

CANADIAN PONY CLUB



STARTING A PONY CLUB BRANCH

2004

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ORIGIN:

In 1928 the Institute of the Horse started a scheme of Sub-Branches throughout England to encourage riding. Several of these started paper chases and gymkhanas for children and thus heralded the birth of Pony Club. The Institute of the Horse inaugurated a Junior Branch known as the Pony Club on November 1st, 1929. Under the new scheme, the country was divided into districts corresponding with the different Hunts, each under the control of a District Commissioner, assisted by a Branch Executive Committee. By 1930, a membership of 700 was recorded. In this year also was formed the first affiliated Overseas Branch in Gibraltar. In 1931, the number of Pony Club Branches had reached 59 with a membership of 4,442. In 1934, Pony Club came to Canada with the establishment of the Eglinton Pony Club.

In 1947, the Institute of the Horse and Pony Club amalgamated with the National Horse Association of Great Britain, and became known as the British Horse Society and the parent organization and headquarters of the Pony Club. Today the Pony Club is represented in 30 countries with approximately 2,000 Branches and 100,000 members.

AIMS:

The objects of the Pony Club shall be:

- (a) to encourage those twenty-one years of age and under to participate in equestrian sports and to enjoy all aspects of activity related to horses and riding;
- (b) to provide instruction in equitation, horsemanship and in the proper care of horses; and to organize, sponsor, conduct and manage various activities relating to horses and riding;
- (c) to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty thereby cultivating strength of character and self discipline;
- (d) to promote the art of horsemanship generally, and in connection therewith to establish scholarships and bursaries for such purposes; and,
- (e) to accept, receive and take by devise, bequest or gift and to hold, possess and enjoy, for the objects of the Pony Club, donations, gifts, grants, devises and bequests of real and personal property of all kinds and upon such terms and conditions and upon such trusts as the donor or donors of any such property may prescribe.

CANADIAN PONY CLUB

The Pony Club of Canada was started in 1934 by Brigadier McKee and Colonel Timmis. The first Branch was Eglinton, followed shortly afterwards by London and Saskatoon.

The Canadian Pony Club is managed by a Board of Directors consisting of 13 elected Directors, one from each Region, plus a youth rep from West of the MB/ON border and a youth rep from East of the MB/ON border and the National Chair. This Board meets twice a year.

There are thirteen Regions across Canada: British Columbia Interior North, British Columbia Islands, British Columbia Lower Mainland, Alberta South, Alberta Central, Alberta North, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Western Ontario, Central Ontario, St. Lawrence/Ottawa Valley, New Brunswick/Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia.

Each Region is managed by a Regional Board consisting of the Regional Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, District Commissioners, Discipline Chairs and Visiting Commissioners. Regions are encouraged to add youth reps to their board. Within each Region there are Branches of the Canadian Pony Club to which individual members belong. In Canada alone, there are 175 Branches and approximately 3500 members.

STARTING A PONY CLUB

If you are interested in the possibility of starting a Pony Club in your part of the country, there are several preliminary steps to take.

First, you need to gather a group of children and parents who are interested in forming a Branch.

While there is no minimum or maximum number of families required to form a new Branch, there must be one adult over 21 who is willing to take the responsibility of being District Commissioner. The D.C. should contact the Regional Chair of the Pony Club for his/her Region, who will attend a meeting with them and answer any questions that might arise. You should be aware that statistics have shown that a new branch with 8 or more members has a much greater chance of success than a branch trying to start up with less than 8 members.

Secondly, you form a Branch Executive Committee. One person shall be elected as District Commissioner. An Assistant District Commissioner may also be elected. The District Commissioner shall hold office for a period of two years. Both the DC and the ADC must be 21 before taking office. Most Branches also elect a Treasurer and Secretary.

Thirdly, have all your members fill out the membership/risk form and PSO application form. Collect all the required fees. Submit the Regional and National fees to your Regional membership person, along with a copy of the membership/risk forms and a copy of the Branch List Form. All P.C. forms are available for downloading from our web site, or contact your Regional Chair for copies.

There shall be Branches of the Canadian Pony Club within each Region, to which the individual Members belong. The function of the Branch is to promote and implement the objectives of the Canadian Pony Club. The Branch is responsible to the Board of Directors for the satisfactory fulfilment of this function.

Each Branch shall be known by a designated name that has been approved by the Board of Directors. New Branches must be first recognized by the Regional Board then by the National Board. Check with your Regional Chair for the date of the next Regional Meeting and ask for the recognition of your Branch to be put on the agenda.

The District Commissioner shall hold office for a period of two years. The District Commissioner is eligible for re-election.

