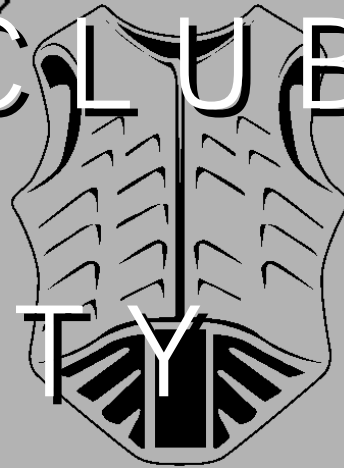
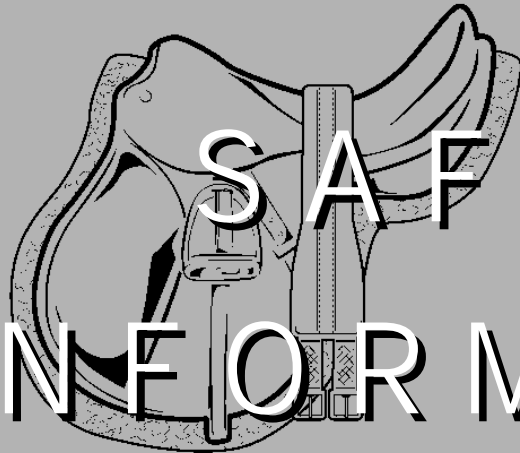




PONY CLUB



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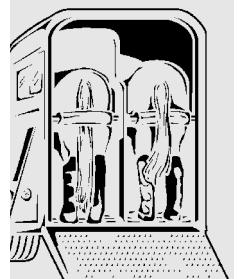
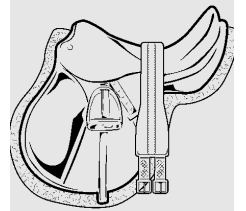
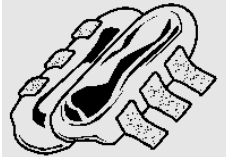
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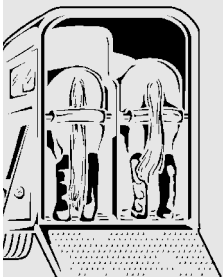
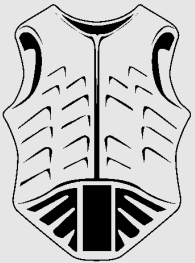
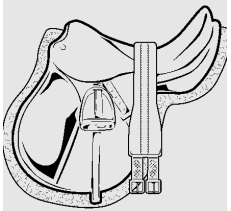
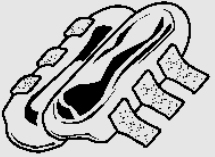
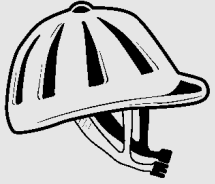


You should read this packet! Why? Because it contains valuable information that could help to save a life: yours, a student's, a friend's, your horse's. If you read nothing else about horses this year, you should read this.



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PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET



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Produced by the Safety Committee  
The United States Pony Clubs, Inc.  
4041 Iron Works Parkway  
Lexington, KY 40511  
859/254-7669

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# PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET

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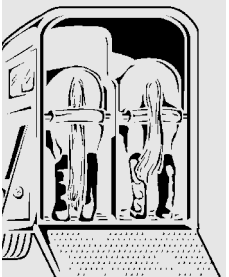
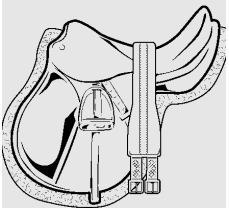
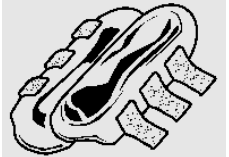
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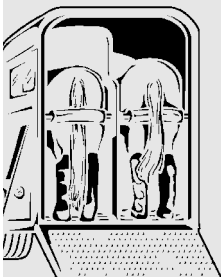
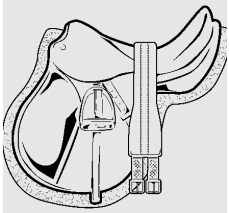
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# REGIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

## Be Aware Be Prepared Get Organized

In response to both natural disasters and the increased need for homeland security, the USPC Safety Committee strongly recommends that each region considers and develops Emergency Response Plans. Regional Plans may vary to meet the individual needs. Some areas must deal with tornados; others hurricanes, extreme heat, or brushfires. All of us must be aware of the possibility of human threats. A few of these are addressed in this publication on pages 23-26. This packet does not have the scope to provide additional information. The following websites have more in-depth information and guidelines to assist in creating Emergency Response Plans. Plans will need to address the requirements of the Pony Club members, adults, and their animals for rallies, clinics, camps, etc. The reality of today's world is that we need to be prepared!

## IMPORTANT WEBSITES:

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

Department of Homeland Security: [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)

American Red Cross: [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

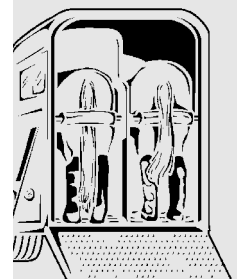
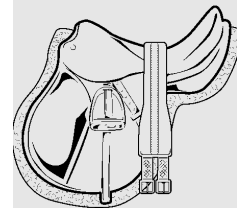
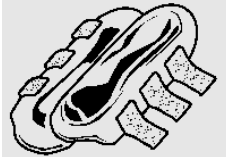
Your own local resources can be of immense help. Check in the phone book for these resources, such as the fire department, police, county services, and animal control. Many agencies have developed plans locally that can be of help to the regions. In many parts of the country, plans have been developed to deal with communications and both human and animal evacuations. The importance of this cannot be overlooked. Take the time to prepare and be organized. Hopefully, you will never have to use your plan, but make one, update and review it annually to stay current. It is up to all of us to protect our most precious resource, our children.

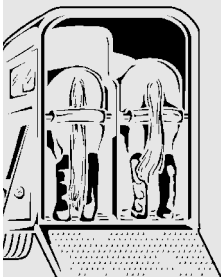
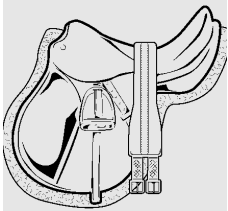
## INTRODUCTION: Foundations for Safe Riding

The goal of the USPC is: “...a happy child riding a happy horse ‘cross the country.” This is achievable through excellent instruction programs in riding, comprehensive periodic testing and evaluation, and thorough education in safe horsemanship. Serving these ambitions, the USPC established a Safety Committee dedicated to determine how accidents arise and how they may be prevented. This committee is recognized by the entire equestrian community as a leader in promoting safe practices for many equestrian disciplines and organizations. Indeed, the USPC is the only equestrian organization that collects detailed information about incidents and accidents that result from horseback riding and horse management. Study of these data has afforded the USPC the opportunity to recognize potential causes of accidents unique to horseback riding. Additionally, this committee, traditionally composed of health care professionals and other leaders in the equestrian community at-large, continually reviews scientific and medical data pertaining to equestrian related accidents and injuries. Critical investigation of reported accidents has provided the basis for guidelines designed to reduce the risks of horse-related accidents.

The importance of safety in the equestrian community cannot be over emphasized. Each year many riders are injured through carelessness or lack of knowledge about accident prevention. A concern for safety should begin with the initial interest in horseback riding and must carry through to instruction, daily horse care routines and riding. The following article, kindly provided by *The Chronicle of the Horse*, underscores the importance of safety practices in all aspects of equestrian activity. It is written by an experienced horseman and is well worth reading.

This packet should serve as an introduction to the safe practices endorsed and promoted by the USPC. It is not intended to discuss all aspects of safety but rather to provide a foundation on which a lifetime of safe horsemanship can be built. We urge our riders to be prepared, continue to learn about safe practices in horsemanship, and enjoy the USPC experience ‘Under the Safety Umbrella.’





## BETWEEN ROUNDS... WITH DENNY EMERSON

### Accidents Make Us More Aware

At the Blenheim CCI\*\*\* (England) on September 4-7, 1997, Sam Moore from Ireland was killed in a cross-country fall. The following weekend at the Burghley CCI\*\*\* (England), American team rider Karen O'Connor was knocked out for a brief time and Canadian team rider Claire Smith was hospitalized with a serious head injury. She's now conscious and is beginning rehabilitation therapy.

The following weekend, at the Fair Hill Horse Trials (MD), Amanda Warrington was sent to the intensive care unit with head injuries, from which, at the time I write this, she has still not regained consciousness.

At the Bromont Horse Trials (Quebec) on September 26-28, 1997, where I was competing, those accidents were the main topic of conversation. Most of the riders knew Claire and Amanda. They'd ridden with them, competed against them, and in many cases, grown up with them.

It's not possible to have such a spate of serious accidents without casting a pall of sorrow and worry over an entire sport. One competitor at Bromont summed up the pervading feeling, "I've never known so many riders to be feeling so spooked before cross-country."

This morning I spoke with a rider who had competed in Virginia the same weekend as Bromont. There, too, she said, the same fears and worries prevailed.

Eventing has never been, nor can it ever be, a risk-free sport. No sport that involves galloping and jumping horses over fixed obstacles can be completely safe, but that doesn't mean that it can't be made safer.

Eventing isn't going to get substantially safer, though, unless a number of different constituencies work together toward that objective. These constituencies include riders, coaches, parents, event organizers, technical delegates and officials, and a small but highly visible group of "famous riders."

Here are some questions that members of each of these groups who are interested in safety might ask themselves. (I'm well aware that there are quite a few high-risk personality types in eventing who don't think much about safety, so they won't think that this "questionnaire" is relevant to them.)

#### QUESTIONS FOR RIDERS:

1. Am I physically fit, am I pretty weak, or am I somewhere in between? Tough, agile, wiry people are much more likely to be able to help a tiring horse keep his own balance.
2. Am I riding at my competence level? One way of really asking for trouble is to try to move up the levels of competition before being adequate at preceding levels.

# PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET

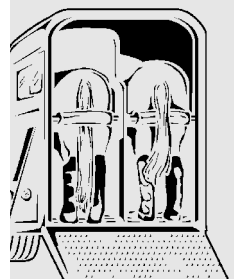
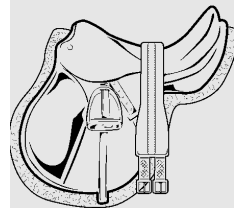
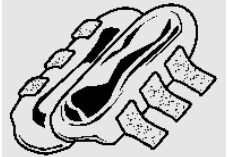
3. Am I riding at my comfort level? A rider may be physically competent to ride at preliminary, for example, but may simply feel too nervous and scared to succeed. The kind of fear that is debilitating isn't simply pre-competition nerves, which everyone feels, but real fear of physical injury.
4. Am I riding a good horse? Horses that rush or hang their knees, or quit and spin at the last second, or rear or buck greatly increase a rider's chance of injury.
5. Do I wear a properly affixed (*USPC note: must have SEI seal verifying that it meets the current ASTM Standard*) helmet whenever I get on a horse? Injuries to most parts of the body can usually get fixed, at least to some extent. Many head injuries, though, leave people permanently changed.
6. Do I school over fences alone, or do I make sure someone is available to get help in case I have a wreck?
7. Do I have a clear understanding of galloping techniques and can I ride competently at speed?
8. Does my trainer emphasize safety? Does he or she insist that I wear a helmet? Does he or she set an example by practicing safety procedures himself?

## QUESTIONS FOR TRAINERS:

1. Do I insist that my riders always wear protective headgear? Do I have them wear body protectors when jumping cross-country?
2. Do I set a good example by doing so myself?
3. Do I try to explain to them and, if relevant, to their parents how crucial it is to have the right horse?
4. Do I try to make sure that my students are riding at the levels for which they are confident and capable, or do I let them (or their parents) push to levels above their abilities?
5. Do I talk with the technical delegate at an event if I see what I believe is a truly dangerous fence? Or do I "not make waves" and just hope nothing goes wrong?

## QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS:

1. Do I insist that my child gets lessons from a competent instructor?
2. Does that instructor practice safety habits such as insisting that my child always wear appropriate headgear while riding? Does the trainer himself set a good example in that regard?
3. Do I support what the instructor tells me about the suitability (or unsuitability) of my child's horse, or do I let my child make that decision, even though my child's opinion may be based more on emotion than on reason?



# PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET

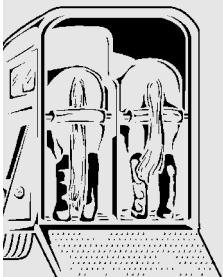
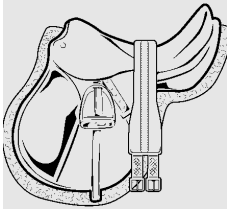


4. Do I support what the instructor believes to be the appropriate level of competition for my child, or do I let my child have his or her own way if they want to ride at a level higher than that for which the instructor feels they're ready?



