

**PONY  
CLUB**



# **RULEBOOK 2023**



HORSE AND PONY  
CARE

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# Contents

<b>OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>HORSE AND PONY CARE ADVISORY GROUP .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PART I – HORSE AND PONY CARE DRESS RULES.....</b>	<b>4</b>
1. RECOMMENDED DRESS CODE.....	4
2. HATS AND HAIR.....	4
3. FOOTWEAR.....	5
4. JEWELLERY.....	6
5. PRIZE GIVING .....	6
<b>PART II – ADMINISTRATIVE RULES FOR AREA COMPETITIONS AND CHAMPIONSHIPS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
6. ELIGIBILITY .....	8
7. COMBINED TEAMS.....	8
8. ENTRIES AND NUMBERS TO QUALIFY.....	9
9. WITHDRAWALS.....	9
10. ABANDONMENT.....	9
11. SUBSTITUTIONS.....	10
12. PROTESTS OR OBJECTIONS.....	10
<b>PART III – DIRECTIONS TO ORGANISERS OF CHAMPIONSHIPS, AREA AND FRIENDLY COMPETITIONS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
13. QUESTIONS.....	12
14. SECTIONS.....	12
15. HORSES/PONIES .....	13
16. ASSESSORS.....	13
17. RESULTS AND SCORING.....	13
18. PRIZES.....	14
19. MEDICAL SUSPENSION .....	14
20. UNSEEMLY BEHAVIOUR .....	14
21. INSURANCE .....	15
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>16</b>
APPENDIX A - HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION .....	16
APPENDIX B - DRAFT SCORE SHEET .....	20

# OBJECTIVES

The Blue Cross Horse and Pony Care competition features teams of three Members who demonstrate their knowledge and practical horsemanship skills taken from The Pony Club Efficiency Test cards over a number of rounds.

Every eventuality cannot be provided for in these rules. In any unforeseen or exceptional circumstances or any other issue in connection with Horse and Pony Care it is the duty of the relevant Officials to make a decision in a sporting spirit and to approach as nearly as possible the intention of these rules. It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure they are complying with the rules of this competition.

"As a Member of The Pony Club, I stand for the best in sportsmanship as well as in horsemanship. I shall compete for the enjoyment of the game well played and take winning or losing in my stride, remembering that without good manners and good temper, sport loses its cause for being. I shall at all times treat my horse with due consideration."

## HORSE AND PONY CARE ADVISORY GROUP

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**NOTE: Rules which differ from those of 2022 appear in bold type and side-lined (as this note)**

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# PART I – HORSE AND PONY CARE

## DRESS RULES

Dress should be appropriate to a working yard environment. Jodhpurs, boots, gloves and hats are expected. Coats should be available in case of weather change.

### 1. RECOMMENDED DRESS CODE

- ▶ Pony Club sweatshirt
- ▶ Membership badge
- ▶ Hat – see rule 2
- ▶ Gloves
- ▶ Correct footwear – see rule 4
- ▶ Jodhpurs/breeches

### 2. HATS AND HAIR

**Hair must be tied back securely, in a safe manner to reduce the risk to hair being caught and prevent scalp injuries.**

It is mandatory for all Members to wear a protective helmet at all times when in high risk situations such as loading, handling young stock etc. with the chinstrap fastened and adjusted so as to prevent movement of the hat. This rule defines the quality of manufacture that is required. Individual sports also have additional requirements with regard to colour and type of hat. It is strongly recommended that second-hand hats are not purchased.

The hat standards accepted are detailed in the table below:

Hat Standard	Safety Mark	Allowed at the following activities:
<b>PAS 015 2011 with BSI Kitemark</b>		All activities
VG1 with BSI Kitemark		All activities
<b>Snell E2016* onwards with the official Snell label and number</b>		All activities
ASTM-F1163 2004a onwards with the SEI mark		All activities

- a. The fit of the hat and the adjustment on the harness are as crucial as the quality. Members are advised to try several makes to find the best fit. The hat should not move on the head when the head is tipped forward. Most helmet manufacturers recommend you visit a qualified BETA (British Equestrian Trade Association) fitter.
- b. Hats must be replaced after a severe impact as subsequent protection will be significantly reduced. Hats deteriorate with age and should be replaced after three to five years depending upon the amount of use.
- c. Hats must be worn at all times (including at prize-giving) with the chinstrap fastened and adjusted so as to prevent movement of the hat.

