.

At B or E ride a 10 metre circle then go large again.

At the K and F markers ride a 10 metre circle then go large and down the centreline at A and begin the exercise again.

If riders need more space they can ride extra 10 metre circles at any of the circles. The exercise will be then set up at walk then trot and when safe, in canter.

Once the dimensions of the circles are correct, ride in canter.

Riders need to be aware of others, and maybe change the rein or ride extra circles so it is safer for all riders to move in and out of the circles.

What to look for: Once all the riders are walking, the instructor begins to watch each rider's position and individually corrects them. The priority here is the rider's centre of gravity (keeping the ear, shoulder, hip and heel line). The riders' should sit evenly on both seat bones and not lean around the around the circles especially when changing from one circle to another. The riders should be checking for flexion and bend, so ask them to see their horses' inside eyelash to create some flexion around the circles, so the horse knows which direction he is turning.

The horse must be balanced in 10 metre circles at trot, before asking for canter. As the rider approaches the circle, they should sit straight and collect the canter, so the horse can 'sit' a little around the circle

COACHES CORNER

without tipping in. Their inside leg is on the girth supporting the horse, the outside leg asks the horse to move around the circle, the inside rein flexes the horse to the inside, and the outside rein supports the outside shoulder.

Once riders are confident in trot, they can ride the exercise in canter. The instructor should be checking there is at least one horse's length between each horse/rider.

Aim: Look for consistent rhythm,

without any abrupt stopping or running. The horse is flexed in the direction of travel. Ask for awareness of the rhythm, flexion and bend, thus working on awareness of the horses' movement for the riders.

Time: Keep the exercise in walk and trot for 10 - 20 minutes.

Confirmation: On completion of the exercise, give the riders and horses' a rest for a few minutes (walk on a

long rein). Then ask the ride to form a line across the centre line and ask them what they should be looking for when they ride canter 10 metre circles e.g. how the horse should move into and out of the circles, how the rider should sit in a canter 10 metre circle.

Stay tuned for the next Coaches Corner feature in the March Newsletter.



Quality Health Solutions & Horse Products



Ph. 1300 886 968

www.equineperformance.com.au

Horse and Pony

Sales.com.au



Providing free and paid advertising for everything horse and pony related

Coaches Corner

This lesson plan has been written by Jane Frankum, State Coach and Coaching Director, as a guide to Pony Club Instructors. If you are interested in obtaining more resources, one of the Associations State Coaches Sarah Venamore has published some resource books featuring additional lesson plans which can be purchased through the State Office for \$40; 'The Right Track' and 'The Right Track II'. Simply download a copy of the Merchandise Order Form from the website under the Club & Zone Management tab.

Sample Lesson Plan 4: THE BARREL RACE

This lesson plan can give you ideas and progression for a proportion of a rally days instruction.

Aim: To teach and improve the riders control skills so they can participate safely in a faster pace sporting event.

Outcome: To help make the rider more competent at controlling their horse at faster paces and get enjoyment riding their horse participating in some fun games.

Pre-Requisite Exercises: Preferably the riders would have done a flat work session before they would do any sporting events to help eliminate the risk of horses being too fresh and/or to loosen up stiffer older horses and avoid any injuries of horses or riders.

Try the following Exercises in your preceding flat work lesson.

Skills required & appropriate exercises:

Skill: riding small circles in trot and canter.

Exercise: Set up a rectangle shape with witches hats minimum size 20m x 60m and halfway down the long side setup a 10m circle using witches hats. While the group is trotting around this arena on the outside of the witches hats one at a time get each rider to slow down at the 10m circle and ride a circle close to the witches hats. After each rider has done it get the group to change direction and repeat the exercise on the other rein. You can then make the circle smaller and repeat no more than three times on each rein.

When the riders are handling this exercise successfully then you can try the same exercise in canter. Stress the importance of preparing themselves and their horse before they reach the small circle markers.

Skill: Riding at a faster pace and slowing the horse back from a faster pace.

Exercise: With the group on a large circle (30m or more) get the riders to count their strides and ask them to be able to firstly in trot do 8 trotting strides in working trot, 8 trotting strides in medium (lengthening) trot then back to working for 8 strides and then shortening and slowing for 8 strides and repeat the exercise three times then change direction. This can be done as

The important thing is to teach the riders to use their weight aid to help slow instead of just their hands and their seat and leg to increase the pace. Encourage them to bring their shoulders back and stretch deeper into their heels to be able to slow the horse. Then explain how to use their lower leg and seat to be able to ask the horse to go forward in a stronger pace.

Equipment required & Setup:

5 Barrels (44gal drums) a stopwatch. It is in a clover leaf shape and the measurement from the start and finish pegs is 41.13m, the distance from the first to the second barrel is 27.42m.

Surface and Area: The surface should not be hard or slippery. It should have a good covering of grass or maybe a sand surface. Be careful about grasses like Rye grass or clover as they can be a slippery surface. From a safety point of view when finishing there must plenty of room after the finish for the rider to be able to pull up slowly and not have to turn too quickly or stop suddenly.

Safety considerations:

To make sure you position the group to the side and away from the Barrel Race track. Not in the line of the finish. Always get the riders to ride away from the group and return to the walk before rejoining the end of the lineup or circle.

