



# TRAINING BULLETIN

## DECEMBER 2014



Welcome to the December edition of The Pony Club's Training Bulletin. Please pass it on to anyone you think may be interested; it's perfect light reading with mulled wine and a mince pie. Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Jenny and Georgina in Training, and The Pony Club Training Committee!

### **PonyPrep Plus is here!**

We have been very busy over the past few weeks in Training, preparing PonyPrep's sister site PonyPrep Plus for launch on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December! This new e-learning site is designed for preparing for Efficiency Tests from C+ upwards, and provides bite-size learning based around the Manual and The Pony Club Tests in the Skills sections, along with videos to watch and interactions to measure their progress. Users can also create their own profile, and upload photos, details of achievements, log activities and sessions and join their virtual Branch or Centre. Coming in time for Easter, the Challenges section will provide an area for users to upload their own videos of them showing a skill they have learned, which will be marked by other users against specific marking criteria. The site is now live at [www.PonyPrepPlus.org](http://www.PonyPrepPlus.org) - we can't wait to hear what you think!



### **Instructors Conferences 2015**

Next year's conference dates are now confirmed, and tickets will go on sale in the New Year. The theme will be 'Instructing and Coaching through the Tests', and a variety of coaches will be delivering sessions at all Pony Club levels so that the attendees have plenty of new ideas and exercises to take away from the day.

- Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March at The Cabin EC, Aberdeen
- Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April at The Hand EC, Bristol

### **A Test Reunion**

If you hold your 'A' Test, please let us know your contact details, so we can send you all the details about the reunion event in June. If you know of anyone else who holds their A Test, but has not heard about the reunion, please ask them to pass on their contact details to us. The main event, at Addington Manor E.C., Buckingham on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June will be presented by Olympian Richard Davison and World Class Show Jumping coach John Ledingham. There will be a gala dinner the preceding evening, at the Best Western Buckingham hotel. Booking details will be released in the next bulletin, and invites will be sent to all A Test holders at that time.

### **Engaging and retaining Senior members**

Many Branches and Centres find that the older members 'drift off' when they are juggling exams, competitions and busy social lives. Here are a few ideas to help keep their interest:

- Training for Lungeing, B+, AH & A Test and Coaching Certificate - Join with other Branches and Centres and offer training for the higher level Efficiency Tests, or contact your Area Rep to arrange Training on an Area level. It is great for the Members to meet those from around the Area for Training and a chat rather than only when they are

competing against each other. Why not use Coaches on The Pony Club's [Visiting Coach panel](#)?

- Coaching Courses - The Pony Club has a clear, progressive structure in place for Members who are interested in Coaching within Branches and Centres, at all levels from E to A Test. The pathway starts with the 'Introduction to Pony Club Coaching Course', a one day course suitable for members from 16 years of age who hold at least 'C' Test. Following this course, members may enjoy shadowing more experienced coaches, helping at Junior camp, helping deliver training for Achievement badges. It is a fun, interactive course and dates can be found on the website, under Area Coaching Courses on the Training tab. For more details and to find dates and venues for these courses click [here](#) or contact your Area Representative. Also, look out in the
- AH Test - Changes are being made to the AH Test to make it more user friendly for Members. There is more information below.
- Ask the Members what they would like to have on offer - It may seem obvious, but a short email or questionnaire sent to each of the members asking them for just one idea could save you hours of thinking time! It could be something they would like to achieve or a new activity they would like to try in the next 12 months, and it could help retain their interest. Young people in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century have a clear idea of how they wish to spend their time, so give them a chance to let you know. Even if only one out of a hundred ideas is workable, it is a good exercise to help you get to know your Membership.

## Assessor Training Workshops

Assessor Training workshops have been running throughout the country during the autumn, with the training being well received by new and experienced Assessors who have come away with a clear idea of the skills they need.

