

The Pony Club Annual Instructors' Conference 2011

“COACHING FOR GOLD”

Featuring:

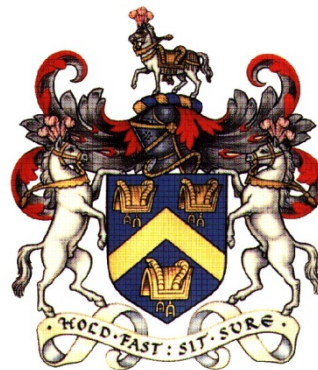
Yogi Breisner MBE FBHS

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Robert Blane BHSI – The Pony Club Endurance Riding Committee



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Welcome to Bishop Burton Arena and our Annual Instructors' Conference for 2011.

I am delighted to welcome you all here today especially in my capacity as the new Chairman of Training for The Pony Club. We all live very busy lives and have enormous schedules to fit into them. I am convinced that the most important part of being a coach is the time we set aside for ourselves to develop and train as coaches and instructors. It is vital we keep developing and I hope you will use this day to ask any questions either to our presenters or to any member of the Training Committee here today.

The Pony Club, the Training Committee and its instructors and coaches feel very privileged to have Yogi Breisner this year to take our conferences. Last year saw the results of ten years of Yogi as the World Class Performance Manager for Eventing with a gold team medal and silver individual medal for William Fox-Pitt at the World Equestrian Games in Kentucky. We all look forward to 2012 and wish him and his team all the best in their training towards the Olympics.

Yogi's presentation is in two sections and is focusing on the Pony Club rider with the young horse and the Pony Club rider aiming towards the Area Show Jumping qualifiers.

As you will know, our newest competitive discipline is Endurance Riding which is not something that is familiar to all instructors. Today includes an introduction to the sport and then two further sessions on how to train riders for endurance riding, offering ideas for incorporating it into a lesson or rally, teaching fitness, and preparing riders for their first endurance competition. These sessions are being taken by Robert Blane, Chairman of The Pony Club Endurance Committee and a keen successful competitor himself.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, our Pony Club Instructors, for the time, skill, patience and enthusiasm that you put into helping our members achieve their full potential.

The Training Committee would like to thank Bishop Burton College, our speakers and riders and last but by no means least our sponsors, The Worshipful Company of Saddlers. We are indebted to The Worshipful Company of Saddlers for sponsoring The Pony Club Instructors Conferences and thank them for their very valuable support.

William Blane
Chairman of Training

Yogi Breisner MBE FBHS



Yogi has become one of the country's most successful and respected trainers of both riders and horses. As a rider he competed successfully in dressage, show jumping, horse trials and point-to-points.

He was a member of the Swedish three day event team for over a decade, winning team gold and finishing fourth individually at the 1983 European Championships, as well as representing Sweden at the Los Angeles Olympics. He was placed in the top ten at Badminton four times and was in the top ten world three day event riders for four years.

From 1978-1991, he worked at the famous Waterstock House Training Centre, near Oxford, training horses and students and became a Fellow of the British Horse Society. He was involved in training the Spanish Olympic three day event team and deputized as Chef d'Equipe at Atlanta in 1996.

Yogi was appointed World Class Performance Manager and Chef d'Equipe to the British three day event team in December 1999, prior to the Sydney Olympics when the team brought home a silver medal. Teams under his management have since brought home a further eighteen medals. In 2000, Yogi was appointed National Coach by British Eventing and has been instrumental in the development of coaching initiatives across all levels of the sport. In addition to the senior team, he also oversees the pony, junior and young rider teams.

He has also made his mark in the racing world; since 1994 he has lectured on jumping at the British Racing School in Newmarket, and his talent for teaching horses to jump has been utilised by a number of National Hunt trainers.

Coaching for Gold

GENERAL

Instruction, training and coaching should always be **fun, interesting, challenging, educational and enjoyable.**

- C – Communication
- L – Listen
- O – Organised
- C – Confidence
- K – Keep it simple

Three types of coaching sessions:

1. **Basic** – work to develop the basics in horses and rider.

2. Specific – work on a specific movement or weakness in horse and rider.

3. Competition – prepare for competition, test riding, course jumping.

Coaching must not take away the natural talent in the horse or rider, but should develop and enhance the natural talent and build confidence in the horse and rider.

WORKING WITH YOUNG HORSES AND YOUNG RIDERS

Work on establishing a good foundation.

Educate and develop horse and rider.

Get horse and rider to work in balance forward and in rhythm.

COURSE JUMPING

Get a general feel for the course.

Have a plan for your warm up.

Have a plan for before you go through the start.

Walk distances.