Stress the importance of not pulling their horses up too quickly or turning them too quickly.

Introduction of Instructor and Riders: Before you begin the lesson introduce **yourself**, find out the riders names and some information about their horses eg. How many times they have ridden their horse in the last week or when was the last time they rode their horse? Does it have any vices?

Gear Check: Make sure a gear check for safety and correct fit has been done before the lesson begins.

Explanation of lesson:

Describe to the group that the Barrel Race is an individually run event and time is taken to determine the winner. You pass through the start pegs and you can either take the first barrel on the left hand side by going around it to the left or go to the right hand side barrel and take it on your right-hand side. You must then take the third barrel going the same direction that you took the second barrel. So either one left turn and two right turns or one right turn then two left turns.

See diagram. PCANSW Handbook pg. 11-22 & 23.

The riders are allowed a flying start and time is taken when the horse's nose passes through the start and again at the finish.

The riders need to be able to have **good control** of their horses and the horse needs to be obedient with turning, slowing and going forward. From a safety point of view when finishing the rider must ease their horse back gently, and not turn too quickly as horses can slip and fall if turned quickly when traveling fast.

Coaches Corner

Also to prevent injury of the horse do not stop them to quickly preferably come back to a steady canter, then trot and walk then they can return to the group. "We will each have a turn individually, firstly at trot and if you feel that your horse is obedient and under control then in canter."

Demonstration:

Two ways of demonstrating the Barrel Race is to draw the diagram of the barrel setup and the track the riders will take or to have a rider firstly trot the course so all the riders can observe the direction in which they need to approach and turn around the barrels. The instructor needs to talk them through as the demonstration rider rides the course.

Positioning the group:



The Teaching Lesson:

Take one rider at a time and trot them through the course of barrels. Reminding them of the way they rode in their previous sessions using their weight aids for slowing and preparation for approaching the barrel, their turning skills for going around the barrel and their control and slowing for after the finish.

You could either have the rest of the riders watching in a line up or walking on a circle to keep their horses warmed up. Always have the next rider warming up while the previous rider is riding.

If you are happy with the control and skills these riders have they can then do it in canter. Again if you are confident in the riders control they could then do it as a race and be timed.

It is important not to do it too many times.

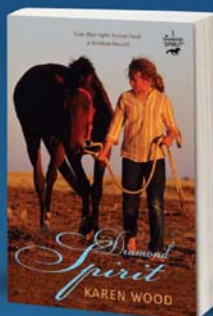
Summary:

- Ask the riders how they felt they went and how they may be able to improve their times.
- You can offer any advice you feel they need to improve on the Barrel Race.
- Remind them of the skills they need to work on and the importance of working on these.

Also explain how the first sessions on the flat prepared them for the actual Barrel Race and the importance of teaching their horse to do all the movements they would then be required to do.

Stay tuned for the next Coaches Corner feature in the September Newsletter.

★
**DIAMOND
SPIRIT**
KAREN WOOD



Adventure, friendship and a dash of romance...

ALLEN&UNWIN
www.allenandunwin.com

Exercise: Teaching a group of riders to jump up a small bank

No. of riders: up to 6

Pre-requisite: Before attempting this exercise riders should be confidently negotiating showjumps up to 60cm from trot and canter.

Set up:

A small bank 40-60cm. The face of the bank must be properly reinforced and the surface on top of the bank firm and free of subsidence.

11 witches hats to define the circle, line of approach and departure and transition points.

Introduction:

Introduce yourself to the ride and undertake a thorough gear check of each rider. At this time, also familiarise yourself with their names and a brief history of each horse/ rider combination and any medical problems or learning difficulties that may impact the lesson.

Explanation:

For the explanation the ride should be lined up facing the instructor with a safe distance between horses.

Definition: The bank is a cross country obstacle with a vertical face where the horse completes only the upward half of the jumping arc and lands on top of the horizontal surface of the bank.

Approach: In competition, the approach used for the bank is similar to that for a tall vertical in the showjumping. It needs to be approached in a balanced, controlled, active, uphill canter. In training, however, the bank is initially introduced at the trot, progressing to a canter departure and when appropriate, a canter approach.

Aids: Riders will approach in rising trot with emphasis on using their legs to keep the horse forward and straight. Riders need to be looking up and ahead, focusing on the top edge of the bank. At take-off the rider folds forward from the hip, closing the upper body angle and the hands move up the horse's neck into a crest release. As the horse lands on the bank the rider returns softly to a light 3point seat and rides forward through the departure

Demonstration:

Instructor can walk the line of approach to and departure from the bank explaining where the ride will remain on the circle and what transitions are required at each set of witches hats.

Warm-up:

The warm-up will be dictated to some degree by the terrain and area available near the bank. Ideally the ride should warm up in an area no less than 50m x 40m. Begin with the ride going large with at least two horse lengths between them at walk. When all of the horse are relaxed and forward in the walk progress to rising trot. Use this time to assess

Begin with the ride on a 20m circle on the right rein at walk. When the ride is established on the circle with at least one horse length distance between horses the instructor will command the rider who is approaching the top of the circle (#) to go forward into rising trot, depart the circle and approach the bank, travelling through the witches hats to maintain a straight approach. At the point of take-off the rider slowly folds forward from the hips and pushes the hands up the horses neck into a crest release. As the horse lands the rider returns softly to a light three point seat and rides forward and straight through the departure in rising trot, turns right after the second set of witches hats and walks at the third set of witches hats before returning safely to the ride on the 20m circle at walk. The instructor should provide feedback on the riders performance while they are walking back to the ride.