## QUESTIONS FOR ORGANIZERS:

1. Is safety a major concern, pervading many of the decisions I make concerning the conduct of my event?
2. Does my course designer share my commitment to safety? Does he or she use ample ground lines and build inviting fences, or is he or she known for creating difficult, vertical, trappy questions?
3. Do I cooperate with safety requests from my technical delegate, such as placing a row of hay bales in front of a table? Or do I resist this kind of "pressure" and decide that next time I'll find a "tame" T.D. who won't hassle me?



## QUESTIONS FOR TECHNICAL DELEGATES AND OFFICIALS:

1. Do I rate safety the highest priority?
2. Do I insist that dangerous or overly difficult fences either get modified or removed from the course, or do I avoid creating extra work for my employer, the organizer?
3. Do I listen with an open mind to concerns of coaches or competitors regarding safety issues, or do I feel that they are being overly cautious and frequently deny their requests for fence modifications?
4. Do I accept the designation that has been placed upon me as a technical delegate, as "the last line of defense for the horse and rider?"

## QUESTIONS FOR FAMOUS RIDERS:

1. Do I feel that my high visibility and the support I may receive from the U.S. Equestrian Team or the Canadian Equestrian Team places me under any obligation as a role model?
2. Do I practice safety, especially in public, such as wearing approved helmets whenever riding?
3. When I am teaching clinics, or teaching at home, do I insist on safe procedures?

# PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET

Famous riders are role models to youngsters, whether they accept or reject that designation. Some of our top riders are very conscientious in this regard, but an even larger number are not.

I never used to give safety a thought. I've probably ignored every safety-related suggestion I've made here at some time in my eventing career. I even used to school alone over cross-country fences without a helmet on bad horses; and at the time, I considered it normal practice.

Several factors have changed my attitudes about safety. One is that I've gotten older. At 20 and even 30, you're immortal. You don't think it can happen to you.

I heard a statement from a woman at a clinic that relates to how your attitude changes. "If you're over 40, and you wake up in the morning, and nothing hurts, you're dead!"

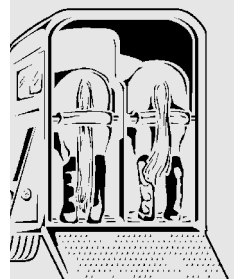
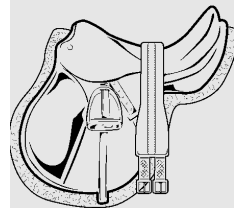
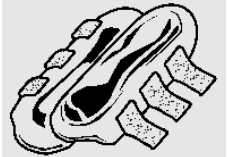
Another thing that has made me much more aware of safety is having my own children, who are now adults. All parents know how vulnerable they are to anything that threatens their children. Also, too many of my friends have had serious riding accidents, and I don't like that. I've had some riding accidents myself, and I like that even less.

And finally, serious accidents wound eventing as a sport. Collectively we've made great progress toward making eventing much safer for both horses and riders. This is the reason we've seen so few serious accidents over the last several years. This latest series of incidents, though, shows us that there's never an appropriate time to become complacent about making eventing a safer sport.

The questions I've asked here are only the ones that several other trainers and I came up with at Bromont. I'm sure there are many others that are equally important.

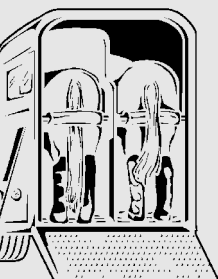
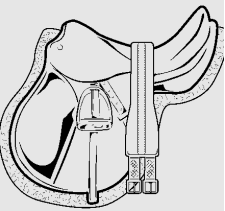
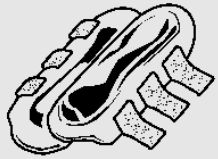
It's one thing, of course, to ask the right questions. It's quite something else to come up with the right answers, and that can only be achieved through collective effort.

Reprinted Courtesy of  
*The Chronicle of the Horse*  
Friday, October 17, 1997



## SAFETY INDEX OF USPC MANUAL OF HORSEMANSHIP

The USPC Manuals of Horsemanship contain many important topics about safety. The safety features presented in “Under the Safety Umbrella” complement these areas and are not intended to replace thorough knowledge of the information contained in the Manual. This index serves as a guide to those areas. Parents, instructors and all Pony Club members should become familiar with the Manual to learn about safe horsemanship and ensure that all are under the safety umbrella to experience the joy of safe horseback riding.

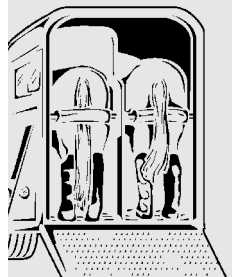
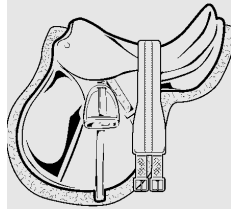
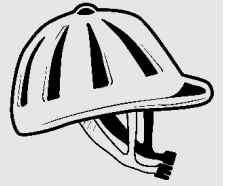


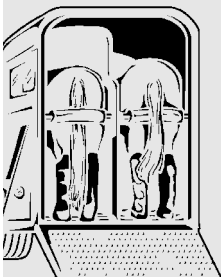
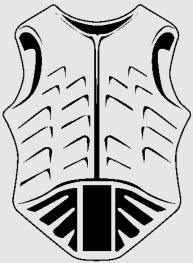
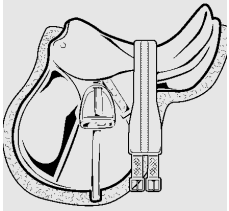
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PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET





## GET UNDER THE SAFETY UMBRELLA!

### A few thoughts on safety...

Safety must be thought of as an umbrella over all Pony Club activities. Often we are unaware of the safety aspects of the equestrian habits we strive to install in our young charges. Therefore, safety requires constant and consistent prodding and constant reminders to not cut corners, to not take the unnecessary risk. In Pony Club the first question that should be asked of any endeavor is: IS IT SAFE? For the child? For the animal? For bystanders? Is it fun? Is it appropriate? Does it provide instruction? Is it challenging? ALL these questions may follow, but the first must be IS IT SAFE? This is true whether we are building a miniature cross-country fence, passing an eager child to a higher level of proficiency, conducting a tack and pony inspection, setting up a lesson plan, or choosing a mount.

If we have doubts about the answer to “IS IT SAFE?” we must each have the courage to discard the tricky fence, and above all, to refuse to let the over-mounted child endanger himself or others!

If we are responsible people, we realize that our actions, or lack of actions, have consequences for ourselves and those around us. There are few worse guilt trips than those started by consequences of our own lack of courage to say NO! NO is NOT a dirty word!

Sometimes when we are asked to instruct in a strange place, we take for granted the adequacy of the facilities. We should always pre-check the area assigned for our teaching. Nails do work out of board fences in even the best of establishments. What should have been a simple brushing of the fence can suddenly become a bloody mess requiring stitches! Footing can vary. A galloping horse hitting a soft spot can be thrown. Deep sand in hot, humid weather can sorely tax even the fittest animal. There are few things more upsetting than leading a field of inexperienced mock foxhunters through an unknown nest of ground bees!

When teaching or coaching, especially when we don't know the child or animal well, as in scramble teams or visiting instructor situations, there are certain procedures that should never be omitted.

### TACK:

Of course, a thorough tack inspection is a must, as is inspection of the child's mount. In addition to the usual checks on proper fit of headgear, footwear and safe stitching of girths, reins, leathers, etc., be sure to check that stirrup irons fit and that safety bars are down! If we must take pliers to get the safety bars down, we may be sure the weight of a falling child will not open them!

### HORSE:

We should look for certain things when checking the horse's condition. Saddle sores and ticks in tails are important. So is maintaining tight clenches on horse's shoes and rock-free hooves, etc., but we also must

# PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET

learn how various unsoundnesses affect hoof growth, and mentally note those animals that show odd wear, founder rings and so on. Sore feet have caused many a horse to stop or stumble, and a rider can take a bad fall because of a stumble!

During our unmounted inspection (safety check) we should also quickly note each animal's respiration rate. This only takes a few seconds. If we find that every animal in the class is showing higher than normal respiration at rest, it may be that heat and humidity and/or smog require a change of lesson plans. Instead of games at a gallop, teach a new game at a walk or refine old skills at a slower pace. Instead of a long canter cross-country, slow down to a trot with plenty of restful walking allowed between efforts.

## STUDENTS:

Also during our unmounted inspections, we should take the time to question our students, keeping the questions appropriate to their rating level. Why does his pony have bar shoes? Does he or she always use a dropped noseband? How is the student feeling? Nervous? Hot? Scared? One of the greatest of instructors, Bertalan de Nemethy, has often pointed out that quite possibly the greatest detriment to good riding is simply FEAR!

We should certainly note our student's faces. Look at expressions, skin color, perspiration, etc. Remember, there are children, like horses, who do not perspire normally and these children are particularly prone to heat exhaustion. But often children do not want to rest until they actually drop!

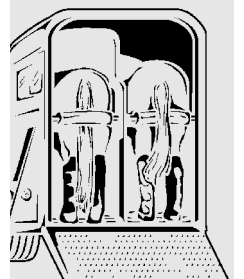
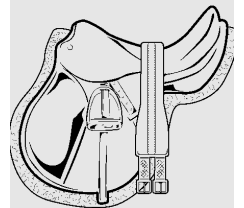
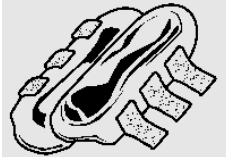
Look at hands. Are they nervous? Constantly moving? Fingernails bitten to the quick? A tense, nervous child on a beautiful, but high-strung pony may be a catalyst for disaster! When working with a group of students for the first time it is advisable to ask the DC or the designated responsible adult if there is anything special or important that you should know about any of the students' health or about any of their mounts.

If any students are chewing gum, etc., insist they get rid of it before mounting. Gum or candy accidentally sucked into air passages can be just as dangerous as a skull fracture.

## CONTROL ISSUES:

Once the children are mounted, always be sure that they have control. One item often overlooked is their skill at lengthening and shortening the reins. Each child should be checked on this skill first at a halt, then a walk, next a trot, and finally, if appropriate, a canter. Do not take this skill for granted even at the C levels. Often a child has progressed on a very stable mount that has not demanded the practice to develop this skill and is now on a more uneducated animal that requires constant adjustment. If the child's fingers "creepy-crawl" down the reins rather than shortening properly, quickly and without looking at his hands, the child probably should not be cantering.

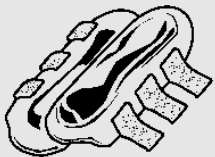
When the child has his reins quite short, note if the "bight" (the loop left hanging, usually to the right of the pony's neck, when the reins are being held correctly) is long enough to be caught by his foot. If so, shorten the reins by an overhand knot in



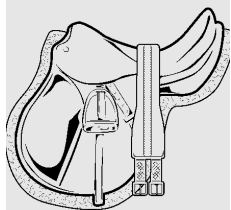
## PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET



each rein rather than by knotting the reins together. It is much better to have a broken buckle than a child dragged by a foot caught in a knotted rein, or a mount's jaw broken by the weight of a falling child entangled in a knotted rein!



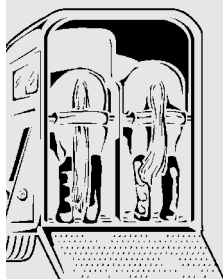
This next check should be for the rider's ability to maintain control and proper distances. This can easily be done by asking for changes of direction, transitions, patterns; again, first at a halt, walk, halt, then move on to a trot, and finally, only if appropriate, a canter. We should remember that many animals will show their true colors at the canter and begin to buck and play at that gait, even those seeming perfectly amenable at a walk and trot!



Keep in mind that mounts may well be strangers to each other even if the children know each other well. That pretty little doe-eyed mare may be very upset at the good-looking gray gelding that keeps running up on her rear!



Sometime in this period asking for emergency dismounts from a halt and a walk is good practice. This gives us a chance to see if the rider is "afraid of the ground," landing stiff-legged and hard, or using his "angles" to absorb the shock. Always review the method of landing before asking. In this exercise we also have a chance to check out the mount. Does he stop when he feels the rider's weight shift? Or is he one of those little characters that says, "Oh goody! Back to the barn as fast as I can!"?



If we have consistently practiced the above, we can accomplish these simple but important extra safety checks fairly rapidly. By the time we have finished, the mounts should be somewhat warmed up and we should have some idea of their mentalities. A few minutes of exercises to warm up the children's muscles are now in order. Now we have an idea of which child can knot his reins and expect his stabilized mount to continue trotting at the same pace, which child cannot safely be asked to drop his stirrups with the others, and so on.

### MOUNTS:

While on the subject of stabilized animals, let us take time to carefully consider those animals we use for longeing a rider. Animals used for longeing lessons must be absolutely stable and under control; and they must also understand the commands of the person longeing. We all longe slightly differently – different tone of voice, different commands. Even the most seasoned longeing mount may be confused by a different person than usual in control. We must check the mount thoroughly for obedience and steadiness in both directions before the rider is ever allowed to mount!

Of course, we anticipate that every Pony Club member will be ideally mounted on an appropriate animal – safe, sane, sound, stabilized, fit, and ready to do the level of work required. However, the reality often is not equal to the ideal. This is a part of the challenge of instructing; we consider ourselves fortunate each time we have the opportunity to work with the ideal and do our best to help the less than ideal in a safe manner.