### Hat Checks and Tagging

The Pony Club and its Branches and Centres will appoint Officials, who are familiar with The Pony Club hat rule, to carry out hat checks and tag each hat that complies with the requirements set out in the hat rule with a **pink** Pony Club hat tag. Hats fitted with a **pink** Pony Club, British Eventing (BE) or British Riding Club (BRC) hat tag will not need to be checked on subsequent occasions. However, The Pony Club reserves the right to randomly spot check any hat regardless of whether it is already tagged.

Pony Club (**Pink**) hat tags are only available to purchase from The Pony Club Shop.

Tagging indicates that a hat meets the accepted standards. No check of the fit and condition of the hat is implied. It is considered to be the responsibility of the Member's parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that their child's hat complies with the required standards and is tagged before they go to any Pony Club event. They are also responsible for ensuring that the manufacturer's guidelines with regard to fit and replacement are followed.

## 3. FOOTWEAR

Long boots and Jodhpur boots may be worn. Plain black or brown half chaps may be worn with Jodhpur boots of the same colour. Tassels and fringes are not allowed. For the Horse and Pony Care competition yard boots which are unsuitable for riding but are safe for yard work are permitted. Trainers or other footwear are not permitted.

#### **4. JEWELLERY**

The wearing of any sort of jewellery when handling or riding a horse/pony is not recommended and if done at any Pony Club activity, is done at the risk of the member/their parent/guardian. However, to stop any risk of injury, necklaces and bracelets (other than medical bracelets) must be removed, as must larger and more pendulous pieces of jewellery (including those attached to piercings) which create a risk of injury to the body part through which they are secured. For the avoidance of doubt a wristwatch, wedding ring, stock pin worn horizontally and/or a tie clip are permitted. It is recommended that stock pins are removed for cross country.

#### **5. PRIZE GIVING**

Competitors must be correctly dressed in their competition clothes, including hats.





# PART II – ADMINISTRATIVE RULES FOR AREA COMPETITIONS AND CHAMPIONSHIPS

Some of these rules can also be used for Branch/Centre competitions.

Each Pony Club Area shall organise a qualifying competition. Branches/  
Centres shall compete within their own Areas.

The competition comprises of a Mini, Junior and Senior competition. All teams can be made up with one member only who has also competed at another level in this year's competition provided they are eligible. Complete teams may not compete at more than one level.

The Area Representative in conjunction with the Organiser will appoint an appropriate person to act as the Official Steward at Area competitions.

## 6. ELIGIBILITY

**Mini Competition** – Teams to consist of three Members. Ages to be 10 years and under on the 1st January of the competition year, with one Member to be 8 years or under on the 1st January of the competition year.

**Junior Competition** – Teams to consist of three Members. Ages to be 13 years and under on the 1st January of the competition year, with one Member to be 11 years or under on the 1st January of the competition year.

**Senior Competition** – Teams to consist of three Members. Ages to be under 25 years on the 1st January of the competition year. One Member to be 16 years and under on the 1st January of the competition year. Of the remaining two Members, one may be between 21 and 24 on the 1st January of the competition year.

## 7. COMBINED TEAMS

A Branch/Centre unable to raise a complete team may combine with other Branch/Centres within their Area. Members may only combine with the permissions of their District Commissioners / Centre Proprietors and the Area Representative; fair and objective criteria must be applied when selecting these Members. Combined teams are to enable smaller Branches/  
Centres to field teams of Members who otherwise would be unable to do so.