The instructor then calls the next rider from the top of the circle, ie. " John, prepare to trotand.... go forward to rising trot now" and the sequence is repeated until each rider has had a turn. The exercise should be repeated on the other rein to approach the bank, . ie. With the ride on a 20m circle on the left rein, however the instructor must reposition themselves appropriately.

If the group has successfully negotiated the bank from the trot on both reins with the horses remaining calm and confident and the riders maintaining a balanced position then you can progress to departing in canter, still trotting at the second set of witches hats (BE SURE NOT TO ALLOW THE RIDERS TO CANTER BACK TOWARDS THE REST OF THE RIDE) and returning to the ride at walk. The final progression would be to have the riders trotting on the 20m circle and approaching the bank individually at canter, landing in canter and trotting at the second set of witches hats then rejoining the circle. The group should cool down in walk on a long rein for several minutes before forming a line-up for the summary.

What to look for:

The horse should be approaching the bank in an active, forward trot, (and later canter) maintaining the rhythm, not rushing or slowing down. Straightness must be maintained on the approach and the departure.

The rider should go with the movement of the horse as it jumps up the bank, if the rider is getting left behind and catching the horse in the mouth have the rider use a mane release . Make sure the the riders lower leg is not swinging back as they jump up the bank, it should remain secure, with the heel directly underneath the hip and the weight down through the heel.

Feedback/Summary:

The instructor should provide positive and constructive feedback to the riders in relation to the way in which their horse was travelling on the approach to the bank. ie. quality of the pace and the line, the control both before and after the fence and the security and effectiveness of the riders position, identifying any position weaknesses and providing bthe information to help remedy these.

Sample Lesson Plan: Dressage

This lesson plan has been written by Sarah Venamore, one of the Associations State Coaches, as a guide to Pony Club Instructors. Sarah Venamore has also published a couple of resource books featuring additional lesson plans which can be purchased through the State Office for \$40; 'The Right Track' and 'The Right Track II'. Simply download a copy of the Merchandise Order Form from the website under the Club & Zone Management tab.

Lesson Group: Up to 6 students

Exercise: Long and Low

Set Up & Equipment: A 60 x 20 metre dressage arena or a large circle in the open. Mark out the area with witches hats or jumping poles if an arena is not available.

Introduction:

- Introduce yourself to the ride.
- Gear check of each rider for safety of the gear and correct fit.
- Ask their names and the history of the horse/rider partnership. Also questions relevant to what you might be about to teach them. I.e. Has your horse any vices? How much work has your horse had since last rally day? How old is this horse? How old is the rider?
- Making sure you familiarise yourself with their names as this is very important for your communication and safety within the lesson.

Explanation: "Long and low" or

"deep and round" is an exercise to warm up your horse's muscles and mentally relax your horse on the flat before asking it to do anything more difficult.

The rider will ask the horse to stretch his head and neck down as low as his nose to his knee level to help warm up his muscles along his top line. It also encourages the horse to use his back and hind quarters.

Aids: The rider needs to ride the horse forward into the bit with both legs evenly then slow the horse with his hands and stretch deep with his heels as he feels the horse start to respond to then allow the horse to stretch down by giving with their arms and following the horse's mouth while maintaining a long contact. This exercise is not to be done on a loose rein but a long contact.

The ride will commence on the large arena track on the left rein in walk, and upon reaching A ride a 20 metre circle and go large. Upon reaching C, ride a 20 metre circle and go large.

Repeat the exercise several times, then change the rein and ride the exercise on the right rein. The instructor should keep the exercise going until the horses and riders have become more supple. Horses that rush or not responding to the exercise should remain on the circle for longer until the rider achieves the exercise.

Demonstration: Whilst explaining the exercise, draw the diagram on paper, a white board or on the ground so the riders understand

the direction and the exercise plan. Explain the necessity of one horse's distance between each rider for safety.

Execution: Nominate a leader (who responds by saying 'I am leading' so that the ride knows who will lead the group to the track).

The instructor commands the ride to 'ride straight to the large arena track and track left in walk, and upon reaching A ride a 20 metre circle'.

At A the riders can choose whether to ride the circle or not, so as to give each other space. (Riders can miss some circles out to give each other space between riders.)

Upon reaching C, riders should ride onto the 20 metre circle and then go large to commence the exercise again.

Once the horses are supple on the left rein, then the instructor can command the ride to 'with Susan leading', change the rein across the next diagonal and continue the exercise on the right rein.'

Once the horses are supple on the right rein, then the instructor can command the ride to 'ride prepare to trot, and ride trot now. With Susan leading, change the rein across the next diagonal and continue the exercise on the left rein.'

Complete the exercise in trot on the left and then the right rein.