No person who is substantially interested in leasing, renting, or selling horses, instructing in equitation for personal profit or otherwise earns a substantial income from such matters shall be eligible for election as the District Commissioner of any branch which is dependent upon the use of any such goods or services which may be controlled by that person.

For the complete list of duties of the District Commissioner, please read the D.C.'s Handbook.

New Member Package

Once you have formed your branch and have sent off your membership list and fees to the Region, each new member in your branch will receive a package directly from the National Office. This package includes a letter of welcome from the Chair of Canadian Pony Club, a supply order form, a parent's information letter, a passport and a few stickers.

Members should be encouraged to use their passports to keep an accurate record of all activities.

When a member joins your Branch, they should be given a P.C. pin and a copy of the C/D Testing Procedures.

Each member should be encouraged to purchase either the USPC D Manual or the British Manual.

DUES

Annual dues in local Branches vary, but are usually from \$100.00 to \$150.00 a year, depending on the needs and program of each Branch. This amount includes a Regional and National Fee. Each Branch must then remit a stated annual amount per child to the Region before the year end. The Region retains a portion for operational expenses and sends the balance to the National Treasurer. Branches should collect their fees in the fall and turn in their fees and membership lists to the Region by November 15 or whatever date is designated by the Region. Regions must turn in their fees and Regional lists to National by December 30.

PROGRAM

Each Branch arranges its own program and stress is put equally on riding and stable management: The care of the horse, its feeding, tack, diseases, etc. Some Branches are able to ride all year round, but others have no winter facilities and confine winter meetings to lectures, visits, etc.

Workbooks or Study Guides are available for each level from D to B2 to help your members prepare for testing. These may be purchased from Supplies or they may be downloaded for free from our web site.

The Badge Program is an educational program, which your members will enjoy. They can earn a wide variety of badges depending on their skills and interests. You can see the badges on the web site.

DRESS REQUIREMENTS

All prospective Pony Club members must wear an ASTM/SEI approved hard hat with a securely attached harness (fastened) at all times when mounted at a Pony Club event, and boots with a heel. To own a horse or pony is definitely an advantage, but some Branches have ponies available for non-owners.

All members must wear a medical armband, with a completed, up-to-date medical card in the holder. The armbands are available through supplies or from your Region. Replacement medical information cards are available free from supplies or may be downloaded from our Website.

COMPETITION

Each Region in the Canadian Pony Club has its own competitions, such as Quizzes, Rallies, Prince Philip Games, Show Jumping, Dressage and Tetrathlon. Zone Competitions are held in Dressage, Show Jumping and Rally with occasionally combined events occurring in a specific year. PPG and Tetrathlon hold National Championships every year. Every two years, an Inter-Pacific Rally is held to which teams

from Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the United States are invited. Tetrathlon and PPG have International Exchanges every year.

It is hoped that the competitive aspect of Pony Clubs will not be over emphasized. It is to be borne in mind that competition is not the aim of the Pony Club . What is hoped for is to provide a broad base of training in horsemanship and horsemastership from which able children will emerge to specialize in all phases connected with horses.

TESTING

Once a child has become a member of the Pony Club, he/she will be tested according to his/her ability. The lowest is a 'D', the next one up is 'D1', into 'D2'. About the age of 11 - 15 a member is generally tested for the 'C' level, then 'C1' into 'C2'. A child may try his/her 'B' test if capable after the age of 14. There are two 'B' tests: 'B' and 'B2'. The highest standing is 'A' level. This is done in two separate tests; the 'HA', or Horsemastership Test, and the RA Riding Test. These are not generally attempted before the age of 17. Each Region has a Testing Representative who should help any Branch with respective tests.

Neither the passing of tests nor competitive riding are among the "Aims of Pony Club" . However, both are used as a stimulating adjunct to encourage the achievement of new skills. Competition is usually held on a team basis with all the team members contributing to the total score. Individual high point performances are recognized but not stressed.

In addition to this booklet, you will need to read the D.C's Handbook as well as the Canadian Pony Club Bylaws and the Canadian Pony Club Operations Manual & Policy Handbook. These three publications will be sent to each new branch along with their Branch Certificate, once the Branch has been accepted by the National Board.

Canadian Pony Club Supplies Office

This office carries many of the books on the required reading list, plus all National Rules, Educational materials and testing supplies.

National Supply House
Val Crowe
Box 127
Baldur, MB R0K 0B0
Phone 1-204-535-2368 or 1-888-286-7669
Fax 1-204-535-2289
e-mail pvcrowe@mts.net or ponyclub@escape.ca
Visit our website at www.canadianponyclub.org