## 8. ENTRIES AND NUMBERS TO QUALIFY

a. **Area Competitions:** Entries should be sent, together with the entry fee agreed by the Area Organiser, either to the Organiser directly or via the online entry system. Details to be found in the Area Competition schedule. If a team wishes to withdraw, part of the entry fee may be refunded provided notice is received by the Organiser seven or more days before the competition.

b. The winning team from each section of the Area Competition will qualify for the Championships. Any Area that has **10** or more teams competing in the section will have two guaranteed spaces for the Championship. Any Area that has 15 or more teams competing in the section at the Area Competition is guaranteed **three** spaces at the Championship. Should space allow, further teams may be invited to the Championships at the Organiser's discretion. 'Wild Cards' will be invited to the Championships by consulting scores and inviting the team that were closest in percentage to their 1st placed team at their relevant Area.

c. **The Championships:** Entries for teams who have qualified for the Championships should be made via the online entry system.

d. Teams qualifying for the Championships who do not wish to attend must inform the Organiser at Prize giving, or to The Pony Club Office at your earliest convenience in order that the qualification passes to the next highest- placed team that does wish to go.

## 9. WITHDRAWALS (ALL COMPETITIONS & CHAMPIONSHIPS)

**If a Branch or Centre withdraws a team or individual prior to the closing date for a competition, a full refund of entry and stabling fees will be made, less an administration charge. Withdrawals after the closing date for a competition will not be refunded.**

## 10. ABANDONMENT (ALL COMPETITIONS & CHAMPIONSHIPS)

In the event of a competition being abandoned, for whatever reason, a refund of 50% of the entry fee will be given. In such an instance the refund process will be communicated and must be followed.

## 11. SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions must be made before the start of the competition. **A replacement eligible member may be entered if a member is not available to compete at the Championships.**

## 12. PROTESTS OR OBJECTIONS

Apart from the Official Steward, the Area Representative and Officials of the competition, only District Commissioners/Centre Proprietors or their appointed representatives are entitled to lodge protests or objections. Protests must be made in writing and addressed to the Organiser. They must be accompanied by a deposit of £25, which is forfeit unless it is decided that there were good and reasonable grounds for the objection.

Protests or objections must be made not later than thirty minutes after the scores have been published. The Official Steward shall give their decision in the first instance.

If this is not accepted, the Jury of Appeal shall give their decisions after investigation and this decision is final.



# PART III – DIRECTIONS TO ORGANISERS OF CHAMPIONSHIPS, AREA AND FRIENDLY COMPETITIONS

## 13. QUESTIONS

Questions must be as practically based as possible. At the Championships some questions will be asked to the youngest Team Member first, this should be done at Area Qualifiers too, to ensure all Members get to answer questions.

**a. Minis:** Questions to be based on the Care section of the E, D and easier parts of the D+ Efficiency Test cards and Mini Horsemanship Achievement Badges. **At the Championships a small number of questions will cover all of the D+ syllabus.**

**b. Juniors:** Questions to be based on the Care section of the D, D+, C and easier parts of the C+ Efficiency Test cards **and Horsemanship Achievement Badges. At the Championships a small number of questions will cover Advances Achievement Badges and all of the C+ syllabus.**

**c. Seniors:** Questions to be based on the Care section of the C+, B and AH Efficiency Test cards. Questions at AH Test level should be used sparingly as not all Branches/Centres will have AH Test level competitors.

NB Centre Members: Centre Members do not own their own ponies, so be aware with wording and use open questions such as "How often should a pony be wormed?" rather than "How often should your pony be wormed?"

## 14. SECTIONS

There should be up to ten stations, one for each section. Teams rotate with ten minutes at each station for Senior and Junior and eight minutes for Mini. A whistle or bell will be rung with two minutes until the end of the section and again to indicate the end of the section. Two minutes are given to move to the next station, before the whistle/bell is rung again to begin the next section.

A ten-minute break can be scheduled after five stations.