What to Look For: Once all the

riders are walking, the instructor begins to watch each rider's position and individually corrects them. The priority here is the rider's centre of gravity (keeping the ear, shoulder, hip and heel line). The riders' should also sit evenly on both seat bones (not lean around the circle), even though they need to be looking around the circles and corners. When the rider is straight, check the horse's straightness (spine alignment with the track the rider is travelling). The riders should be checking for the beginnings of flexion and bend, so ask them to see their horses' inside eyelash to create some flexion around the circles.

When riding 'Long and Low', the horse is allowed to stretch down in a relaxed frame with a straight long neck, with the poll below the withers.

Riders should ask for the horse to stretch 'long and low' so as to stretch the horses' muscles along the neck, back and hindquarters, prior to asking 'deep and round'. (Deep and round is ridden in the same rhythm, with the horses' poll lower than the withers and in a rounded frame.) This will give the horse the best chance of working correctly when up and 'on the bit'

The instructor should be checking there is at least one horse's length between each horse/rider.

Aim: Look for consistent rhythm into and out of the circles. If the riders are not yet riding their horses on the bit, make sure they ride the horses straight down the

long sides and aiming for flexion around the circles. As the ride warms up, rhythm is most important in 'long and low', thus working on awareness of the horses' movement. It is important that the horses are working correctly from behind and that the rider is in balance with the horse, so the horse does not fall onto the forehand. It is important that the instructor can see the horse is not running onto the forehand and can tell the rider when and how to correct this. When long and low is performed correctly you will see the horse slow and elevate his stride as he takes his weight onto his hindquarters.

Time: Keep the exercise in walk for 5 - 10 minutes depending on how long the riders have been warming up themselves. The exercise will then be completed in trot for another 5-10 minutes or until improvement is seen.

Confirmation: On completion of the exercise, give the riders a rest for a few minutes (walk on a long rein). Then ask the ride to form a line across the centre line and ask them what they should be looking for when they warm up. e.g. how the horse should move around the arena, what to be feeling for in a 'long and low' horse.

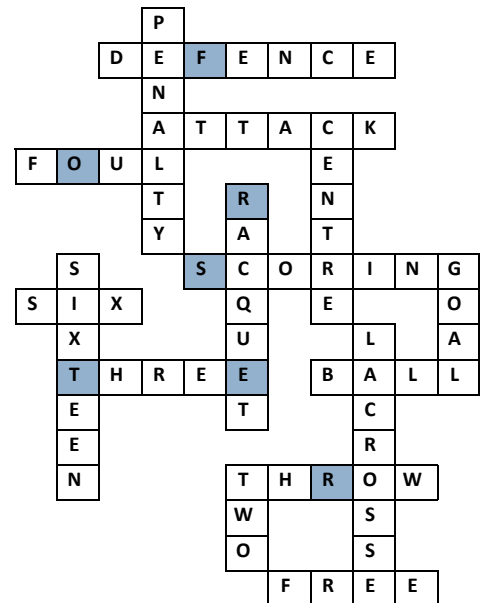
In the next State Newsletter we will feature a sample lesson plan for the exercise '10 Metre Circles'.

competition winners & solutions ISSUE 17 (JUNE 2011)

CROSSWORD

Answer: Forster

Winner: Emma Warn



FIND-A-WORD

Answer: Always wear a helmet when riding

Winners: Alan Scrivener, Sarah Goshi, Melissa Stewart

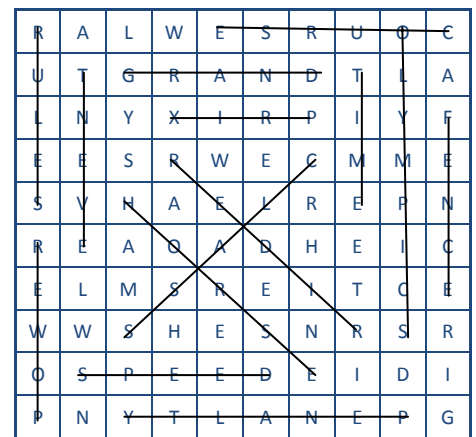


PHOTO CONTEST

Answer: N/A

Winners: Laura McLaren, Dan French, Hayley Northey, Bridgette Corrtill, Claudia Atfield

Check out the photos over on our blog, www.pcanw.wordpress.com

Coaches Corner



Chrissie's Column:

Article by Christine Johnson, one of the Associations State Coaches

Finding the right horse for you

The right horse can be the making of a rider's career, just as the wrong one can dampen an interest in horses or make for a fearful nervous rider. How do you find the right horse?

I am often asked this, and I have to admit, there is a fair bit of luck involved, however being in the right place at the right time, networking, and being patient are all important factors for success.

As a teenager, my inexperienced, but well-meaning parents bought me a three year old ex racehorse from a dealer, not a good choice, but he went on to be short-listed for the first World Eventing Championships in Lexington in 1978. His name was Cervantes and he was a hero of a horse, but that story is the exception to many stories I see. Several decades, later I would never advise on buying a horse like that for an inexperienced teenager.