## LEVELS OF INSTRUCTION

It is important when teaching to know the level of the students and what topics are appropriate and safe to be teaching. The Standards of Proficiency should be a help here so one knows roughly what is *appropriate* to teach, based on the rating level of the students. However, this does not *always* hold true, as a child may not be riding at his particular rating level on a particular day.

Instructors need to know the Standards of Proficiency so they know what is *appropriate* for a level of rider. It is sometimes tempting for instructors, especially with an eager, promising student, to ask for a higher performance level than is safe for that individual. Repetition of a task is a way to perfect the performance.

Let us not forget that those who are not experienced in the stress of competition may find their minds go totally blank. These children then become totally dependent upon their unconscious reactions to stress. If safe habits have not been thoroughly established by constant practice, disaster may await!

The *USPC Horse Management Handbook* has many other safety points that apply not only to competitions, but also to daily work in the stable. Just because it is not allowed at a rally doesn't mean that it is all right to use every day, and change just to go to the rally! Pony Club is trying to instill safety practices on a day-to-day basis. We have repeated a few here, but please also use that Handbook for further edification and amplification if necessary.

## FOOTWEAR

While riding, a conventional type of riding footwear with a heel, such as leather or rubber riding boots, jodhpur boots, or the equivalent, is required. 'Waffle' type soles are not allowed.

When dismounted, acceptable footwear is a shoe that is securely fastened, entirely closed, covers the ankle, thick-soled and in good condition. Totally canvas or cloth shoes of any kind are not allowed. A sturdy leather shoe or boot is recommended.

## JEWELRY

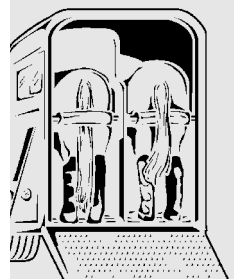
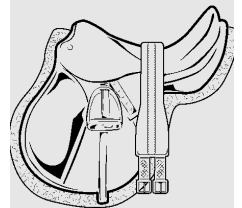
The following jewelry is acceptable for USPC instructional activities and competitions:

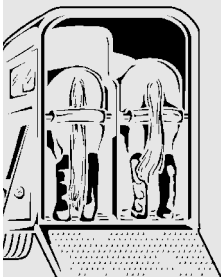
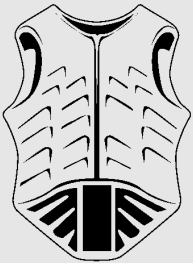
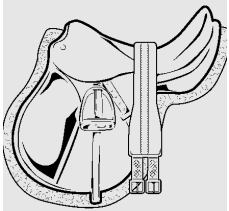
- Medic alert bracelets or necklaces
- Watches
- Wedding rings
- Stud earrings in the ear ONLY

Any other type of jewelry is inappropriate because of safety concerns. The following jewelry is NOT permitted:

- Hoops of any size (including ear cuffs) or jewelry that dangles
- Anything on the face or in the airway

Competitors wearing jewelry that is not permitted will be assessed points and the jewelry must be removed. If the competitor elects not to remove jewelry that is not permitted, s/he will be disqualified from the entire competition and must leave the grounds, if possible. (See Section 39, page 40).





## SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

As instructors, upper-level Pony Club members, coaches, horse management judges, DCs, etc., we have an opportunity, indeed a duty, to set good examples of safety to our students. This means we care for ourselves just as well as we care for our students. The thoughtful, experienced instructor realizes that the sweet little pony worried by flies during tack inspection may stamp on his foot and break it just as easily as its owner's foot. Thus, the experienced instructor makes sure his/her own footwear is sturdy and appropriate for unexpected situations. It can be most embarrassing to return to a Pony Club activity from the emergency room in a cast as a consequence of one's own lack of safety consciousness.

Gloves are always a good thing to have handy when around horses. However, jewelry is not! Rings can cut fingers deeply. Dangling or hoop earrings are particularly dangerous, as are bracelets. Necklaces, especially those made of cord without a clasp, could choke or block an airway.

**Safety** – such an all-encompassing little word. Yet, for us to stay under the safety umbrella requires so much concentration, constant awareness, dedication, imagination, and judiciousness in problem definition and problem solving based on acute observation and experience. Perhaps the most important requirement of all is courage. Courage to say NO; courage to make the unpopular decision and stick with it! In our Pony Club endeavors let us continue to meet the challenges inherent in instructing children and their mounts. Let us continue to ask first “IS IT SAFE?”

Above all, let us continue to have the courage to say NO whenever it becomes necessary!

**Junior Instructors** – for your own protection and the safety of your students, make sure there is a supervising adult on the grounds to help or go for help if needed. You should never allow anyone to place you in the position of being alone and totally responsible for an entire group of younger children with ponies or horses. In addition, any student who fails to meet the requirements of the safety check must not be allowed to participate in your lesson. Remember: you are responsible for teaching safety in horseback riding as well as how to ride. You will be a much better teacher if you are strict about safety regardless of any other abilities you may have in teaching youngsters to ride.

## UNDER THE SAFETY UMBRELLA: Instructor Checklist FACILITY

*Precheck needed for:*

- Bees/wasps
- Footing
- Condition of arena perimeter fencing
- Condition of jumps
- Availability of shade and water in hot/humid weather, and warmth and shelter in the cold
- Weather conditions and forecast
- Loose dogs or children
- Access to immediate communication and emergency services

# PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET



## PRE-RIDE CHECK

- Helmet fit
- Tack Fit, including stirrups, girth and bridle
- Safe stitching and no cracks in leather
- Stirrup bars down
- Length of bight loop
- Appropriate footwear and stirrup size

## CONDITION OF HORSES

- Sores, etc. suggesting poor tack fit
- Evidence of sore feet
- Signs of heat or air quality stress
- Reason for special shoes, tack, etc.
- General fitness level
- General disposition

## CONDITION OF STUDENTS

- Signs of anxiety or fear
- Disposition, especially attitude towards mount
- Fitness level
- Chewing gum, jewelry
- Signs of heat intolerance
- Medical conditions and medications (review USPC medical release)

## MOUNTED ASSESSMENT

Ability of students:

- To follow instruction
- To shorten reins
- To maintain control and spacing
- To perform emergency dismount
- Appropriateness for planned exercises
- To perform to usual level under competition conditions

## LONGE WORK FOR RIDERS

- Ability to control horse in both directions before mounted

## RELIABILITY OF MOUNT

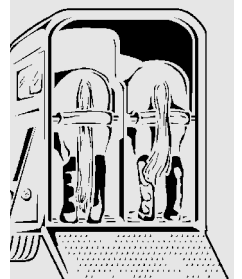
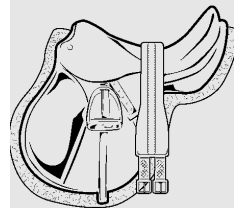
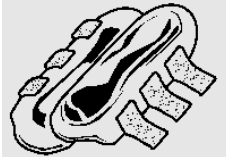
- In a group
- On the longe in both directions
- In the open

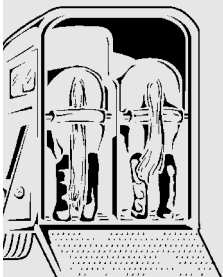
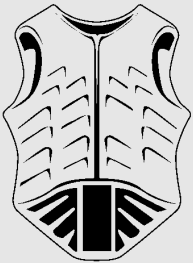
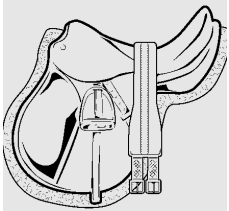
## INSTRUCTOR

- Avoid temptation to instruct to own level; instead, focus on the level of the students
- Don't rush talented students too fast – they all need hours in the saddle
- Set a good example with appropriate attire, footwear, no jewelry
- NEVER use drugs and/or alcohol
- Maintain personal fitness
- Stick to your own good judgment.
- Be willing to say NO!

## REMEMBER:

Mounts may react differently outside an enclosure, and riders' minds may go blank under stress.





## GUIDELINES FOR PERFORMING A SAFETY CHECK

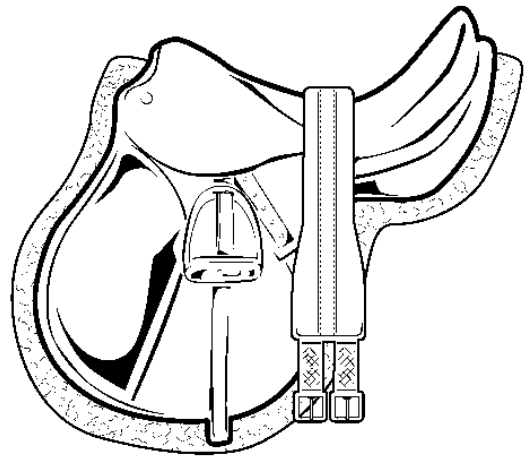
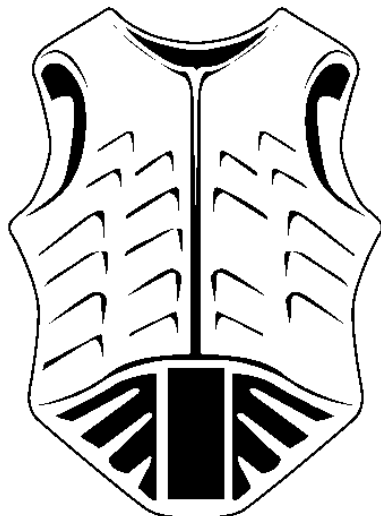
Anyone can be educated to perform a safety check on riders before they mount. This must become a regular practice and all mounted activities, and even non-riding parents of a younger or less experienced member should be taught how to do safety checks for daily at-home riding.

When performing a safety check, explain what needs to be looked for and WHY.

A safety check should include the following:

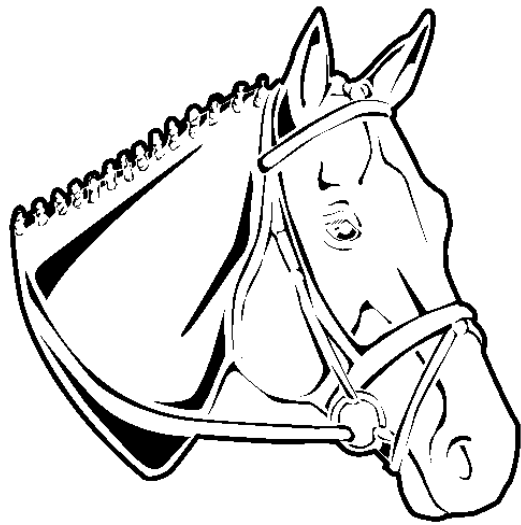
### RIDER:

- Properly fitted and adjusted approved helmet with SEI seal verifying that it meets the current ASTM Standard.
- Safe footwear, Boot with heel.
- If optional protective vest is worn, check the fit.



### SADDLE:

- Check overall fit, tree, condition of leather and stitching.
- Safety bars must be down.
- Stirrups must be 3/4" to 1-1/4" wider than the boot. Leathers must be appropriate length and sound. Buckles must be sound. Stitching not worn.
- Billet straps – more than 1 on each side, stitching leather and holes not overly worn.
- Girth – check for appropriate size, (buckles should rest somewhere in the middle holes when girth is fully tightened) stitching and soundness.



### BRIDLE:

- Check overall fit, all stitching, keepers, buckles and hooks.
- Cheek piece – buckle should not be in the top hole.
- Bit – check for correct size (1/4' to 1/2' wider than the mount's mouth) and adjustment. Check a bit for wear – worn bits can create sharp areas or places more likely to pinch the horse's mouth.
- Be sure bridle path area is smooth ("Cut" path not required, owner's option.)
- Reins – check at bit and buckle for length and width appropriate to rider and mount.
- Check condition of all leather.

### MOUNT:

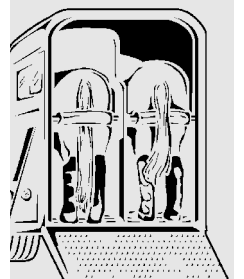
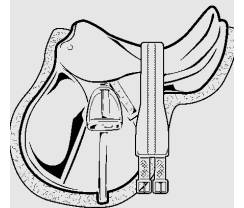
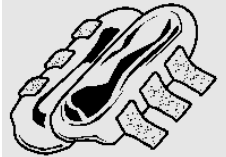
- Check condition of feet, shoes secure, girth galls or cuts that need attention, and overall condition of horse (i.e., insect bites or anything else that may cause a problem).

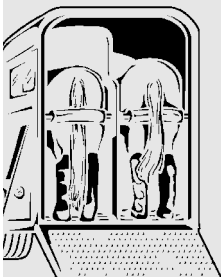
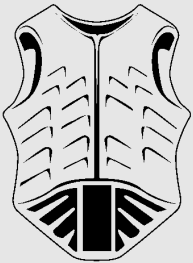
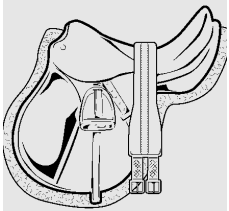
### OTHER EQUIPMENT:

- Check all additional tack (e.g. breastplate, martingales, bell boots, etc.) for condition and proper fit.
- Fitting of equipment may vary according to the breed of horse and make of the specific equipment. Make sure all equipment is safe and comfortable.