Each section should be marked out of fifty. Three sections, in the order in which they will apply, must be identified in advance and announced at the

competitor briefing as the Tie Break Rounds, in the event that there is a tie between two or more teams.

A draft score sheet can be found in Appendix B for use at Horse and Pony Care competitions.

## 15. HORSES/PONIES

- a. **Minis:** Ponies under 14.2hh and ideally smaller.
- b. **Juniors:** Ponies should be under 14.2hh.
- c. **Seniors:** Horses should be between 14.2hh and 16hh.

## 16. ASSESSORS

Assessors can be used from local Branches and Centres; the Area Representative may be able to assist in finding suitable assessors.

- a. **Minis:** Assessors should be familiar with D+ Test standard.
- b. **Juniors:** Assessors should be familiar with C+ Test standard.
- c. **Seniors:** Assessors should be familiar with B Test standard.

## 17. RESULTS AND SCORING

Organisers are advised to hold a briefing for Assessors at the beginning of the day to ensure they are clear on timings and how to complete score sheets. **All competitors are required to attend a briefing before the competition. The briefing will include an explanation of the tie break round.**

- **Branches and Centres are judged together and not split into two sections.**
- **Area Competitions should be recorded on Pony Club Results.**
- **Area Competitions should be finished by 1st July unless permission is granted by The Pony Club Office.**
- **Full results must be added to Pony Club Results within 7 days of the Area Competition taking place. If you are unable to use Pony Club Results you need to contact The Pony Club Office before the Area Competition and must return full results within 7 days of the Area Competition taking place.**

- **Contact details for the Team Managers of the qualified teams should be provided; they will be contacted directly once the online event entry system is open for the Championships.**
- **At the end of the competition, Team Managers will have 15 minutes to check the provisional score sheet and put in any objections.**
  - i. **Mini Competition:** Although the Mini competition should be run in the same way as the Juniors/Seniors, a 'friendly' emphasis should be used to encourage future participation.

## 18. PRIZES

All competitors in the Mini Competition should receive a 'Special' rosette if not placed. It is recommended that a 'Best Individual' Award is awarded to an outstanding individual in each level of competition.

**At the Championships, all competitors who attend will receive a rosette from the sponsor, Blue Cross.**

## 19. MEDICAL SUSPENSION

If a Member has been suspended from taking part in any activity/competition/sport for medical reasons, this suspension must apply to all Pony Club activities until such time as the Member is passed fit by a medical professional to take part. It is the Member's and parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure adherence to this rule.

Medical letters are required, following a suspension for medical reasons, to allow a Member to take part in any activity again. The letter should be issued by either the hospital or specialist(s) involved in treating the injury, where appropriate.

## 20. UNSEEMLY BEHAVIOUR

Unseemly behaviour on the part of competitors, parents, team officials or team supporters will be reported as soon as possible by the Official Steward to The Pony Club Office. Offenders may be penalised by disqualification of the Branch/Centre or Branches/Centres concerned for a period of up to three years. Any competitor who, in the opinion of the Official Steward, has been rude or aggressive towards any officials **or competitors** at a competition, or who has behaved in an aggressive or unfair manner to any horse, may be disqualified.

## **21. INSURANCE**

The Pony Club 'Public and Products Liability Insurance' Policy includes cover for all the official Area Competitions and the Championships. Details of this insurance are available on The Pony Club website.

In the event of any accident, loss or damage occurring to a third party or to the property of a third party (including the general public and competitors) no liability should be admitted, and full details should be sent at once to The Pony Club Office.

The following statements should be included in all event schedules:

### **Health & Safety**

Organisers of this event have taken reasonable precautions to ensure the health and safety of everyone present. For these measures to be effective, everyone must take all reasonable precautions to avoid and prevent accidents occurring and must obey the instructions of the organisers and all the officials and stewards.