Finding a coach or trusted advisor is a good start and matching your experience, goals and budget are priorities

from there on. George and Alice both had some "magic" horses in their early riding days: Khana and Scobie are both horses that set George on a path to success and Alice has fond memories of Susie and Perry who won many ribbons and taught her so much. We got it right in these examples, but it doesn't always go to plan. If a horse and rider don't gel well together, find another one. Finding the horse that is right is never easy, but I would urge you to follow the following guidelines:

1. Always have safety as your first consideration.
2. Consult with your coach throughout any purchase process.
3. Always try for a trial, or at the least multiple trial rides in different environments.
4. Always have a vet check.
5. Do your homework. Research any horses history, ask around.

Good luck.

Introductory Special...

\$500
delivered anywhere
in Australia

Saint Lourdes Australia have released a top of the range synthetic and leather range of jump and dressage saddles specifically designed to be AUSTRALIA the best value for money in Australia.

Buy online or call 0409 994 409

Distributors wanted:

If you are a Pony Club looking for sponsorship, please call and be part of our promotion.

If you are a pony club instructor, produce store, or riding school that is looking to recommend and sell a quality product and buy wholesale please call 0409 994 409



www.saintlourdes.com.au

For more information and articles by Christine please visit this website

<http://www.teamj.com.au/index.htm>

Stay tuned for the next Coaches Corner feature in the June Newsletter.

RUNNING A SHOWJUMPING EVENT:

There are a number of issues that need to be considered before and during a Showjumping competition. Below are the issues that are very important in conducting a safe and enjoyable competition for horse, riders and officials.

The Competition Arena.

Size:

The recommended **minimum** size of a Showjumping arena for competition is 50m x 80m and larger when possible. An outdoor competition arena must have a minimum size of 4,000 sq m with a minimum width on the short side of 50m.

Surface:

The surface should have give, not hard or slippery.

Grass arenas should have a thick coverage of grass with ideally a sandy loam base underneath. Clover, rye and onion grass can be very slippery and grasses that grown in clumps are also not suitable as horses tend to trip. If wet you may have to make allowances with the course, making sure there are nice open easy corners, the height of the fences to be kept at a sensible height for the conditions.

Sand and sand mix surfaces should be no less than 10cm or 4" deep and have a good solid base underneath. They are not ideal if they are too deep as this makes it hard for the horse to travel properly and hard to jump out of.

Flat and even surfaces are best but it is not illegal to have a slope on the arena.

Arena Boundary:

The competition arena must be enclosed. The boundary fence can be a solid fence, bunting or plastic chain.

Equipment:

Cups.

Pony Club approved safety cups/break away cups must be used on the back rail of spread obstacles and the middle rail/s of triple bar obstacles fences for heights 90cm and above. Cups should be no deeper than 25mm, but 20mm cups are recommended for normal jumping competitions whilst 25mm are recommended for the jumping phase of One day events. Cups should allow the rails to be loose and free to fall down when the horse hits them.

Cups not being used should be taken off the wings or put away from the inside of the jump. No equipment should be left lying in the competition or practice arena.

Rails.

The recommended weight of rails is between 13 -18kgs, length 3.6m and diameter of 100mm. If short rails are to be used on a style fence they should have a minimum length of 2.4m.

Practice Arena:

There should be a limit on the number of horses allowed into the final jumping practice arena. Depending on the size a maximum of 6 horses to a minimum of three horses if the area is very small.

The **minimum** size of a practice arena 30m x 50m.

There needs to be a Vertical (straight) and an Oxer (spread) supplied. 2 wings and 2 rails for a vertical and 2 wings and 3 rails for an oxer . The back rail of the spread obstacle must have approved safety cups.

It is correct etiquette to have someone on the ground with each rider in the practice area to pick up rails and alter the fence to suit the stage of warm up the horse and rider requires. Always check with the organisers to see who the person that allowed into the practice area. I.e. Team manager etc. The jumps should be flagged or have red or white jumping wings to indicate in which direction the jumps need to be jumped. On the approach to the jump red should be on the rider's right hand side.

Officials:

The responsibilities of the following are listed below:

Course Designer: To design the course suitable for the level required. The Course designer should have at least two assistants to set up the course and have to help during the competition. The course designer needs to post a course plan with the course, time allowed and jump off if required. This should be posted near to the gate of the practice arena for the riders to see before walking the course and the judge should also have a copy.

Judge: The judge is in charge of the competition and in consultation with the organising committee/club.

The judge should have a pencillor to record the penalties and results. A timekeeper is of help but timekeeping can be done by the judge if a timekeeper is not available. The judge is in control of the bell. The judge needs to inspect the course before it is jumped to ensure it is safe and to discuss with the course designer if there are any questions on the judgability of the course. The judge is the only one who can eliminate anyone from the competition.

Marshal: The practice area is organised and controlled by the marshal and the draw should be followed unless there is good reason for someone to not be in draw order.

For the jump off the riders must go in the draw order from the first round unless it is a seeded draw. If they missed their turn in the first round and they make the jump off they must then go back into their original spot in the draw for the jump off.

The marshal needs to check which riders are in the practice area and call them in their draw order. Eg. One till Julie two till Brian three till Ben four till Kate etc. It is also the marshals responsibility to make sure the number of horses in the practice area does not exceed the recommended number.