### WHAT TO DO IF SOMETHING IS NOT SAFE

- Make sure that it gets fixed.
- Don't leave the student with a problem. Explain the problem and offer suggestions as to how to remedy the situation. Teaching safe practices is equally important to instructing how to ride. It is part of the process!
- You must not allow a student to mount without a proper helmet, footwear and tack in satisfactory condition.





## HOW TO DETERMINE A PROPER HELMET FIT

- Only an approved helmet with the SEI seal verifying that it meets the current ASTM Standard is allowable; no others measure up to this standard (except when playing under certain conditions in polo and when vaulting).
- Purchase your helmet only from a reputable tack store whose owner knows how to advise and determine proper fit.
- The helmet must fit snugly and squarely on your head. Excessive movement forward or backward or side to side indicates an improper fit.
- The harness is not to be used too snugly to correct the improper fit of the helmet itself.
- Hair, because it is slippery, should not be used to make an improper fit seem better.
- Any significant accident in which the head is hit resulting in a headache demands re-testing of the helmet by the manufacturer and/or purchase of a new helmet.
- Helmets don't last forever, it is recommended that a new helmet be purchased if the helmet is older than 5-6 years of age.
- ALWAYS wear your helmet when mounted or longeing.

The most satisfactory way to be sure your ASTM/SEI approved helmet fits is to have it fitted by a knowledgeable salesperson. The worst way is to buy a helmet by mail order or from another person who has no experience or knowledge about proper fit. There are a variety of styles from which to choose, so shop around if you can in order to obtain the one you like the best. Everybody doesn't have the same shape and size head. Thus, some approved helmets with the SEI seal verifying that it meets the current ASTM Standard may not fit as well as others regardless of the extra features. Don't be discouraged if the first model or size doesn't fit or feel comfortable. With a little effort, you'll be able to find a helmet that is perfect for you.

## REMEMBER:

The helmet must contain a certification inside the hat that the particular helmet you have chosen meets the standards of the ASTM and is certified by the SEI. **THERE ARE NO SUBSTITUTES.** Studies have been done to compare various helmets and helmet standards. The conclusions of these scientific investigations repeatedly have shown that the ASTM standard currently offers the best protection against head injury. Despite this, no helmet offers **COMPLETE** protection against injury. The nature of falls that are associated with horseback riding is such that forces can be generated against which **NO** helmet can protect. Research continues and, as materials improve, the safety of helmets will increase. At present, ASTM is the standard.

## DOES THIS HELMET FIT?

Do not remove the ASTM/SEI certification from inside your helmet. It is how your helmet will be identified as compliant by Instructors, Examiners, Horse Management Judges, etc.

Your helmet should fit as snugly as you comfortably can wear it. It is recommended that you wear the helmet you are considering buying for a few minutes to make certain the fit is not so tight that you get a headache. After five minutes, remove the helmet and look in a mirror. Do you see marks on your forehead? Was it pinching the sides of your head, or was it too loose on the sides? If you answer “yes” to any of these, try a larger size or a different brand, style or shape. Heads and helmets come in different shapes as well as sizes, so be sure the helmet you get is the one that is the right shape for the shape of your head.

A well-fitted helmet should stay on your head when the harness is fastened without rocking or moving about. If the helmet slips forward or backward, it’s probably the wrong size or shape. Try another brand, style or size. Helmet manufacturers suggest that you try to move the helmet from front to back and side to side; your scalp and skin on your forehead should move with the helmet, indicating a correct fit.

Some helmets come with ‘spacers’, pieces of foam which may have sticky or velcro backs that can be inserted to improve fit. These must be applied in the proper way. The owner of the tack shop should be acquainted with how to fit these. Follow the owner’s manual which is included with each helmet so that you will understand how to fit these ‘spacers’ and the individual features of that particular model. If you

need a number of these ‘spacers’ to get the proper fit, the size or model is probably not right for you. Look for a different size, brand or style.

## REMEMBER:

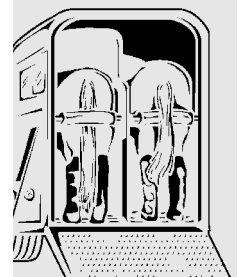
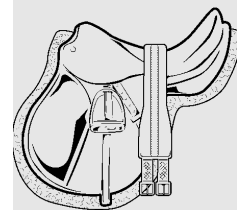
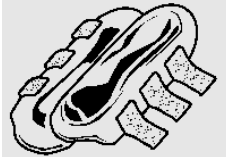
The suspension is for comfort only; the helmet should fit snugly with or without adjustments.

Some helmet designs have a harness with laces at the back of the neck. This feature is designed to help keep the helmet from slipping forward should a fall occur. The harness should be placed tightly below the small bump at the back of the head. If the harness is ‘U’ shaped, you must be certain that the chin or neck strap is very firmly adjusted before fitting this side of the harness below this bump. If it is not fastened, the helmet will slip back and protection for the front of the head will be lost. If this happens, try another style or size. The ‘U’ shaped harness should fit smoothly, close to your head, and without extra lumps, bumps or folds. Usually, this will require adjusting each time before you ride.

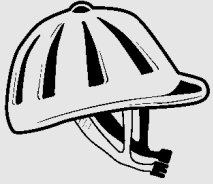
## REMEMBER:

The helmet should always be snug and sit level on your head. A helmet set too far forward or too far back off your forehead does NOT fit properly.

The chinstrap of the helmet’s harness should fit snugly. However, the chinstrap is never to be used to keep a loosely-fitted helmet in place!



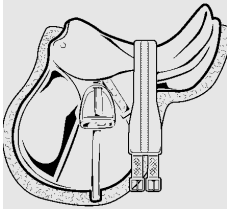
## PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET



The chinstrap (jaw or neck strap) can be worn on the point of the chin or under the jawbone depending on the manufacturer's recommendation and the style of helmet.



The harness must be tight enough that it will prevent losing your helmet should a fall occur. There are a variety of models available with differing styles of chin and neck straps. Try several to find the best and most comfortable for you. Try helmets with different closure mechanisms. All mechanisms afford the same degree of protection so that the choice is personal and will not affect the abilities of a particular model to protect the head.

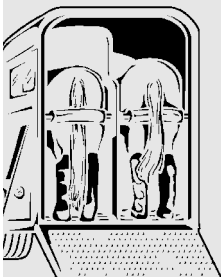


### REMEMBER:

Read the fitting instructions of the manufacturer, which come with each helmet. Also, the helmet should fit snugly and not slip forward or backward when all adjustments to the harness have been properly made.



One of the rules of protective headgear in any sport is that a helmet that shows damage of any kind or has been through an accident severe enough to give you a headache should be inspected by the manufacturer for damage and/or replaced. Not all damage to a helmet can be easily seen or felt. If you have doubts about the protective abilities of your helmet after you have had an accident in which you struck your head, you should discontinue use and you may return the helmet to the manufacturer for possible replacement. An obviously 'damaged' helmet should be discarded and a new helmet purchased.



The materials of helmets do not last forever nor do head sizes remain the same as we grow. Although the materials used in manufacturing ASTM/SEI approved helmets are the best available they lose their protective capabilities with time and exposure to sun. Manufacturers have recommended that helmets be replaced each 5-6 years of use or when the helmet is more than 5-6 years old. Frequently, if you are still growing, your head may increase in size within this period of time making the helmet fit less comfortable.

### REMEMBER:

**The approved helmet with the SEI seal verifying that it meets the current ASTM Standard is among the most important pieces of equipment you can purchase for riding safety. The requirement of this standard for the USPC has reduced the significance and frequency of head injury. The extra time you spend getting the proper fit is well worth it.**



## ATTACHMENT A TO POLICY 0125

### SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR HELMETS

#### Criteria and Disclaimer:

The United States Pony Clubs, Inc., recognizes that riding is an inherently dangerous activity and that injury and death can occur even if the rider has a proper helmet and all other customary and recommended safety precautions are observed. Each person participating in riding and working with horses must recognize these dangers and participate at his own risk.

Based upon the best information, standards and testing procedures available, the United States Pony Clubs, Inc. requires that the following conditions be met when participating in an activity sponsored by the USPC, its regions or registered clubs. These requirements are not intended to be an endorsement, guarantee or warranty of the products specified. The requirements are made based upon the judgment of the manufacturers and the testing facilities that these items provide the best protection now available.

#### REQUIREMENTS

1. When mounted (except when vaulting or engaged in polo) all Pony Club members must wear properly fitted and securely fastened equestrian helmets that comply with the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) Standard.
2. The helmet must have a seal bearing the letters Safety Equipment Institute (SEI) that will verify that the helmet meets the ASTM Standard.
3. Polo has protective requirements that demand special considerations:
  - A. When mounted for a USPC-sponsored polo instruction clinic, at which there is no scrimmage or contact play and at which mallets will not be swung above the horse's withers, *either* of the following must be worn:
    1. A helmet meeting the ASTM Standard and bearing the SEI seal, *or*
    2. A polo helmet with a facemask that meets the National Organization Committee for Safety Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) Standard of Severity Index (SI) of <1100.
  - B. At a mounted polo instruction clinic at which there is scrimmage or contact play, or at which a mallet will be swung above the horse's withers, a helmet with a facemask that meets the NOCSAE Standard of SI of <1100 must be worn.

## INCIDENT AND ACCIDENT REPORTING

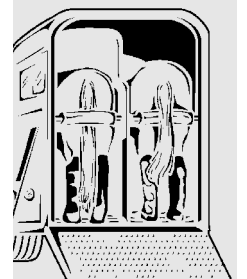
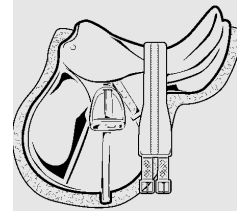
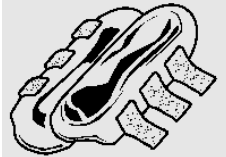
Each year, the DC receives a package containing forms for reporting Incidents/Accidents that occur at Pony Club functions.

- These data provide information to improve safety in horsemanship.
- An incident is an accident which does not necessarily result in an injury. An incident should be reported if it is of concern to the student, instructor, adult in charge, DC, etc.
- All accidents that result in injury of any degree **MUST** be reported.
- The short form **MUST** be sent to the National Office as soon as possible.
- A long form must be completed following review by the Safety Committee.
- There are **NO** excuses for not fulfilling this function.

**T**he USPC has been a leader in the acquisition of information about events that could or do result in injury associated with horsemanship. This information includes not only those incidents which lead to injury during riding but also those that may occur during grooming or any other function associated with the care or transport of the horse. The information obtained from USPC yearly surveys has led to significant improvements in safety and has reduced the number of injuries for all riders.

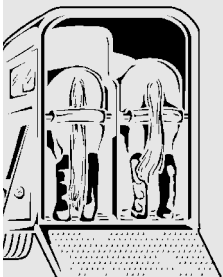
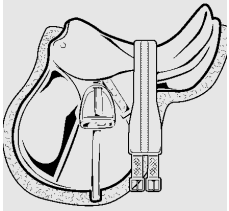
For example, restricting the use of helmets to those meeting the standard of the ASTM has lessened the numbers of Pony Club members who have sustained a concussion after a fall. Strict attention to the problems of heat and humidity has greatly reduced the occurrence of heat related illness. Insisting on proper footwear reduces foot injuries. These are but a few of the safety measures that have been introduced based on results of the incident and accident reports. They are an important part of the USPC.

The responsibility for completing these forms belongs entirely to the DC or adult in-charge at a meeting. Without full support and cooperation, the Safety Committee cannot know what issues may arise that warrant study. When an incident occurs that may have resulted in injury or when an accident results in injury, the responsible DC **MUST** complete a **SHORT FORM** of the accident report. This should be sent to the National Office as soon as possible. The Safety Committee will review this report and either contact the DC or send a more complete form for completion. The Safety Committee will follow up on all accidents that produce injury. Incidents may also be reported regardless of the severity. This includes situations which produce **NO** injury.



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## PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET



These reports are compiled at the year's end and reported to all members of the USPC. Recommendations for changing policy that may lessen the risks of injury-producing accidents are presented to the Vice Presidents of Instruction and Activities for further review and consideration.

The function of the Safety Committee depends on full cooperation of all DCs to complete the forms in a timely fashion. Don't forget to fulfill this important function each time an incident (without injury) or accident (with injury) occurs. Obviously, common sense must prevail in reporting incidents that are unassociated with injury. The goal of the reporting process is to learn what things contribute to an accident and how these may be prevented. In addition, these reports provide insight into incidents that could result in injury. For example, a fall from a horse which is not associated with any injury is important, especially if this occurs because of poor footing, unsuitable horse/rider combination, etc.

## PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

- Always have two adults present for the entire activity.
- Nearest Telephone and Number: Best to have a cellular phone on-hand.
- Telephone Number of Nearest Emergency Medical Service: Know the most direct route to the meeting.
- Telephone Number of Nearest Police: This is helpful in case of road accidents.
- Weather Forecast: Check for heat index and possible inclement conditions.
- Medical Information and Release forms: These must be properly completed for each member. It is recommended that both sides of the member's insurance card be placed on the back.
- Human First Aid Kit

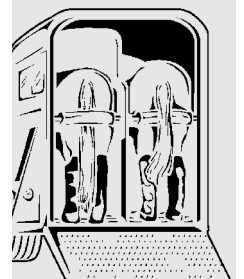
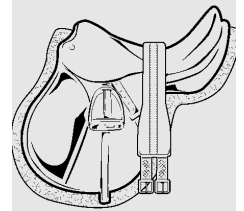
### SUGGESTION:

Make a card with all necessary telephone numbers, place into a waterproof jacket and keep it in your human first aid kit.

## GUIDELINES FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- Take time to be prepared for an emergency.
- Check weather forecasts including heat index.
- Have access to a telephone (or cellular phone) if possible.
- Inform emergency medical services where your mounted meeting is to be held and know proper directions.
- Always have a second responsible adult present throughout the activity.
- Always have medical release forms handy. Update at the beginning of each year.
- Always perform a safety check before allowing students to mount.

The best way to respond to a medical emergency is to be prepared. Anticipation is the key to avoid confusion and assure adequate medical coverage at any USPC event or meeting. The needs for medical coverage vary according to the nature of the particular event. Requirements for a mounted meeting will not necessarily be the same as those of a Regional Rally or National Competition. The following are guidelines that discuss the minimum requirements for local USPC mounted and unmounted meetings, Regional Rally and National Competitions.



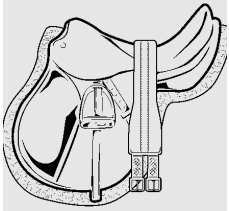


## SAFETY PRACTICES FOR LOCAL UNMOUNTED MEETINGS



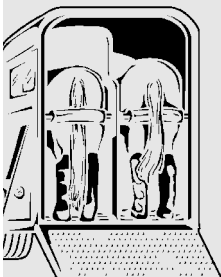
### MEDICAL RELEASE FORMS:

The USPC Medical Release Form must be properly and thoroughly completed each year and kept on-hand at ALL activities regardless of their nature. It is of particular importance to identify special information regarding diabetes, epilepsy and allergies and/or medications. Do not forget to have these forms properly signed by parents or legal guardians. Also, it is strongly recommended that a copy of both sides of a member's insurance card be placed on the back of the medical release form. Many hospitals will not initiate treatment without informed consent and/or this insurance information. DCs and instructors should also respect the privacy of individuals in regard to their medical information.



### WEATHER CONDITIONS:

Be aware of possible conditions that may influence transportation. Outside meetings in the summer or winter require awareness of the potential for heat or cold related illness. Don't be afraid to cancel a meeting if the weather conditions are worrisome.



### PERSONNEL:

At least two adults must be in attendance with adequate means of transportation to take Pony Club members home or to the hospital as the situation dictates. Having two adults in attendance assures that one is left with the remaining Pony Club members if the other adult has to leave with an injured member. Although the presence of medically trained individuals and/or an ambulance is not a requirement, those adults in charge should be familiar with techniques of CPR and general first aid.

### MEDICAL RESPONSE SHEET:

It is recommended that all information required for a medical emergency be kept in a waterproof container in a human first aid kit (see recommendations for a human first aid kit) AND that this information be made known to all adults in attendance. This sheet should include the telephone numbers of the EMS; the nearest hospital; police and directions to where the meeting is being held.

### EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICES:

The telephone number of the nearest EMS should be readily available. Knowledge of the location of the unmounted meeting and directions for getting there assure a rapid response if needed.

## ADDITIONAL SAFETY PRACTICES FOR LOCAL MOUNTED MEETINGS

FOLLOW PROCEDURES FOR UNMOUNTED MEETINGS, PLUS:

### ACCESS TO TELEPHONE:

A cellular phone is preferable to obtain medical help as soon as possible. Know or have available the telephone numbers of the EMS, hospital and police.

### EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICES:

An EMS unit or ambulance is NOT required for all mounted meetings. Nevertheless, it is advisable to notify the local EMS that you are conducting a mounted meeting and provide information as to the date, location and directions. Knowledge of the telephone number of the nearest EMS services is mandatory.

### SAFETY CHECK:

This is required for all mounted meetings. Deviations from the safety standards must not be permitted. See page 14 for additional information.

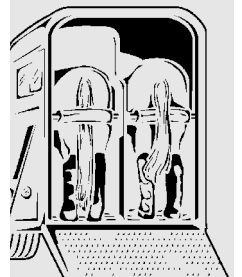
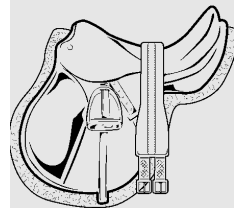
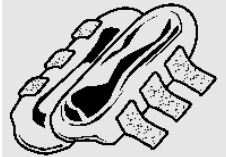
## REGIONAL/ NATIONAL RALLY

The differences between the mounted meeting and a Regional or National Rally primarily are reflected in the numbers of Pony Club members in attendance thus increasing the potential for accidents and injuries. Being prepared is key. The following are recommendations in addition to those requirements for a local mounted and unmounted meeting.

### EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICES:

The presence of EMS personnel is mandatory AND an ambulance with appropriately trained personnel is recommended. However, there are occasions when an ambulance is called to leave the grounds. This should not stop riding activities IF properly trained and licensed medical personnel and/or ambulances are still on the grounds. The requirement is to maintain ready access to appropriate emergency care. This demands that telephone numbers of medical response services, hospitals and ambulance services be available to all in charge. It is advisable to post these telephone numbers and directions to the site in a location where all have ready access.

Reviewing the specific sites of competition with the medical personnel prior to the actual Rally is extremely useful. This affords the EMS the opportunity to become familiar with traffic patterns and design the most direct path to all areas of competition. Also, alternative routes can be selected for use in the event that weather conditions preclude the use of a 'usual and customary' route.

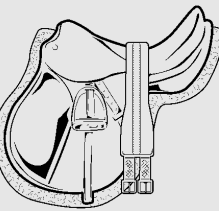


# PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET



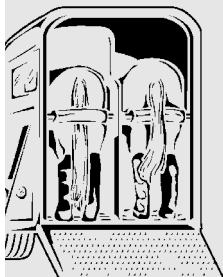
## WEATHER CONDITIONS:

Weather conditions may require extra precautions to reduce the risk of heat related illness. Recognition and methods to reduce the risks of these conditions may be found on page 30 of this safety packet. Inclement weather also may call for particular concern as to the ease of medical transport and how ambulances can get to specific areas of competition.



## MEDICAL INFORMATION AND RELEASE FORMS:

It is highly recommended that these forms be kept by the EMS personnel or appointed medical officer during the competition. This will facilitate transfer of medical information and release for treatment to hospital personnel in the event that a Pony Club member is taken to the hospital. A second set of medical release forms should be carried by the chaperone.



comfortable. Provide a blanket or warmth or shade from the sun. In specific cases of immediate danger utilize first-aid techniques to control bleeding. It is best not to move the victim or to try to remove any imbedded foreign objects. Wait for trained medical personnel. Most importantly, keep calm. Use common sense and provide strong emotional support.

Notify local disaster response authorities, sheriff and/or other emergency response agencies of any meeting/event with a large number of participants and visitors. This is important in the event of sudden changes in weather conditions or other natural disasters that may unexpectedly occur. Without proper warning and preparedness these agencies may be unable to provide needed assistance.

## REMEMBER:

Preparedness is the key to managing medical emergencies.

Most accident victims can wait safely for professional treatment. The use of trained Emergency Medical Services personnel has reduced the response time from the occurrence of the accident to initial evaluation and treatment. Moreover, injuries, which are relatively minor, can be complicated by well meaning yet incompetent individuals wishing only to help. The most important function non-healthcare persons can serve is not to move them, but to make the accident victim

## CLUB HUMAN FIRST AID KIT

- Band-aids, 1 or 2 dozen assorted sizes
- 1 dozen 4" x 4" sterile gauze pads, individually wrapped
- 2 rolls of 3" wide conforming gauze
- 2 large triangular bandages (2 can be made from a 3 foot square of cloth cut diagonally)
- 4 oz. or more of Betadyne or other antiseptic cleanser
- antibiotic ointment (e.g., Neosporin, Polysporin, Tripleantibiotic)
- 6 large safety pins (diaper pins don't rust and have safe heads)
- 2 chemical cold packs
- 1 full roll of 1" wide tape
- bandage shears
- pointed tweezers
- anti sting or other analgesic preparation to ease the sting of wasps, bees, etc.\*
- 3 pairs of rubber or latex gloves
- sunscreen
- human bug spray/repellent
- CPR shield for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation

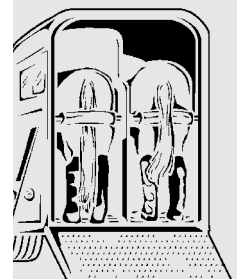
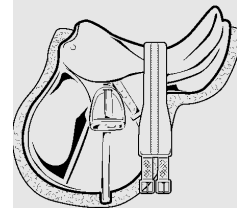
\*Pony Club members who are allergic to bee or wasp stings should carry their own bee-sting kit at all times. They should know how to use it or be accompanied by an adult who does.

The Safety Committee recommends that a human first-aid kit be present at all meetings. The list contains the minimum number of items and can be expanded as the individual club anticipates their specific needs. It is recommended that this kit be kept by the DC or an appointed adult and routinely inspected for contents and expiration dates necessitating replenishment. NOTE: Pony Club members are not expected to have such an extensive human first aid kit in their tack rooms at rallies.

No first aid kit is complete. There are always unexpected injuries and accidents. These items should be useful for first aid treatment of minor injuries that commonly occur at Pony Club activities. Larger Pony Club events may have emergency medical personnel on the grounds to treat more serious injuries. EMS personnel will have their own supplies, which are much more extensive than those contained in the recommended list.

### REMEMBER:

Always have USPC medical releases and a phone available. (See Guidelines for Emergency Responses and Things you should know and have.)

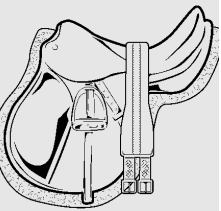




## INFORMATION ABOUT HEAD INJURIES



**H**ead injury is the usual cause of the most serious and fatal horse-related injuries. Most injuries are “closed head injuries” caused by a blunt trauma. Although helmets reduce the risk, head injury still occurs. Most head injuries do not result in coma, but that doesn’t mean they aren’t serious.



One out of every three riders with a head injury will have a second head injury within 3 months. There is mounting evidence that subtle brain damage may result both immediately and after repeated mild head injuries. Reduction in abilities to learn, personality changes and or loss of recent memory can result from repeated (as few as 3) mild head injuries. Even a seemingly mild head injury can be fatal if repeated incidents occur within a relatively short period of time.



Adults in charge of children participating in impact sports need to know how to reduce the risks. (Yes, riding CAN BE an impact sport!)

In Pony Club, a responsible adult should **always** be present. This responsibility is serious and sometimes involves difficult decisions. One of the heaviest of those responsibilities is the decision whether or not to allow a potentially injured rider to continue.

The following guidelines are for information purposes only and should not be viewed as teaching non-medically trained adults when to allow an injured member to continue with an activity.

**CONCUSSION** is defined as any alteration in mental status following a blow to the head. It must be stressed that a rider may have sustained a concussion without actually losing consciousness.

## GUIDELINES FOR A HEAD INJURY:

Following an impact with the head:

### CATEGORY I:

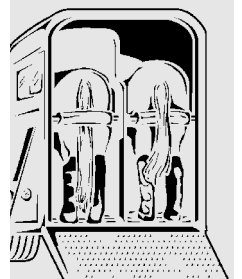
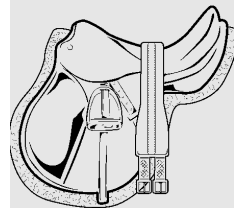
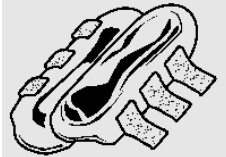
The person does not lose consciousness. There is correct, spontaneous and oriented response to questions. Knows what happened!

Close observation of the person is required. It is necessary to check every 5 minutes to make sure there are no further symptoms, for at least 15 minutes. Parental involvement is necessary before allowing the rider to continue. Suggested to see family physician.

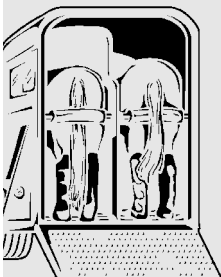
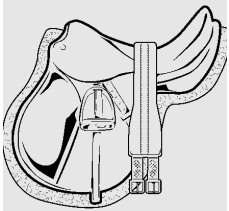
### CATEGORY II:

- A. A second impact on the same day, or
- B. A concussion may have one or more of the following symptoms or signs:
  1. May have period of brief unconsciousness
  2. Headache
  3. Scalp tenderness or pain at injury site
  4. Dizziness
  5. Unusual changes; confusion, restlessness, irritability, disorientation
  6. Sluggishness
  7. Memory loss (amnesia) to event of injury or events immediately preceding the injury; usually lasts less than 5 minutes
  8. Nausea and/or vomiting
  9. Abnormal posturing

The rider may have one or all of the above listed signs or symptoms. If this is the case, then it is recommended that the rider does NOT continue to ride, and should seek medical attention.