### **Legal Liability**

Save for the death or personal injury caused by the negligence of the organisers, or anyone for whom they are in law responsible, neither the organisers of this event or The Pony Club nor any agent, employee or representative of these bodies, nor the landlord or his tenant, accepts any liability for any accident, loss, damage, injury or illness to horses, owners, riders, spectators, land, cars, their contents and accessories, or any other person or property whatsoever. Entries are only accepted on this basis.



# APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX A - HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION**

There are strict procedures around the response to concussion.

### **a) General Advice**

Head injuries and concussion can be life changing and fatal. Serious head injuries are usually obvious, but concussion can be very subtle. It may not be immediately apparent but should be taken very seriously.

Members may be asked not to ride by an Official (including a first aider) who believes they may have sustained concussion either at the time of injury or from a previous injury (which may not have been sustained whilst riding). Concussion is difficult to diagnose, and practitioners of all grades must err on the side of caution. Thus, any decision must be respected, and professional medical support is advised to avoid further harm. Ignoring an official's advice about concussion breaches The Pony Club's Code of Conduct.

### **b) Incidents that could cause head injuries or concussion**

Any Member involved in an incident that could cause head injury or concussion at a Pony Club activity (for example, a fall from their horse/pony) should be assessed by the first aid provider in attendance.

Dependent on the level of first aid cover, the exact process of diagnosing will vary depending/based on whether the Member has suffered:

- ▶ No head injury/concussion
- ▶ Suspected head injury/concussion
- ▶ Confirmed head injury/concussion

The process for diagnosing each option is covered in more detail below.

An assessment may make it immediately obvious that there is no cause for concern. Reasonable care should be taken to ensure Members have not sustained a serious head injury or concussion.

### **c) Unconsciousness**

If a Member is unconscious following an incident they should be treated as if they are suffering with a confirmed concussion and the steps in point vii should be followed.

## **d) Who can diagnose head injury or concussion?**

Diagnosis of a head injury or concussion can be carried out by Trained First Aiders, Qualified First Aiders or medical professionals officiating at a Pony Club activity. If there is any doubt as to the diagnosis, the Member should see the highest level of first aid cover that is present who should make the diagnosis. If a definite diagnosis is not possible then the Member should be referred to a hospital or a doctor off site for a professional diagnosis.

The member must not ride again until they have been seen by a doctor/hospital.

## **e) Actions to be taken in the event of a suspected head injury or suspected concussion diagnosis**

If a diagnosis of a suspected head injury or concussion is made by a first aider, the parents/guardians should be advised to take the member to hospital.

Any Member who has been diagnosed with a suspected or confirmed head injury/concussion should not be left alone and must be returned to the care of their parents/guardians where appropriate.

If a Member has a suspected head injury/concussion at an activity/competition, organisers should inform the DC/Proprietor to ensure that the rider follows these guidelines.

Once a diagnosis of suspected head injury or concussion is made by the first aid cover present at the activity, then that decision is final. If a Member is advised to see a doctor because of suspected head injury/concussion and the parents/guardians decide not to allow the member to be examined (either at the activity or in hospital), the Member will not be allowed to ride again on the day and should be treated as if they have sustained a confirmed head injury/concussion. Depending on the circumstances, the decision not to allow further examination may be considered a safeguarding issue.

Where a doctor subsequently certifies that a Member does not have or did not suffer a head injury/concussion, and provides evidence that they are satisfied the Member is well enough to resume riding activity, that Member will be treated as if they did not sustain a concussion. Officials will endeavour to assess members in a timely way; however, head injuries can evolve over time, which may lead an official or professional to perform a series of assessments. A Member may miss a phase or part of an event during the assessment process and the Sport Rules for missing that phase or part will apply.