Ring Crew: The ring crew are there to help build the course and maintain it throughout the competition. They can stand or sit quietly out on the course making sure they are not in the way of any jumps and are able to move quietly around the course rebuilding jumps while the competition is in progress.

Draws: Draws need to be posted at the practice area and at the clubhouse or competition office. It is preferable to have draws instead of a whiteboard system in competitions to be fair to all competitors.

Coaches Corner

This information has been written by one of the Associations State Coaches, as a guide to Pony Club Instructors. If you are interested in obtaining more resources, one of the Associations State Coaches Sarah Venamore has published some resource books featuring additional lesson plans which can be purchased through the State Office for \$40; 'The Right Track' and 'The Right Track II'. Simply download a copy of the Merchandise Order Form from the website under the Club & Zone Management tab.

MOUNTING & DISMOUNTING LESSON PLAN

Aim:

Step One: To teach the rider to safely and effectively mount and dismount from their horse.

Step Two: To ensure they have the skills to be able to mount and dismount from any horse.

Outcome:

To produce competent and safety conscious horse people.

Skill:

To be able to maintain control of any horse while mounting and dismounting.

Equipment required & setup:

Mounting Block.

Safety considerations:

Taking both feet out of the stirrups before dismounting and keeping the inside rein shorter to gain more control of the horse.

Introduction of instructor and riders:

Before you begin the lesson introduce yourself, find out the riders names and some information about their horses eg. How many times they have ridden their horse in the last week or when was the last time they rode their horse? Does it have any vices? Is there any problems with their horse when they are mounting or dismounting.

Gear Check:

Make sure a gear check for safety and correct fit has been done before the lesson begins.

Explanation of lesson:

Method used in the PCANSW "Riding" manual.

Mounting:

There are a number of things to consider regarding mounting your horse and dismounting from your horse.

If you are mounting after saddling your horse it is important to walk the horse for a little while before mounting and not to get straight on until this is done, particularly if you do not know the horse. Some horses can be a bit cold backed or girthy and will buck if not lead around to relax and stretch their legs first. Also always do the girth up in stages and start quite loose and bit by bit doing it up.

It is preferable to use a mounting block for the good of the horse to prevent strain on the horses back and it will also aid the rider to mount correctly.

If a mounting block is not available always consider the lay of the land and put the horse on the lower side of the hill or in a ditch.

After placing the reins over the horses head and neck keep the inside rein (the rein closest to the rider) shorter to give the rider maximum control of the horse. With the riders back to the horses head and standing near the shoulder take hold of the stirrup with their right hand and place their left foot in the stirrup and hold the pommel with their right hand and their left hand on the horse's neck. They then spring up trying not to bounce up and down and land lightly on the horse's back.

Dismounting:

Take both reins into the left hand, hold the pommel with the right hand.

Take both feet out of the stirrups, bring the right leg over the horse's rump and land with both legs together lightly on the ground facing the horse.

Demonstration:

It is preferable to choose a rider in the group who you think or know could mount and dismount well and is good at receiving instruction. Run through step by step and talk the rider through the procedure.

Teach the class:

Make sure you have the riders well spaced out. A well spaced troop line is probably best for you to view all riders and keep things safe.

At first run each rider through individually then you could ask the whole group to mount and dismount together.

Summary:

To summarize you can ask each rider a question about the method of mounting and dismounting and also ask them each how they felt they did during the session. You can also reiterate anything they should practice and what you felt they did well.

Coaches Corner

This information has been written by one of the Associations State Coaches, as a guide to Pony Club Instructors. If you are interested in obtaining more resources, simply visit our online store.

MUSICAL WITCHES HATS

(Assuming the group have never done a Musical Tyres/ Drums/Blocks/Witches Hats, before)

This lesson plan can give you ideas and progression for a proportion of a rally day instruction.

Aim: To teach and improve the rider's control and agility skills so they can participate safely in a fun games with their horses.

Outcome: To help make the rider more competent at controlling their horse, improve their agility and horsemanship skills and get enjoyment riding their horse participating in some fun games.

Pre-Requisite Exercises: Preferably the riders would have done a flat work session before they would do any sporting events to help eliminate the risk of horses being to fresh and/or to loosen up stiffer older horses and avoid any injuries of horses or riders. Try the following Exercises in your preceding flat work lesson.

Skills required & appropriate exercises:

Skill: Leading their horse in walk and trot.

Exercise: With reins over the horses head (stirrups run up) and rider standing at the horses shoulder asking the horse to walk beside them, using the "Click/voice aid" and the whip behind the girth to encourage the horse to go forward if necessary. Once they have mastered the walk then proceed to trot. Also make sure they can stop their horse as well as making it go forward.

Skill: Dismounting quickly and safely.

Exercise: A preceding lesson of safely and efficiently dismounting the horse firstly at the halt. **Taking both feet out of the stirrups and sliding/ vaulting off** then taking the reins over the horses head to then lead the horse. This exercise should be repeated going from walk to halt and dismount and from trot to halt and dismount.

SAFETY: Emphasis that the riders MUST take BOTH FEET

out of the stirrups and slide off when dismounting for this game. Also they must stop the horse before dismounting, dismount and take the reins over the horse's head to lead.