Revised 4/04



## PREVENTION OF HEAT ILLNESS

- Heat illness is preventable.
- Keep the heat/humidity chart on Page 32 on hand to determine when heat illness is most likely to occur.
- Heat illness is most likely to occur in children not acclimated to heat and humidity; early in the riding season (summer); in those who have experienced heat illness previously; in those who are taking certain medications; in those with certain medical conditions.
- Insist that coats be removed when the heat index is dangerous. Remove helmets and vests when not mounted.
- Insist that all participants drink extra fluids.
- Headache, irritability, nausea, inability to think clearly, and loss of attentiveness are early and common symptoms of heat stress.
- The treatment of heat illness is to rapidly cool the victim.

Exposure to elevated temperatures that can occur during the days and times that Pony Club members ride increases the risk of heat related conditions. This may result in serious illness, even death if not recognized and immediately treated. Although it is important to be able to recognize any person who has the symptoms and signs associated with excessive exposure to heat, it is vital to understand that these problems are 100% preventable. The following contains information as to the causes of heat illness; how to recognize and treat this condition; and, most importantly, how it may be prevented.

## WHAT IS HEAT RELATED ILLNESS

During the hot summer months, the body protects itself against the extremes of heat by the evaporation of sweat. Anything that prevents this effective way of reducing the temperatures inside our bodies quickly results in over heating that can slow down and eventually stop vital bodily and mental functions. Thus, heat related illnesses may occur when the temperature inside our body becomes markedly elevated.

The protective benefits of sweating are lost when:

- Elevations in humidity prevent air from evaporating sweat.
- The body runs low on fluids.
- Clothing prevents air from reaching sweat.

## HOW TO RECOGNIZE HEAT ILLNESS

There are three easily recognizable types of heat illness which may be seen in riders during the summer months. These are:

### HEAT CRAMPS:

This stage is characterized by painful muscle spasms. This may be so mild as to be overlooked. Nevertheless, cramping occurring during periods of high temperatures and humidity should be an alert to heat related problems.

### HEAT EXHAUSTION/STRESS:

This is the most common stage of heat illness recognizable by the most people. Irritability is an early and consistent sign. Look for difficulty in understanding, confusion or inattention. Headache is frequent. Other symptoms include: extreme weakness, dizziness, profuse sweating, heavy breathing, nausea or vomiting.

### HEATSTROKE:

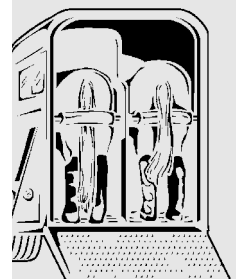
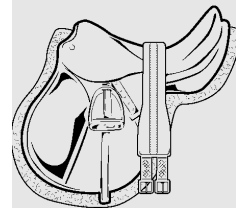
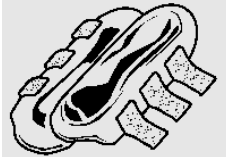
This is the last and most serious stage and is a true medical emergency, as the body has become unable to cope with the heat. This is characterized by hot and dry skin, an absence of sweating and coma. You have but a few minutes to get trained medical help.

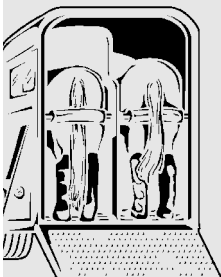
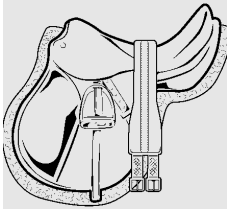
## HOW TO TREAT HEAT ILLNESS

Treating heat illness is best done by prevention. Nonetheless, you may be called on to render first aid to a Pony Club member who has symptoms of excessive exposure to heat. You should do the following:

- Stop activity immediately.
- Provide shade.
- Loosen/remove clothing; particularly the helmet and boots.
- **PROVIDE UNLIMITED WATER.** Water is better than other fluids such as Gatorade or other 'sport replenishing' fluids. Iced tea should be avoided as it functions as a diuretic. Beverages containing sugar take longer to be absorbed thus do not replenish body fluids rapidly. Caution: Make sure the victim is sufficiently alert not to choke or aspirate the fluids into the lungs.
- Cool the victim as rapidly as possible by any means available. Cool compresses, ice or cold water all may be used.

The goal of treating heat illness is to reduce the temperature of the victim as rapidly as possible. Any way this can be done successfully is appropriate. This can be a fatal condition if the body temperature is allowed to remain high.





## HOW TO PREVENT HEAT ILLNESS

This is most important. It begins by using common sense.

Be aware of the temperature AND humidity. The humidity is a reflection of how much moisture is in the air AND how much more it can hold. A high humidity is rich in moisture and will hold less water than a lower humidity which can hold much more. During periods when the temperature is quite high AND the humidity also is high, sweating is much less effective in dissipating temperatures of the body than during conditions when the humidity is lower and can hold more water. Elevated temperatures associated with low humidity can be tolerated much easier and are less dangerous. The following chart, which considers both temperature and humidity, is helpful to determining when the risks for heat illness are highest. You should have this chart readily available at all times.

When the Heat Index is in the danger zone you particularly should be aware of the likelihood of heat stress and implement the following measures to prevent this problem.

### TO USE:

- Determine temperature in degrees Fahrenheit (T).
- Determine % relative humidity (H).
- On chart locate point of intersection of T and H

If the point of intersection is to the right of and below the critical line (CL), you should consider the possibility of heat stress problems.

Be aware of the time of day, level of exertion and condition of the riders. Riding in the hottest part of the day is not smart IF the heat index is in the danger zone (see chart). Additionally, acclimation to the heat frequently is poor during the earliest part of the summer season. At these times, the

Effects of Humidity on Apparent Temperature											
RELATIVE HUMIDITY	Air Temperature (degrees Fahrenheit)										
	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120
	Apparent temperature (degrees Fahrenheit)										
0%	64	69	73	78	83	87	91	95	99	103	107
10%	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	111	116
20%	66	72	77	82	87	93	99	105	112	120	130
30%	67	73	78	84	90	96	104	113	123	135	148
40%	68	74	79	86	93	101	110	123	137	151	
50%	69	75	81	88	96	107	120	135	150		
60%	70	76	82	90	100	114	132	149			
70%	70	77	85	93	106	124	144				
80%	71	78	86	97	113	136					
90%	71	79	88	102	122						
100%	72	80	91	108							

**DANGER ZONE**

## PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET

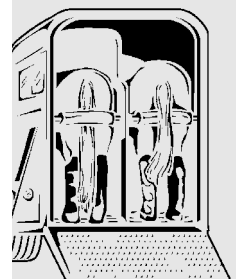
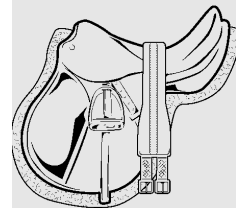
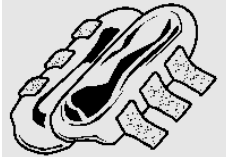
condition of the Pony Club member may not be as high as his or her excitement and anticipation. Overweight riders are more susceptible to heat illness than those who are less fit. Children who have sustained heat related illness are more prone to suffer from repeated episodes. Don't forget adults who may be watching, teaching or judging. They, too, are susceptible to heat stress.

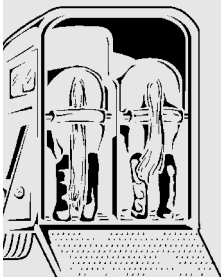
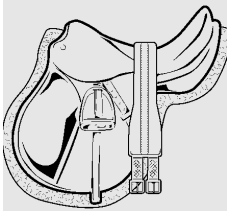
Plan for water breaks. Have plenty of water readily available. Do not depend on thirst as an indicator of the need for water. Thirst begins only after a large amount of water has been depleted from the body. By the time one is thirsty, a water deficit may be present already. This is easily replaced by drinking water. Provide plenty of fluids in the stabling areas, riding rings and any area where riders may be, e.g. score board, tack room. It is advisable to expect a rider to drink about a quart of fluid for each 1 hour of riding or exposure to the extremes of heat and humidity. Fluid breaks are an important way to assure that all in attendance are drinking adequate amounts to lessen the risks of heat stress. It is your responsibility to make absolutely sure that all Pony Club members drink plenty of fluids during periods of heat and humidity; insist on it!

Removal of coats, stock and neck ties is **MANDATORY** (it is also mandatory to remove helmet covers on vented helmets) any time the Heat Index is in the danger zone. (See page 16 of *USPC Horse Management Handbook*.) This is mandated in the Uniform Officiation Rules of the USPC. Helmets and vests should be removed immediately after dismounting.

Consider shortening the length/level of exertion. Riders should be asked to dismount, remove their helmets and drink fluids after they have completed their participation. It is not wise to insist that all be in attendance during times when the Heat Index is in the danger zone.

The key to preventing Heat Illness is common sense and awareness that children may not complain of thirst. Most are so excited about riding that they neglect thirst and/or other symptoms of heat illness until they fall victim to heat stress. At that point they seem to be less attentive, and may complain of headache, nausea, dizziness and premature fatigue.





## WEATHER DANGERS

- Check weather report before all activities
- Be aware of potential severe weather
- Know signs of approaching severe weather
- Use common sense
- Have a plan!

Each area of the country is unique in the way severe weather presents. Therefore, there can be no one set of rules or guidelines that will apply in all situations. Hence, it is imperative that those in charge become familiar with local weather conditions; when and how severe weather may arise and is manifested. Usually this knowledge is gained first-hand through experience in living in a particular region. However, there may be occasions when you are visiting other areas whose weather peculiarities are unfamiliar. In these events, it is best to consult the local weather report before beginning any USPC activity. Radios dedicated to weather reports or effective NOAA weather cubes, which alarm of potential severe weather, may be purchased for minimal costs and are particularly helpful.

Some of the signs that may indicate approaching severe weather include:

- towering thunderhead
- darkening skies
- lightning and thunder
- increasing winds
- static on AM radio
- greenish or yellowish skies
- wall cloud
- loud roar (like a freight train)

When a storm is threatening keep in mind these potential dangers:

- High winds come with severe thunderstorms. The major danger is being hit by falling trees, branches or other debris. The risk is greater where trees do not grow so densely that most will be caught on another tree when blown over. A pasture larger than one acre is considered sufficiently large that horses can keep away from the blowing debris of a hurricane.
- Lightning is an integral part of thunderstorms and can strike 10 miles ahead of the main storm.
- Flash floods and tornadoes are serious dangers. They may occur many miles away from the rainstorm. Avoid low drainage areas.

# PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET

- Storms and their warnings differ in various parts of the country. Mountains may hide them until the last minute. Sound and noise in a desert or prairie may come from a storm 50 miles away.

What can you do to stay safe when a severe storm threatens?

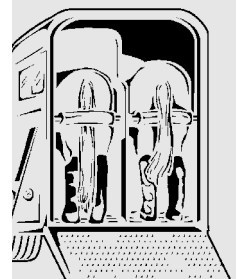
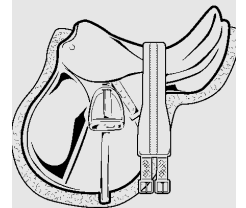
## DON'T

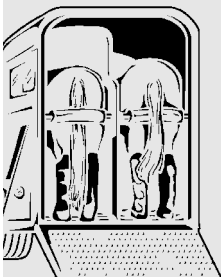
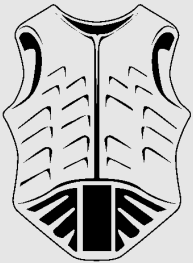
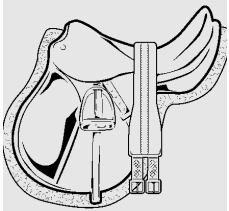
- Seek shelter under any tall, solitary object or anything that projects above the landscape;
- Stand in or near water. This includes small puddles;
- Hold a radio, especially one with an antenna.

## DO

- Stop all activity;
- Take cover when you see lightning or hear thunder;
- Seek shelter, if possible, inside a large building. Otherwise, in a truck or hardtop car with the windows closed. If you are in an open, flat area seek the lowest point, drop to a crouched position, bend forward putting hands on knees. Lie flat in a ditch if possible. If you are near woods, seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees. Crouch down, head down, feet together, arms wrapped around legs.
- Avoid anything metal, wire fences, or pipes.

It cannot be sufficiently emphasized: **THINK**, use your head, apply **COMMON SENSE**. The safety of Pony Club members is paramount; mounts take their chances.





