

LESSON PLAN 8 -Teach the rider to recognize the correct leading leg at canter

Pony Club Venue:

Date:

Rider:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Pony:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Topics and goals for session:

1. Rider to know correct aids to canter.
2. Rider to be able to identify the leading leg at canter.
3. Rider to understand correct procedure to bring pony back to trot if incorrect canter lead.
4. To introduce a new school figure/arena language to riders.
5. To revise, integrate and consolidate previously learnt school figures, arena language/protocol.

Equipment needed and layout:

- Arena with letters.
- 6 x Cones – 3 at each corner or arena with enough distance apart to allow rider to do the following: 1st cone –check position & ½ halt; 2nd cone – prepare to canter (thinking of aid); 3rd cone – ask for canter.
- Two different colours of chalk or tape – red and white.

Introduction to session (key points):

- Introduce yourself and chat to riders about themselves and their mount (some combinations may be new to you, and you also need to know what they have been working on since the last rally).
- Revise one rein stop and diagonals.
- Why the horse has a leading leg at canter – footfalls; beats; balance.
- Dismounted riders to canter on the ground to assist in recognition.
- Ensure the rider has the skills to recognize which is the leading leg and know if the horse is on the correct leading leg – mark shoulders of the horse with coloured chalk or tape (white for left and red for right).
- Ensure correct canter aids are known and how to give them correctly on both reins.
- School figure/arena language – Serpentine 3 loops (at trot);
-- Riders practicing lateral/advanced work always have the right of way.

Gear Check (List gear to be checked): As per Gear Checking Rules for Pony Club.

- **Rider:** Clothing - Clean & correctly attired with appropriate Club uniform including safe boots & correctly numbered helmet;
Hair - Long hair tied back;
Jewellery - Check jewellery;
Fitness - Age of rider; weight of rider in comparison to mount.
- **Horse:** Gear - clean; correctly fitted; approved; stitching OK; safe;
Condition - clean/groomed (no bot eggs), including feet;
Fitness - age; soundness; what work has mount been doing?
(Are pony/horse and rider capable of doing planned lesson?)

Warm up activities and rider exercises:

Halt, walk and trot using upward and downward transitions, and large school figures, to ensure pony/horse is sound, attentive and listening to rider. (Canter could be included in the warm up but would depend on the rider's level of skill & ability.)

Select some rider exercises to complete on a 20 metre circle.

New Skill/s (name of skill):

- Achieve and identify the correct leading leg at canter.
- Serpentine 3 loops at trot.
- Riders practicing lateral/advanced work always have the right of way.

Key teaching points and demonstration method:

Demonstrate using one rider out in front of group and ask riders questions to keep them alert and interested.

- Use a demo horse that has each front leg bandaged with a different colour of bandage (white for left and red for right) – get done prior to lesson.
- Discuss number of beats in the canter (3) and order of footfalls.
- Reinforce the preparation and aids for canter (both reins).
- Transitions into and out of canter can be included.
- Serpentine 3 loops.
- Discuss the fact that riders who are practicing lateral/advanced work always have the right of way (important for them to know if they happen to ride at other venues with advanced riders).

Practice activities:

- Tape or chalk the shoulders of the horses – white for left and red for right.
- Have riders trot in single file, two horse distance apart, with a leading rider. Get each rider, one at a time, to canter from the front of the ride to the back, and before reaching the back of the ride ask them to identify the leading leg. They are to take up canter using the cones at the corners, following the steps as mentioned above under the heading `Equipment Needed and Layout'. Depending on the level of riders, they could perform a 20 m circle at B, E, A or C before re-joining the ride. Once all riders have completed the exercise, they can change rein and change leaders.

Practice activities continued:

- **It is easier for riders to take up canter on a corner or circle. A pole on the ground can be used to assist a pony going into canter. Telling a rider to keep their eyes on a person or cone in the centre of the circle can also assist them in getting the correct canter lead.**
- **Practice 3 loop serpentines – at trot.**
- **Practice giving right of way to a rider doing lateral/advanced movements – A rider in the group can be chosen to `pretend` that they are the rider doing more advanced work while the others move appropriately around them.**

Cool Down:

Long rein walk using school figures.

Session Evaluation and Summary:

- **Riders to line up on centre line facing B or E.**
- **Discuss with riders if they understand the aids and are confident in recognizing the correct leading leg at canter – give them some more tips - something to take home to practice. All riders to be involved in this session using question techniques rather than dictating coach's thoughts.**
- **Evaluate the lesson – BE HONEST! - What did you as the coach like?
- What worked well or didn't work?
- What would you do differently?**