Look out for outside disturbances.

Course jumping is about control, the rider's ability to control the horse's pace (speed and rhythm) and direction. The rider must be able to adjust the horse's canter stride.

Endurance Riding

WHAT IS ENDURANCE RIDING?

Endurance riding is open to all Members and Associates of The Pony Club from the age of five. It promotes all round horsemanship and encourages Members to ride in the countryside safely. Competitive endurance riding focuses on completing a set distance at a certain speed with the horse finishing sound with an acceptable heart rate. Training Members can be easily incorporated into Branch/Centre activities whether it be within stable management or in mounted rallies. When competing at a ride, all Members must have a Pony Club Mastercard. This acts as a log of all rides a Member has competed at. These are available from Pony Club Headquarters. The Pony Club offer the opportunity for riders that have successfully completed 3 rides to qualify for The Pony Club Endurance Championships.

What type of horse / pony is needed?

The stereotypical view of an endurance horse is the Arab however any type of horse or pony can be used as long as the rider is comfortable. Horses must be over 5 years old to compete. One of the main skills that must be taught is how to get the rider's pony fit. This can also be incorporated into other disciplines such as eventing.

What tack and riding equipment is needed?

Endurance riding can be done with tack that would be used at a rally, there is no need for Members to purchase any special equipment. On a ride, Members must wear a medical armband and have their hat

correctly tagged. Clothing that is worn should be comfortable as riders will often be in the saddle longer than they are used to. It is important that saddles fit correctly so that the horse is not in discomfort. Synthetic bridles may be useful when cooling a horse down in hot weather. A map holder worn over the riders shoulder is useful and a saddle bag is almost essential.

Ride Preliminaries:

When Members feel ready to try a ride, the Branch may wish to organise a ride if there is sufficient interest or help them find a ride of an appropriate distance. (Details of how to organise a ride are published on the Pony Club Website). It is important that entries are sent to the secretary in plenty of time and a self addressed envelope is enclosed so that details of the ride and most importantly the map can be sent to the rider. Once the Member has received their map they will have to study it and measuring the distances to work out the time it will take them to get between points on the map. This task could be incorporated into training for the map reading achievement badge.

When arriving at the ride, riders must hand in their mastercard to the secretary and collect their number. A vet sheet will also be given to the rider. This should be filled out and handed to the vet steward before the first vet inspection

First Vet Inspection:

The first vet inspection is to check for soundness, to record the horse's heart rate and to check the horse over generally for lumps and bumps that may affect it during the ride.

Riders should present their horse wearing a bridle only. Saddles and boots should not be worn. Trotting up can be practiced at rallies before the ride so that the rider is confident on the day. It is important that the rider looks straight ahead and that the trot is purposeful and active.

Unfortunately if the vet does not feel that the horse is sound the rider will be eliminated at this point.

Understanding speed:

Many riders do not know how fast their horses' walk trot and canter is. Measuring the speed of different paces is a good and interesting exercise to give the rider a better feel for the pace of their horse. Measure a flat kilometre in a jog trot (about 10km/hour), an active trot about 12km/hour) and a canter about 15km/hour). The formula for calculating speed is:

$$\text{speed} = \text{distance} / \text{time}$$

FITNESS FOR ENDURANCE RIDING AND COMPLETING A RIDE

Recovery and reducing the horse's heart rate to low 40s or below:

- Advise the rider to walk the last kilometre.
- Cool the horse down before the rider reaches the finish.
- Encourage the rider to persuade the horse to drink or take in sugar beet water, apples or carrots,
- If possible, as much washing down as necessary, especially when weather is hot, but be careful in when it is cold.
- Encourage the horse to stale.

Understand the importance of rhythm:

Competing the endurance horse has great similarities to dressage and jumping. The horse which is in self balance, works into a light contact and produces a rhythmic stride will become considerably less tired and will have a much greater chance of finishing the ride sound. The rider should avoid mad gallops followed by a period of walk and then another mad gallop. This is considerably more tiring for the horse and will lead to an increase in the heart rate.

Items which the rider's crew should always carry (crew are the team who back up the rider and help at the venue and on course):

Slosh bottles, buckets, sponge and scraper, fresh water for drinking and washing down, Sugar beet water, spare reins, stirrup leathers/irons, spare shoes, waterproof clothes and refreshment for the rider.

At vet gates the rider may have to think about taking:

Several light rugs (one could be waterproof), feed, electrolytes, hay net, first Aid kit, clean numnah and girth, spare riding clothes, stethoscope / heart monitor, massager.

What the rider should carry:

First aid equipment, bandage, plastic sheet, Easy boot, , map holder with map, distance / timetable chart, gloves, drink, refreshment bars.