## FIRE – IT DOESN'T HAVE TO HAPPEN!!!

None of us likes to think about fire, but if you have a barn, you will have to think about ways to prevent fire. Barn fires are usually caused by humans and are preventable:

- If not possible to store bedding and hay in a separate building, be sure storage area is well ventilated.
- Keep aisles clear of equipment, debris and cobwebs, etc.
- Aggressively control rodents, as they may chew through electrical wires.
- Have large fire extinguishers (type A or ABC) and check gauges and/or expiration dates.
- Check all electric equipment and wiring periodically; not only for wear, but to remove dust and dirt.
- Report any electrical malfunction **IMMEDIATELY** to the electrical provider.
- Storage of any flammables (gasoline, paint) should be separate from barn, hay and bedding.
- No smoking in and around barns or storage areas.
- Make sure everyone knows location of electrical master switches, and fire department phone numbers.
- Know address of the barn and how to direct someone to the premises.

- Have emergency phone numbers posted near phone.
- Keep a halter and lead rope by each stall.
- Have a plan for escape.

If, despite your efforts, fire becomes a reality, you must act quickly. Immediately, call the fire department to report the location and fire address of your barn.

Remember that as the heat from the original fire grows, the resultant super-heated air can cause explosive conditions many feet ahead of the active fire, possibly cutting off your escape route. Smoke can also limit good vision and cause death. Most importantly, human life must not be risked under any circumstances!

Some areas' fire fighters require that maps of the barn showing fire escape routes be posted. Make a plan for evacuating the barn and hold a 'fire drill' to practice.

Remember to securely enclose horses rescued from a barn fire. Horses in panic will often re-enter a blazing barn.

No human life is worth the life of a horse. Fires spread very quickly – if a fire does start in your barn, **DO NOT ENTER**. The most important step you can take is to call for help.

## CHOOSING A MOUNT

- Beginners and young riders need friendly, well-mannered mounts.
- The best horse fits both the child's size and abilities.
- Look for well-schooled mounts from other disciplines or older mounts who still may be serviceable for a new job.
- A mount that is well known to you or to a trusted advisor is a better bet.
- Arrange for an appropriate trial under supervision by the child's usual instructor.

Choosing a mount is one of the more stressful things Pony Club parents are asked to do. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we only had to do it once? Unfortunately, trying to avoid repeating this chore is one of the most serious mistakes a parent can make. Trying to make one mount meet the changing needs of the child can mean compromising safety. The unflappable 14 hand solid citizen who gives a D-2 confidence to trot over an X may not be safe if asked to fly over a preliminary fence on cross country. Conversely, the talented upper level mount could seriously injure or frighten an inexperienced rider.

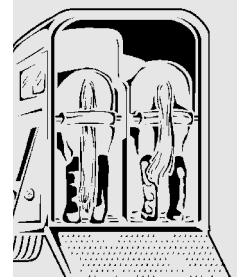
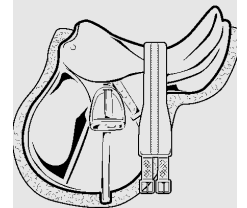
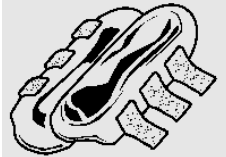
So what do we look for? First, realistically assess the child and his/her abilities. A young face, or a novice rider of any age, needs a mount that is friendly, quiet, and unflappable. Far too many accidents occur when handling unruly ponies on the ground. Training should not be expected to correct bad habits or a skittish temperament, both of which are unacceptable in a mount for a beginner. The child and mount need to fit each other physically, too. A horse that is either too large or too small can make the rider less

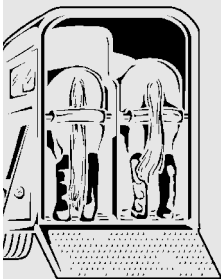
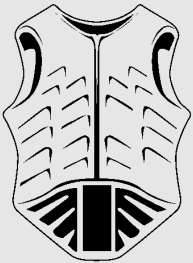
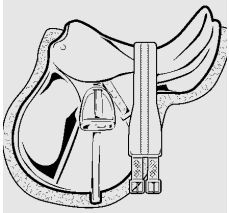
secure. Unfortunately, a pony can be outgrown in a very short period of time (see, D Manual; pp 14-20).

Experience is another issue affecting safety. "Learning together" is NOT a good idea with a sport as potentially dangerous as riding. Well-schooled mounts are often expensive, but are probably worth it! Looking in other disciplines for a well-trained mount with good temperament can be a good compromise when looking for Pony Club mounts. Older horses can be excellent teachers. This raises the question of soundness. The horse must be sound enough to safely perform the required tasks. A retired hunter may be a little short behind but can he safely carry a child to C-1? Having a realistic discussion with the veterinarian, including the type of work likely to be expected of the horse, will help decide.

Judgment is required to determine if a particular horse or horse/rider combination is unsafe. Pony Club members do show up on unsuitable mounts! It is the responsibility of leadership to obtain input from knowledgeable horse persons and act on it. No one wants to be the 'bad guy' but if an unsafe situation exists, it must not be allowed to continue.

Horses are large, unpredictable animals and riding is a high-risk sport. Pony Club is all about participating in this wonderful sport as safely as possible. Buying the safest, most appropriate mount you can afford is one way to reduce the risks. A cheap horse is not always a bargain! Anyone who has owned horses knows the purchase price is a small part of the total investment. A sane, safe beginner mount will always be in demand when you need to move up to a bigger or more athletic animal for your advancing Pony Club member.





## GUIDELINES FOR CHOOSING A RIDING FACILITY

- Is safety a high priority with the management and instructors?
- Are the instructors well trained and appear professional in their behavior with students?
- Are there adequate personnel for safe instruction?
- Is the physical facility well organized and cared for?
- Are the horses and equipment in good condition and do the horses appear content?

## GUIDELINES FOR CHOOSING A RIDING SCHOOL

The following suggestions should be taken into consideration when looking for a safe, effective riding school. However, it is necessary to use some common sense when applying to one. Before you choose, give some thought to what your goals are (e.g., pleasure riding, competitive riding, having a horse of your own.)

Make a point to plan an unannounced visit(s) before making a commitment, but be fair about the time of your visit. Early morning when the staff is feeding, mucking out and tidying up is not a proper time.

Also, if the school horses are having a happy time rolling in the mud, they are not going to look sleek and shiny. Take into consideration that no matter how well and properly run a facility is, nor how competent and successful the instructors, the student must like them and get along with them. If not, the relationship will fail in its goals.

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Are the premises tidy and generally well ordered? Are staff members friendly and helpful? Do the stables appear to have a place for everything, with everything in its place (unless, of course, it is being used)? Has the school addressed the possibility of fire, e.g., appropriate fire extinguishers, critical emergency phone numbers posted by the telephone? Is there ample supply of good hay and bedding under cover? Is there a good supply of grain in vermin-proof containers? Is the manure kept away from the barn as a means of insect control? Are aisles free of obstacles and swept clean?

## INSTRUCTION

Good instruction is the key element in a good riding school. Visit a lesson or two. Whether mounted or unmounted, children should be under supervision at all times. There should be sufficient personnel. The ratio of personnel to students will vary depending on abilities of students and types of activities. A good rule is never to expect one instructor to manage a program single-handedly.

Instructors should have a strong educational background and experience in working with young people, as well as teaching riding and horse management. They should dress, act and appear as professional horse people who set an example for their students.

Before the start of class, the students' clothing and equipment should be checked: Is the equipment being used correctly? Is it sized to the rider and horse? Is it clean and in good repair? Safe attire means long pants, shoes or boots with heel and hard sole, and ASTM/SEI headgear with harness fastened at all times when mounted.

Horses also should be checked for lameness and if they are 'off their feed' or 'sour.' It is desirable that basic horsemanship and horse handling be taught because a knowledgeable rider is a safe rider. Lessons should appear to be presented in a safe and progressive manner. Do they make sense? Do the students appear to be enjoying them?

The instructors should be trained in Basic First Aid (CPR is also advisable) as a minimum requirement, and there should be a well thought out procedure in case of a fall or accident. They must be aware of safety and the hazards of riding.

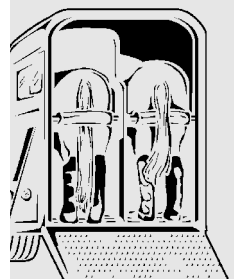
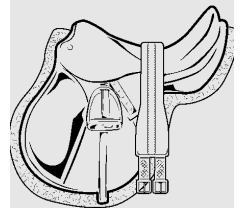
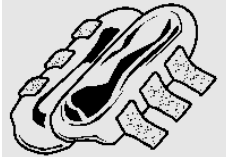
## HEALTH AND TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

Sufficient and suitable food, exercise, water, space and shelter are of paramount importance. Clean water in clean containers should be available at all times for each horse, whether stabled or pastured.

Look at the horses. They should have sufficient flesh covering them, a bright eye, a shiny coat, feet that are well shod (or well-trimmed in the case of a horse that goes barefoot), and show an interest in what is going on around them. They should be free of galls and/or saddle sores.

Stalls should be at least 10' x 10' for ponies and 12' x 12' or larger for horses. There must be no hazards such as nails, holes, broken boards, etc. that could cause injury. Stalls must be clean and dry with ample bedding. Horses kept at pasture must have a readily available source of clean, fresh water at all times. Fencing must be suitable for horses (no barbed wire!), four feet high or higher, and in good repair.

Pastures should be reasonably free of droppings as well as hazards such as odd bits of old machinery. If there is not sufficient grass for the number of horses pastured (a common problem today because of 'urban sprawl'), then there must be evidence of sufficient hay fed in such a way that each animal gets a fair share. Shelter from sun, insects, wind and cold rain is a must – either in the form of an appropriate sized run-in shed or a natural windbreak.



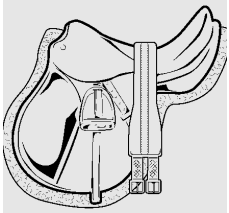


### SADDLERY

Saddlery must be in ample supply, fit the horse for which it is intended, be clean and supple. Saddle pads also should be clean.

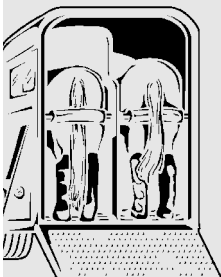


There should be a separate area fitted with proper racks and hooks for placing saddlery not in use. Bits should be clean and washable girths should be clean.



### TEACHING FACILITIES

Riding rings should have good footing and be free of rocks, holes and other hazards. They should not have sharp projections on the inside walls or fence surfaces. They must have gates that provide complete closure when the rings are in use. Outside rings should be enclosed with a sturdy fence of adequate height and be in good repair. These should be away from traffic and other distractions. Loose animals (dogs, cats, chickens, geese) should be well behaved and kept from being underfoot.



## TRAVEL SAFETY

Becoming a complete horseman requires many skills, including the safe conveyance of a horse in a trailer and the maintenance of the vehicle itself. One must pay attention to details, laws, and regulations and use common sense.

These suggestions should help you have a safe and comfortable trip. Remember, avoid traveling alone when trailering. There are many circumstances where an assistant can help avoid a dangerous situation. Consult with experienced horsemen for additional help.

## TRAILER MAINTENANCE

Safety Check (each time you tow or at least weekly).

### CHECK:

- Oil, fluid levels, belts on tow vehicle.
- Hitch on tow vehicle for loose or cracked welds and bolts.
- Trailer for rust in receiver.
- Tow vehicle for loose ball.
- Both vehicles for loose or broken electrical connectors.
- Signal and brake lights on trailer.
- Safety chains and hooks and places they connect.
- Tire pressure on tow vehicle, trailer and spare tires.

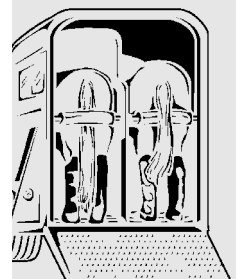
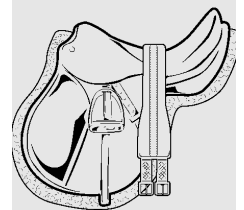
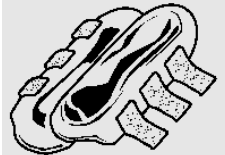
- Tire changing equipment to fit trailer and vehicle tires.
- Dual tires – hit inside tire with hammer, hammer will bounce back if air pressure is okay.
- Interior for wasp and hornet nests – they can appear within a week!

### BE SURE TO HAVE (WHEN REQUIRED):

- Tow vehicle registration form.
- Insurance card.
- Trailer registration with current inspection stamp.
- Coggins test and health papers required for horses.

### EACH MONTH:

- Clean and inspect your trailer (so it will be ready to go when you are)
- Clean inside and out with soap and water
- Wash and wax trailer exterior
- Check tires for cuts and uneven wear
- Check wheels, bearings and brakes
- Check quick releases mechanisms and D rings where they attach to trailer
- Check floor mats; inspect and clean floors with mats removed
- Check lubrication of nose wheel, hitch assembly and tailgate mechanism (especially if stored outside)
- Check center partition, lubricate groove bolts and rump chain or bars for easy removal in an emergency
- Check surface rust and sharp edges that may be developing, touch up with paint and repair when needed.