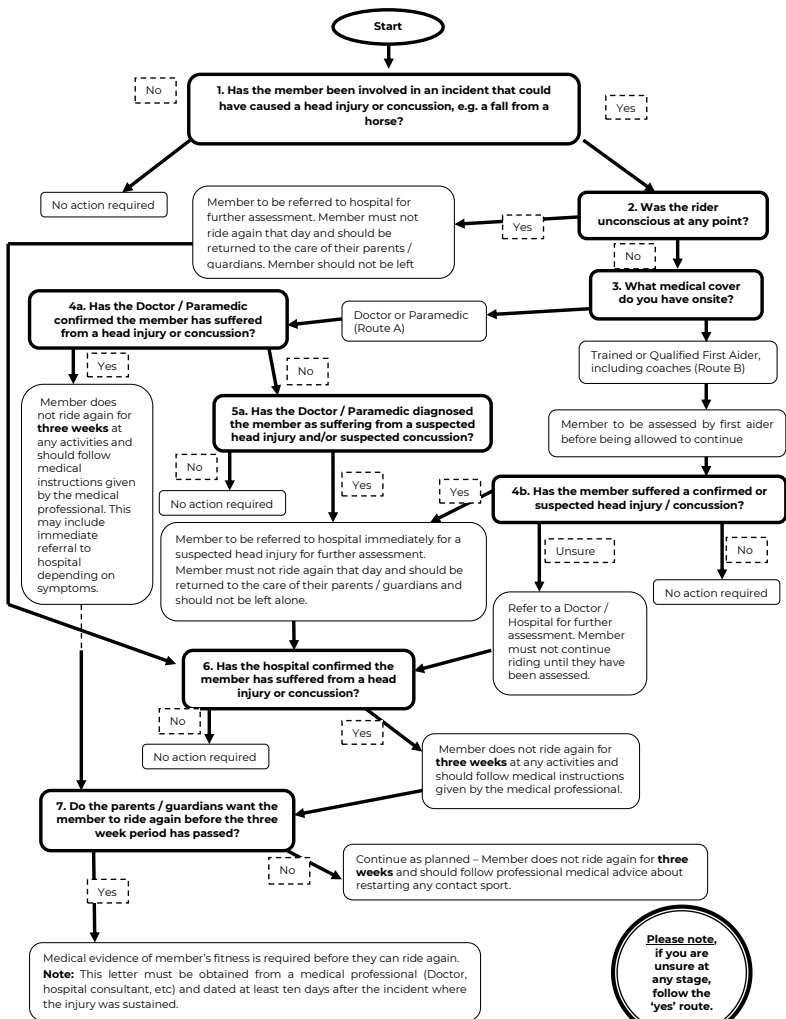
#### **f) Actions to be taken in the event of a confirmed head injury or confirmed concussion**

In the event of a confirmed head injury or confirmed concussion diagnosis, the doctor will advise the Member not to ride or take part in any activity that potentially involves hard contact for three weeks. The member may be advised that they could request a review of any ongoing concussion problems by a doctor (with experience in assessing concussion) after 10 days. If that doctor is happy to certify that the Member is not suffering with a concussion, the Member may ride again. Evidence regarding this decision is required, e.g. in the form of a medical letter. If no evidence is provided, the Member should not take part in any Pony Club activity that involves horses/ponies, whether mounted or unmounted, for at least three weeks after the initial injury.

#### **g) Actions to be taken in the event of a diagnosis of a confirmed or suspected head injuries/concussions outside of Pony Club activities**

Ultimately, it is the parent/guardians' responsibility to make a decision about the welfare of their child.

If a Pony Club Official becomes aware that a member has sustained a suspected or confirmed head injury/concussion and has been advised not to take part in any potentially hard contact activities, the Member must not be allowed to take part in any Pony Club activities that involve horses/ponies, whether mounted or unmounted for three weeks, unless appropriate medical evidence of fitness to ride can be provided by parents/guardians dated at least 10 days after the initial injury.



## APPENDIX B - DRAFT SCORE SHEET

**LEVEL:**

**BRANCH/CENTRE:**

**ROUND:**

	Question	Comments	Mark/5
1			/5
2			/5
3			/5
4			/5
5			/5
6			/5
7			/5
8			/5
9			/5
10	T&A Mark		/5
	TOTAL		/50







PONY CLUB  
22  
Horse and Pony Care  
Championships







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