Ideas for teaching a rider to get a horse fit for endurance riding:

- Help the rider make a fitness plan with clear goal to achieve. Encourage the rider to use different types of work such as long hacks, canter work, hill work, schooling and gymnastic jumping.
- Use a G.P.S. system if possible to practise riding at different speeds.
- Learn how to use a stethoscope.
- Highlight the importance of feeding in relation to work load. Encourage the rider to base the feed on fibre and oils for slow release energy and avoid carbohydrates where possible.

Improving the rider and horse:

It may be useful to teach the rider exercises to maintain and improve self balance and rhythm for both horse and rider. The prospect of riding 40 km without self balance is a daunting prospect. BUT once the horse has learnt to cover long distances in self balance the rider will find it easier to improve his dressage and show jumping work.

Finishing the ride:

When making a plan for the ride, the rider needs to be aware of timekeeping. The rider should be encouraged leave enough time for the horse to walk the last kilometre to lower its heart rate. After finishing, the rider has half an hour to present their horse to the vet. It is important to highlight to the rider that the horse should be encouraged to drink, stale and keep relaxed but avoid stiffening.

INCLUDING ENDURANCE RIDING IN PONY CLUB ACTIVITIES

The principles of Endurance riding can be incorporated into every day Pony Club activities.

In addition, lectures are often useful for older Members. If you feel that a talk from an experienced Endurance rider would be useful, contact your local Endurance GB representative. They would be only too delighted to organise a lecture for you. Alternatively any member of the Endurance committee would be available to give talks to your Branch.

Endurance Rallies:

- This is an ideal way to carry out exercises such as working on the different speeds of each pace. (Measure a kilometre and measure the time it takes in all different paces. you can then teach the rider how to work out their speed).
- Take heart rates before and after work.
- Discovering the increase of the heart rate with more active types of work and also how it returns to normal more quickly the fitter the horse is.
- Stable Management training can incorporate sessions linked to Endurance such as equine first aid.

Pony Club Endurance Rides:

Please read the Endurance rule book for full information on each level. There are a variety of rides available to Pony Club Members:

Robin	5-8 km	No faster than 12 km per hour.
Merlin	8-15 km	No faster than 12 km per hour
Kestrel	16-25 km	8-15 km per hour
Osprey	26-35 km	8-15 km per hour
Eagle	35-40 km	8-15 km per hour

Endurance GB Rides:

Endurance GB has kindly given PC members permission to compete in their rides as temporary day Members. Rides are between 16 and 40 km, all details are in The Pony Club Endurance rulebook or on Endurance GB's website: www.endurancegb.co.uk

Championship Qualifiers:

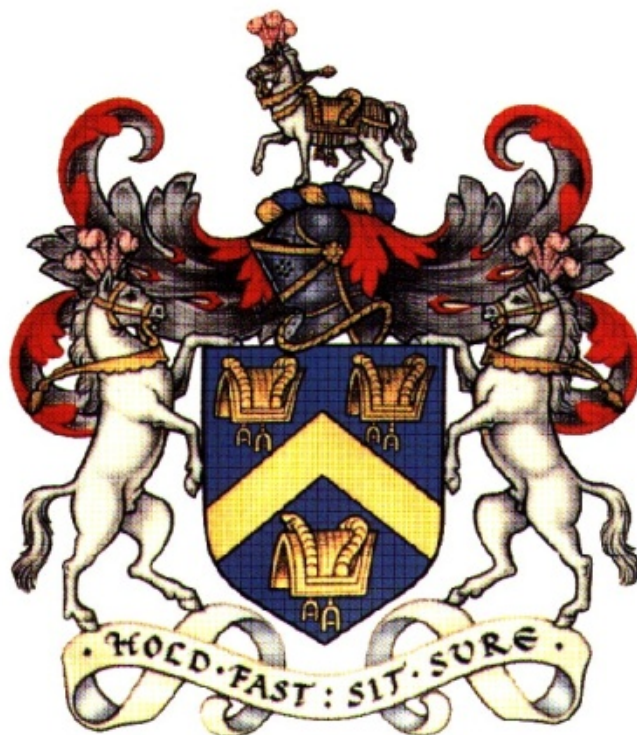
Pony Club members need to complete 3 rides successfully of the appropriate distance to qualify for the Championships. All details in the rulebook.

Optimum times for championships.

Kestrel	Calculated at 10 km per hour
Osprey	Calculated at 11 km per hour
Eagle	Calculated at 12 km per hour

The Pony Club website offers documents on running a ride, the pathway for Pony Club Endurance riders, more information on ride distances and also the Endurance Rule Book.

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