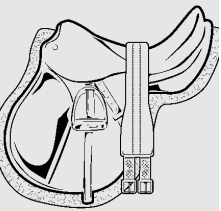


## PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET



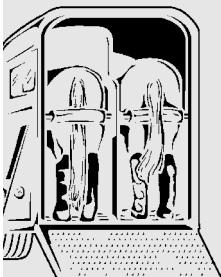
### AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR, CHECK:

- Inspection date, register in the appropriate month (if required)
- Insurance coverage
- Condition of springs (for cracks)
- Condition of all wiring, bulbs, lenses and reflectors
- All channel iron supporting the floor for rust or cracks
- The underside of the floor for dry rot by scraping and probing with a knife
- Tread and condition of tires, including the spare
- Ramps and hinge for sag or rust – oil hinges
- Tailgate and threads on screw-type clamps for wear, replace if beginning to strip
- Braking system, including shoes
- Wheel bearings (repack)
- Wood floor planks (seal with a wood preservative)



### EQUIPMENT LIST FOR TRAILER *(Even for short trips)*

- Tool Kit – including:
  - Sturdy knife to cut tie ropes in an emergency
  - Crowbar (essential in case of need to remove center divider quickly)
  - Screw driver, plier, hammer, wrench, etc.
  - Extra bulbs for trailer light
  - Fuse (20 amp)
  - Extra pin for hitch of tow vehicle



- First Aid Kit – human and equine (see Horse Management Handbook for list)
- Small pail and sponge or cloth
- Extra cotton and leg wraps
- Jumper cables
- Spare tire and jack for tow vehicle and trailer
- Two chocks or blocks to put behind front and back tires when parked
- Towing chain
- Flares – in case of breakdown (for road warning)
- Large container of fresh water – can be used for horses, first aid treatment or some car problems
- Longe line, extra lead line and halter, sheet or blanket
- Broom, shovel, fork, rake, manure disposal bags (leave-parking areas clean)
- Hay and feed needed for trip
- Water and feed buckets, hay net (fastened so it won't swing around or drop too low) – with fresh hay for each trip
- Chains and hooks for putting up buckets and stall guard if staying overnight
- Maps, directions and phone number needed

## RIDING IN THE OPEN AND ON THE ROADS

All safety practices are even more important than when riding in the arena.

- Never ride alone.
- Let someone know where you will be riding.
- Be prepared for the unexpected at all times.
- Know and follow your state's traffic laws as they apply to horses.
- When riding in groups, plan the ride with the least experienced horse or rider in mind and be considerate of other riders.
- Avoid riding at night.
- A cellular phone can be a valuable piece of equipment.

## RIDING SAFELY AND CONSIDERATELY ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

Riding outside a ring – along trails and field – can be great fun and a nice change for you and your mount. To enjoy it fully, however, you must learn the rules that will keep you safe. A knowledgeable rider should follow these rules and show respect for the land he or she is privileged to ride on.

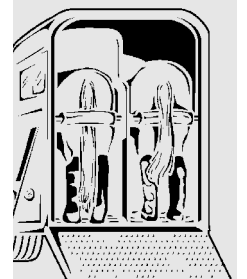
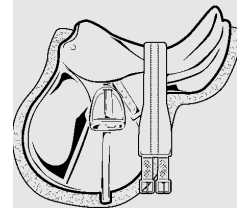
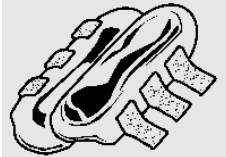
Before attempting to ride in the open, a rider should feel confident at the walk, trot and canter and have basic control of his or her mount.

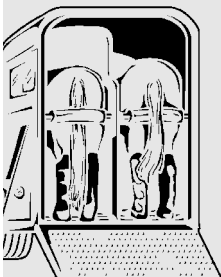
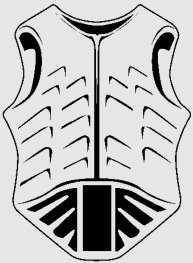
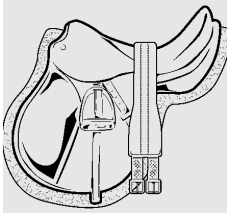
## ORGANIZATION

- Never ride alone. Make sure at least one responsible, more experienced rider goes with you.
- Check with property owners in advance to make sure their land is open to you.
- Carefully check your tack; make sure all stitching is secure on stirrup leathers, billet straps and girth buckles. (Secure means not one loose or worn stitch.) Make sure your stirrup safety bar is down and throat latch tight enough. Check fitting of all tack prior to leaving – make sure you are not on the last hole for bridle adjustments. You should have room to go at least one hole shorter or longer in case adjustments are needed. This also applies to your billet straps and girth.
- Check your mount to make sure his shoes are secure, if he wears shoes.
- Be aware of any horse which might kick. Tie a red ribbon as a warning on his tail and put him at the end of the line.

## WHAT TO WEAR AND TAKE ALONG

- Approved headgear, with the SEI seal verifying that it meets the current ASTM Standard, properly fitted and fastened. Safety Comes First!
- Riding boots, jodhpur boots, or high-top leather shoes with heel and a full smooth sole. Never sneakers or moccasins.
- Scarf or bandanna in pocket (for emergency bandage or sling).
- Kleenex, cellular phone, first aid kit.





## ON THE TRAIL

- When riding in a large group, the most experienced rider should be in the lead, the least experienced in the middle, and a strong rider in the rear.
- Stay behind one another so your horse's head is facing the tail of the horse in front of you.
- Distances (the faster you are going the longer it takes to stop) –
  - At walk, keep one horse's length between you and the horse in front.
  - At the trot, two horses' lengths.
  - At the canter, three horses' lengths.
- Walk for at least the first ten minutes and the last ten minutes. When it is cold, you may increase this time to fifteen minutes so that horses are adequately warmed up and cooled off.
- Stay on established trails.
- Close all gates behind you. The first rider can open the gate and lead the group through. All riders should then wait for the last rider to close the gate and remount, if necessary.
- Do not cross-plowed or planted fields; ride around the edge. If absolutely necessary, ride through the furrows, not across them.
- If you lose control in an open area, change your position to slightly behind the reins, but "pull-and-release". Guide your horse in a circle, trying to make the circles smaller and smaller. Your horse will probably return to the group. Most important – Keep your head in an emergency!
- Starting with the leader, every second rider should warn those behind of dangers ahead, such as broken glass, low branches, poor footing, holes, etc.
- Do not hold branches, as they will snap back in the face of the next rider.
- Before changing the gait, the leader should warn the group and give time for preparation.
- Stay in a group. Do not straggle. This will prevent horses in the middle and end of the group from having to go faster to catch up. Do not pass without specific permission from the group leader.
- Walk up and down hills.
- Do not "click" or raise your voice; use your aids silently so you do not influence other horses.
- Do not race – ever.
- Stay out of water unless your group leader is familiar with the footing. If it is necessary to go through water, enter slowly but confidently and encourage your horse to keep moving forward with his head up.
- Ride in single file; if a horse needs to pass (after permission has been given) turn your horse's head towards the passing rider to prevent any kicking.

# PONY CLUB SAFETY INFORMATION PACKET

- ❑ If a rider falls off and the horse runs away, do not chase him. Halt and wait as he may return to the group, or send one rider quietly to catch him. (Tidbits – carrots or sugar – may be taken along in case of such an emergency.)
- ❑ Knowledgeable riders are never impressed by unsafe riding or taking risks that may injure horse or rider.
- ❑ Do not let your horse nibble grass or leaves as he goes along.

## RIDING SAFELY AND COURTEOUSLY ON HIGHWAYS

This pamphlet is not intended to encourage Pony Club members to ride on the road, but rather to provide some guidelines for those who are confronted with necessary travel along highways.

Riding lore has assumed that jumping, racing and Western speed events are the most dangerous of horse sports, but accident studies both in the United States and England show that most accidents result with horses on pleasure rides going no faster than the walk.

As open land inevitably disappears, more and more of these pleasure riders, including Pony Club members attending Pony Club activities, are going to have to negotiate roads.

If there is an accident with a motor vehicle, it is natural enough for the rider to blame the driver.

Often, of course, it is the driver's fault – usually because of ignorance. However, the rider can also be at fault and all too frequently is.

All riders must learn to share the road with other users in a safe, courteous, and pleasurable way.

## BEFORE RIDING ON THE ROAD, YOU MUST:

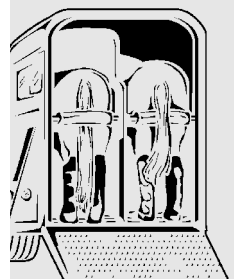
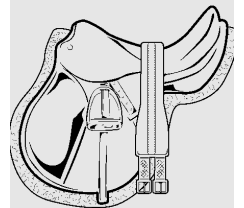
Know and understand the Highway Code of the State in which you live – the meaning of all traffic signs, signals, control lights, and the regulations concerning them.

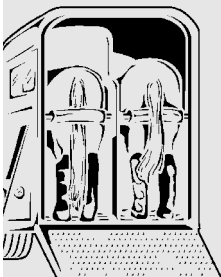
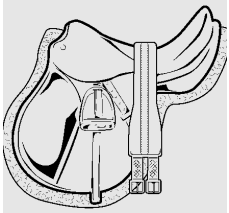
Remember that you must obey the instruction of Police Officers or other appointed persons engaged in controlling traffic. Your State Department of Motor Vehicles will supply you with a Driver's Manual in which the Highway Code is spelled out.

Find out if you or your horse is likely to be considered liable if you cause any harm to other people or their property. Your Insurance Carrier can tell you this.

Make sure your tack and clothing are in safe condition and are appropriate for your activity – this should include footwear and a properly adjusted ASTM/SEI helmet.

Make sure your horse is free from irritations (galls, flies, etc.) and that shoes, if worn, are in good repair.





## RIDING ON THE ROAD

Make sure you can control your horse in traffic. If you have a green horse or one that you know is traffic-shy, go on the road only in the company of steady horses. Better yet, keep to quiet roads and avoid peak traffic times until your horse has learned to accept oncoming or passing cars and trucks.

Remember – the highway is no place to teach your horse discipline. If you must take your green horse on the highway, do not stop him to allow vehicles to pass unless you can move quite clear of the road. A stopped horse is concentrating on the oncoming car and is ready to swing his quarters towards it or run away. A moving horse being asked to continue walking has most of his attention on the rider and less on the passing traffic.

Look and think ahead at all times. Anticipate a dog running out or an unfamiliar trash can. Make a detour, if necessary, to avoid the obstacle. Be alert for all possible hazards, particularly those coming from behind. By using your voice, prepare your horse for silent vehicles from the rear (i.e., bicycles). Remember, you have a responsibility not only for yourself and your horse, but for the vehicles and their drivers that share the road.

## RIDING IN GROUPS

If you are responsible for a group, use only a steady, road-wise horse in the front and the back of the line. Know the habits of every horse in the group (i.e., will stablemates become agitated if separated; which ones tend to shy; which ones tend to dawdle or rush). Put young, traffic-shy animals on the inside and the middle of the group. The same rule applies to young, novice riders. Better yet, avoid this situation. Let the novice horse and rider learn in one-to-one situations on quiet roads. See that riders keep a safe distance apart – one horse's length since you should be walking. Do not get so strung out that motorists are tempted to go fast when passing.

When it is necessary to cross a highway, use a flanking movement rather than crossing single file. After crossing, no one should proceed until all other riders are across the highway.

School your horse to expect to stop at the edge of the road before crossing, whether or not there is on-coming traffic. Also train your horse to walk across roads both because of traffic and frequent slippery surfaces. If this habit is well established, it could prevent potential trouble in the future if your horse may be anxious to get back to the stable to another horse friend.

## ADVERSE ROAD CONDITIONS

If riding on winter road surfaces cannot be avoided, extra care must be exercised. Ask your farrier about shoeing for these conditions. Discuss with him the use of borium, etc. Allow your horse the maximum use of his head and neck and encourage him to walk on. Horses usually balance themselves better with as little interference from the rider as possible.

## RIDING AT NIGHT

Riding at dusk or by night should be avoided. However, if you must ride after dark or at dusk, the cardinal rule is “be seen-be bright”. This means carrying an effective light and wearing retro-reflective clothing. Remember, dusk is an especially dangerous time to be on the highway. Do not ask someone to follow you in a car, because headlights cast shadows, which make it difficult to see and also may spook the horse. Your eyes as well as your horse’s will slowly become accustomed to the night.

## REMEMBER

- Be considerate and helpful to other road users, taking special care when passing pedestrians who may be frightened of horses. A friendly smile and hello may put them more at ease, and your own sense of relaxation will be shared by your horse.
- Always acknowledge any courtesy shown by others toward you and your group. A smile and thank you to a thoughtful driver are invariably remembered and may be helpful to the next rider encountered by the same driver.
- Follow mannerly trail procedures. Pass other riders and pedestrians only at a walk, and only after requesting and receiving permission to pass.
- Plan ahead when observing possible hazards. Signal your intention clearly and well in advance. Allow sufficient time for the other person to react and take the necessary action.
- A smile and a thank you are never improper and always leave a good impression.
- Being courteous, alert, visible, and prepared add up to being safe!!!