There is now information about the Assessor pathway [here](#). Use the link to find dates and venues of workshops for 'D & D+ Assessor Training' on the left hand tab and 'How to become an Assessor' on the right hand tab. From January 2017, it will be recommended that new Assessors should attend an [Assessor Training workshop](#) at the relevant level, shadow a more experienced Assessor for at least one Test, and then co-assess at least one Test before assessing independently.

## SportsCoach UK Survey

SportsCoach UK is carrying out a survey of coaches to help shape future plans for coaching and improve the support and services offered. The survey is generic rather than specifically for Equestrian coaches.

The survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete and includes the option to save your answers should you need to complete it another time. As a thank you for taking part you can enter a free draw with five prizes of £50 shopping vouchers on offer.

Here is the link: <http://www.snapsurveys.com/swh/surveylogin.asp?k=141580840330>



## Rule Changes

The rule changes for 2015 are now listed on the website [here](#). The rule changes that affect coaching and training are:

- The Road Rider Test is now required before achieving the C+ Test. We have had some queries from some Branches who have got some Members already working towards the C+ Test, who may not be able to do the Road Rider Test before their scheduled C+ Test. It has been agreed that for 2015 only, if a Member is already training for the C+ Test, they may take that before the Road Rider Test if necessary to do so, but they cannot be awarded their certificate or felt until they have passed the Road Rider Test. From 2016 onwards, all Members must achieve the Road Rider Test before attempting the C Test.
- AH Test – From 2015, the AH Test will become modular, so Members can take and pass each section separately, and trainers are able to structure a training programme that works towards specific sections of the Test if they wish. There will be various options:
  1. Apply and take the whole Test. Any Member passing the whole AH Test on one day will be awarded a Distinction. A Member who is outstanding in all four sections may be awarded Honours, as is the case now.
  2. Apply for one or two sections at a time, so that training can be fitted in around school or University exams, working etc

Test dates will continue to be displayed on the PC website [here](#). Applications should still be made on AH Nomination forms, signed by the DC or Centre Proprietor. For ease of record keeping, all AH Test applications and results will now be dealt with at The Pony Club Office, but AH Tests will continue to run within the Areas.

## Visiting Coaches

We are pleased to have added another Visiting Coach to the panel:

- Richard Evans BHSI (Discipline Specific – Eventing)

The full list of Visiting Coaches can be viewed on the website [here](#) and any Branch or Centre can use any coach or coaches once each holiday period (identified by school holidays!). Visiting Coaches are recommended by the Training Committee, and can claim their travel expenses from The Pony Club Office, making them affordable for any Branch, no matter where they are based!



## Rider Development Pathway

Plans for the 2015 pathway are well under way! We have lots of Winter Training days with top coaches such as Nick Gauntlett, Warren Lamperd and Eric Smiley for Members who are interested in applying for the pathway; please encourage your Members to have a look online if they'd be interested in attending -

<http://www.pcuk.org/training/training/riderdevelopmentpathway> or  
<https://www.facebook.com/PCRD>

Applications for the RDP Assessments are also now open; there will be ten assessment days running during the Easter holidays, open to Members aged 12-25, who fulfil the [RDP Rider Criteria](#) in Eventing, Show Jumping or Dressage. One rider from each discipline at each assessment will be selected to go forwards to the RDP Camp at Somerford Park Farm on 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The six most promising riders at the camp will each receive individual training and support packages going forward.

Applications for RDP Winter Training and the Assessment days are being taken online at <http://events.pcuk.org>

## Free Training Opportunities for Members at UKCC courses

We regularly require demo riders for candidate coaches to work with in order to get the most from the course, and improve their coaching. Sessions are free to all riders and provide a good opportunity get in some extra practise and advice. Forthcoming dates and requirements are listed below, please ask anyone interested in coming along to email [Georgina@pcuk.org](mailto:Georgina@pcuk.org) to book in:



- Radway Riding School, Radway, Warwickshire, CV35 0UN on Monday 5th January - Jumping - Riders Pony Club Open level (SJ or Eventing) and some riders Pony Club Novice level.
- Addington Manor E.C., Buckingham, MK18 2JR on Monday 19th January (afternoon) - Indoor XC / Jumping - Riders Pony Club Open level - this session will include working with Eric Smiley FBHS.
- Addington Manor E.C., Buckingham, MK18 2JR on Tuesday 20th January (afternoon) - Flatwork - Riders Pony Club Intermediate (BD Novice) level or above.