Equipment required & Setup: Enough witches hats to mark out a large circle 20m diameter minimum and either witches hats, jumping blocks or small drums for the "Chairs". You will need one less of these than the number of children participating. The "Chairs" as such will be in the center of the circle and spaced well apart from each other but spaced evenly to give everyone on the circle a fair chance to reach them.

Surface and Area: The surface should not be hard or slippery. It should have a good covering of grass or maybe a sand surface. Be careful about grasses like Rye grass or clover as they can be a slippery surface.

Safety considerations: Make sure the riders who are knocked out of the competition are positioned away from the circle but can still see what is happening. Stress the importance of not pulling their horses up to quickly and stopping on the line of the circle. Be very aware of any horses that may kick as they may not be suitable to participate in this game. Six is an ideal number to have so if your group is bigger split them into two groups to run separately.

MUSICAL CHAIRS GAME LESSON

Introduction of Instructor and Riders: Before you begin the lesson introduce **yourself**, find out the riders names and some information about their horses eg. How many times they have ridden their horse in the last week or when was the last time they rode their horse? Does it have any vices?

Gear Check: Make sure a gear check for safety and correct fit has been done before the lesson begins.

Explanation of lesson: Describe to the group that Musical Chairs is a group run event and after each turn one person will be eliminated. Everyone rides around the circle (whatever pace the instructor feels the group are capable of safely stopping easily) and when the music stops or the instructor says "Stop" the riders dismount and run with their horse into the center to get to one of the markers before the other riders. Whoever misses out is out of that game. Then with the riders left remount and the game starts again until you get down to the final two and they ride off against each other.

Coaches Corner

The riders need to be able to have **good control** of their horses and the horse needs to be obedient with stopping and leading.

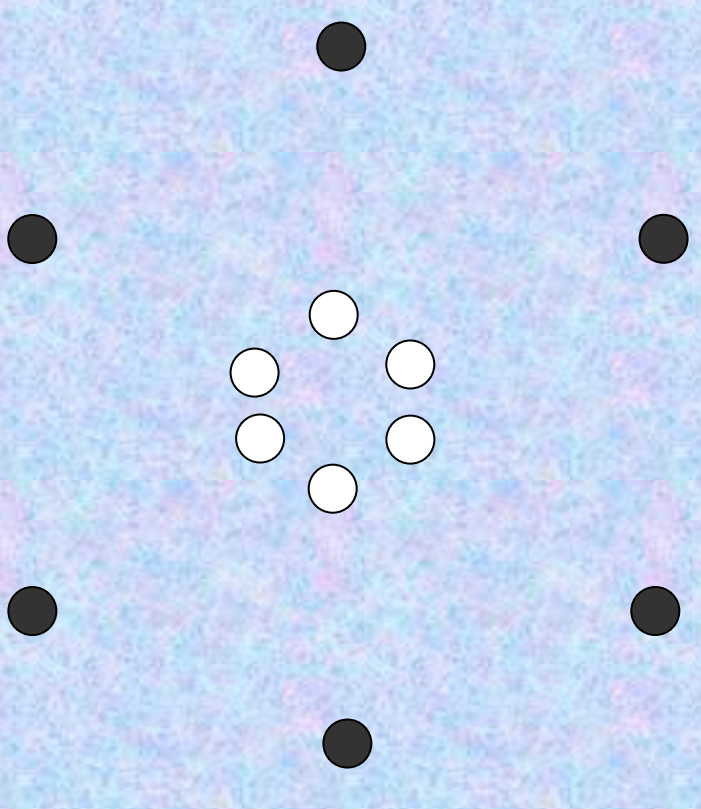
Make sure the riders are not rough when stopping and leading their horses. (This is why practicing the skills beforehand is most important so the horses have learnt what to do).

Demonstration: The best way to demonstrate the Musical Chairs is to have a rider demonstrate. Ask the rider to trot or canter around the circle (depending on their standard) and when you say stop they stop their horse dismount take the reins over the horses head and lead it into the center and claim a witches hat. They must stay on the outer circle until they have dismounted and are not to turn into the center.

Start them in walk if a fairly novice group otherwise start in trot and as the numbers lessen on the circle try canter. After each go you need to take away one of the witches hats and keep going to the final two riders. If you have had to have two groups run off the two winners against each other.

Summary:

- Ask the riders how they felt they went and how they may be able to improve their skills.
- You can offer any advice you feel they need to improve on their skills for this game .
- Also explain how the first sessions on the flat prepared them for the actual skills required for this type of game and the importance of teaching their horse to do all the movements they would then be required to do.
- To finish on a positive note ask them what they felt was the best thing they did and what did they achieve.



The Instructor: From this position the instructor can instruct and still see all the riders.

Teaching the Lesson: Start with all the riders out on the circle. If you have a large group and some are watching get them each to cheer for the riders participating.



**AUSTRALIAN
SHOW
RIBBONS**



ORDER FROM OUR WEB SITE
www.showribbons.com.au

Now, metallic silver or gold ink for
the same price as standard ink.



Order from the specialists

All we do is make Ribbons & Rosettes

You can trust us with your order

**Choose a typestyle & logo from our easy
to use order form.**

PO Box 1142
WARWICK 4370
PH & FAX (07) 4661 7933
email: sales@showribbons.com.au



Our quality and service speak for themselves.