## Instructors Database Reminder

Please don't forget that the database is changing, so we are asking for all Branch Instructors and Coaches to provide their details to go on to the database by 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014. If you didn't receive the email, or you need to find the forms again, you can find all of the relevant information and Instructor forms on the website - <http://www.pcuk.org/training>. If you are an independent coach, and you don't know whether you are already on the database, then either fill in the form [here](#) or send us an email ([training@pcuk.org](mailto:training@pcuk.org)) and we'll let you know what you need to do! We have been asking DCs to send us a list of all those who coach for their Branch, so that we can check each coach off when their information comes in. All Pony Club Centres have received information about the new Centre database in the most recent Centre bulletin.

## Cross Country Coaches

There seems to have been some confusion over who can coach Cross Country for The Pony Club, and some Branches have been wrongly informed that from next year people with the BHSAl qualification won't be allowed to teach cross country for The Pony Club. There is no specific minimum qualification for cross country coaches, so BHSAls can continue to teach cross country. We have asked Branches and Centres to ensure that someone with experience appropriate to the activity they are going to be expected to teach is selected. Some qualification assessments (such as the BHSAl exams and Generic UKCC Level 2 assessments) give instructors a qualification, but cross country is not included in the assessment. The people with these qualifications can go on to gain, or build on existing experience coaching cross country, so they may be used for cross country coaching if Branches and Centres feel they are appropriately experienced. If you have any queries about this, do get in touch, but please be reassured that the rules on this have not changed.

## Exercise idea



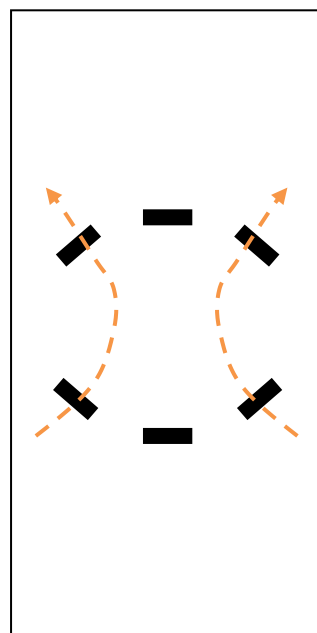
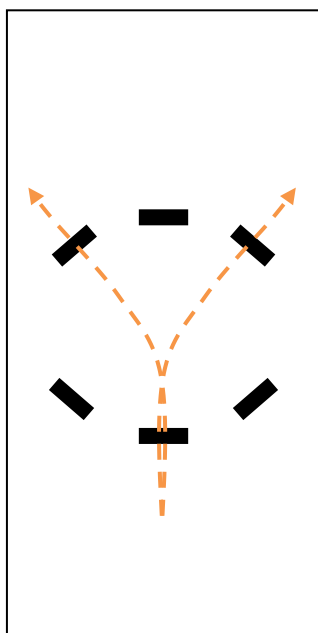
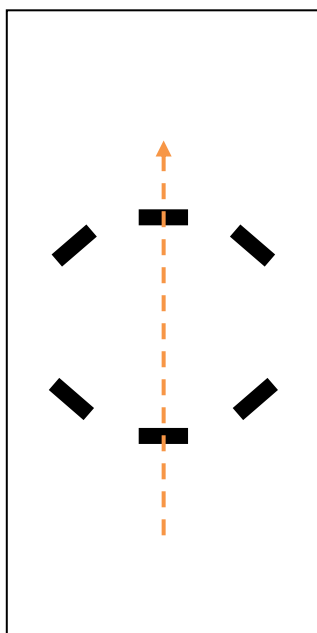
In this Bulletin, the Chairman of The Pony Club Training Committee, William Blane, has shared one of his favourite jumping exercises. It can be used at rallies and Clinics, with any size of group at any level. Remember if you have a favourite exercise you would like to share, please send it to [jenny@pcuk.org](mailto:jenny@pcuk.org)