NSW State Pony Club

LESSON PLAN

Lesson group: 6 students

Choice of exercise: Walk and trot a 20 metre circle

Walk and trot a 20 metre circle

Set up:

In a 60 x 20 metre dressage arena set out 20 metre circles with witches' hats at A and C.

Have the arena divided into 2 halves by witches' hats on either side of X, across the centre line from B to E, and tracking left or right at E.

Introduction:

Introduce yourself to the ride and topic of lesson.

Emergency Stop: Explain your requirements with hand held up.

Medical Query: Enquire if any issues that would make it difficult for the rider to participate in the lesson and advise them they can inform you as you are completing gear check.

Gear Check: Commence the gear check of each rider whilst asking their names, medical issues and the history of the horse/rider partnership.

Lesson Area: Advise riders of the area they are riding in for the lesson and advise of any safety issues that may be of a concern.

Explanation:

Explain to the ride the exercise.

The ride will commence on the large arena track on the left rein in walk, and upon reaching A, ride a 20 metre circle. Follow the witches' hats to keep the circles accurate. Upon reaching A go large and at B turn across the arena.

At E track right. At C ride a 20 metre circle. Upon returning to C go large. At B, walk and right. Upon reaching E track left and commence the exercise again.

Demonstration:

Whilst explaining the exercise, draw the diagram on a whiteboard so the riders understand the direction and the exercise plan. Explain the necessity of one horse's distance minimum between each rider for safety. Riders need to be aware of riders coming from the other direction when approaching B; they may need to slow down to let another rider cut a corner to create more space. Show the tangent points clearly on the whiteboard e.g.: **on the left rein at A, A will be your first tangent point, the second will be 4m past F, the 3rd is 2m past the P-V line on the centre line and the last (4th) is 4m before K.**

Warm Up:

Nominate a leader (who responds by saying 'I am leading' so that the ride knows who will lead the group to the track).

The instructor commands the ride to 'ride straight to the large arena track and track left in walk in single file' (or open order if you find it easier to control the group).

Riding large work on walk – halt transitions, then when that is working well with all riders on both reins change the exercise to include trot- walk transitions. Use the change across the centreline from E – B (or vice versa). This warm up will check safety first: that the riders can stop safely. It will then work on the horses improvement of rhythm, suppleness, contact, impulsion, straightness, and ultimately collection (if the horses and riders are at that level, if not it will re-establish control and riders connection with the horse).

Execution:

If the ride is at the level the instructor can continue the lesson. If the ride needs to have more help it may be better to ride the warm up then run through the explanation and demonstration, so long as the horses don't end up cool because it takes a long time.

The instructor commands the whole ride to 'ride straight to the large arena track in walk, and upon reaching A ride onto a 20 metre circle'

At A the riders can choose to ride onto the 20 metre circle or miss it and continue on to B and to the next part of the exercise.

Upon reaching B turn left and ride in a straight line across to E . At E, trot and track right and at C ride onto a 20 metre circle. Upon reaching C again, go large and at B, walk and turn right to commence the exercise again.

Riders can miss some circles out to give each other space between riders.

The instructor needs to indicate that riders should change the rein regularly for this exercise to make sure the circles are ridden in walk and then trot on both reins.

What to look for:

When commencing the exercise at walk, the instructor begins to watch each rider's position and individually corrects him or her. The priority here is the rider's centre of gravity (keeping the ear, shoulder, hip and heel line). The riders' should sit evenly on both seat bones (not lean into around the circle), even though they need to be looking around the circle.

When the rider is straight, check the horse's straightness (spine alignment with the track the rider is travelling). The riders should be checking for the beginnings of flexion and bend, so ask them to see their horses' inside eyelash to create some flexion around the circles.

Riders should also be aiming for their horse to either stay on the bit, or at least keep their poll in the same position from the walk into the trot and return (i.e. no pulling or throwing of the horses head into and out of transitions)

The instructor should be checking there is at least one horse horse's length between each horse/rider.

The instructor is also looking for the accuracy in the 20 metre circles. Once the riders are competent, the instructor can remove the witches' hats to check the rider's accuracy.

Aim: Look for consistent rhythm into and out of the circles. If the riders are not yet riding their horses on the bit, make sure they ride the horses straight down the long sides and aiming for flexion around the circles. As the ride warms up, ask for awareness of the rhythm, thus working on awareness of the horses' movement for the riders.

Time: Keep the exercise in walk for 10 - 20 minutes unless the riders have warmed up prior to the lesson (in which case the warm up can be shorter).

Feedback and Confirmation: On completion of the exercise, give the riders a rest for a few minutes (walk on long rein). Then ask the ride to form a line across the centre line facing the coach. Ask question; what they should be looking for when they ride a 20metre circle and transitions e.g. specific points of the size, how the horse should move around the circle, how the rider should be positioned /sit around a circle, what they should be looking for into and out of a transition. Give the riders something to work on so they practise before next lesson. The feedback should work along the 'sandwich' lines: positive-negative-positive.

PLAN YOUR LESSONS SO YOU ENJOY TEACHING THE TOPICS, THEN YOUR RIDERS WILL ALSO ENJOY THE LESSONS.