### 'JUMPING EXERCISE'

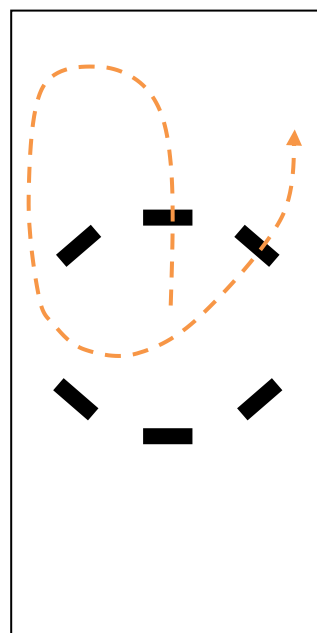
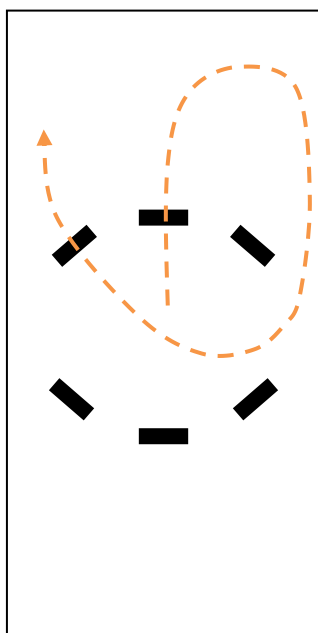
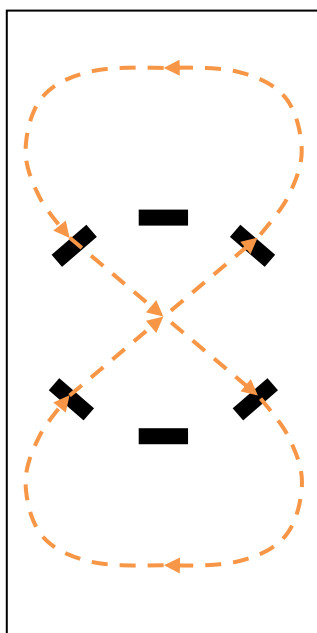
Aim: to improve and maintain rhythm, balance and straightness when jumping.

Initially, set up the exercise using poles on the ground, with a four stride distance between central poles, until the track is familiar and can be ridden accurately in rhythm. For ideas on helping rhythm, refer to the exercises in previous bulletins.

Introduce fences to work on rhythm, balance and straightness using a 4 stride related distance.



4 Stride Distance between central poles



1. Trot between the two centre poles - Use transitions to walk between the poles to test control and straightness.

2. Trot over two poles then over the shown directions to work on improving turns and accuracy whilst maintaining rhythm
3. Repeat in canter
4. Introduce small jumps depending on standard of riders and horses, ensuring fences are jumpable from both directions
5. Use the fences on the centre line to test balance and control, then introduce the turns
6. Remind the riders to plan their approach and getaway. Remember to position yourself so that you can ensure you are safe, you can see all the riders and you can observe what you have asked the riders to show you. For example, if you have asked the riders to work on their straightness between two poles or fences, place yourself at one or other end of the track you have asked them to ride to check if they are straight. This will enable you to give relevant feedback on the performance.

This exercise gives a multitude of options, including turns, circles, dog legs and related distances. It is a great exercise to use with a ride at a rally, particularly with rides of mixed ability on horses and ponies of varying size and experience.

It allows the ride to use the whole school including circles at each end of the school, so riders can be kept on the move without interfering with the exercise.

It can be used for all levels and standards of riders and horses as you can change the demands of the exercise for each individual rider or horse.