

Best Practices – Greenacres Riding Center

Before Accepting Members into Pony Club

- Greenacres Pony Club Members are our competition team- they must be riding D2 (Midsouth competition height - jumping 2') before they are invited in to be members. This encourages the younger riders to stick with riding to become a Pony Club member someday & separates out our members from the general lesson riders at our center as something different and “elite” in the eyes of the younger riders. Only our Pony Club members are permitted to travel/compete at off-site shows.
- We try to make becoming a Pony Club member at our center a special experience from the invite letter to the Introduction to Pony Club meeting.
- Pony Club Privileges at Greenacres Riding Center
 - Only students allowed to ride in off-site competitions & schoolings
 - Only students allowed to lease Greenacres horses (allowing them to ride up to 6 days per week)
 - Only students allowed to longe Greenacres horses
 - Only students allowed to ride mounts out to turnout fields bareback
 - Only students allowed to “pony” horses
 - Only students allowed to lead trail rides
 - Only students who get two lessons per week (regular lesson and PC mounted meeting)
 - Only students allowed to keep tack trunks at the barn
 - Only students allowed to teach unmounted classes
- In September, we send out a formal invitation letter to our students that are being invited to join Pony Club for the upcoming year. Within two weeks of this letter going out we host an “Introduction to Pony Club” informational night for the potential new members and their families. I have a PowerPoint of “What is Pony Club” that we briefly run through, covering commitment, expectations, calendars and fees for parents/members and then we open the floor to the current Pony Club members to give testimonials as to “what Pony Club has done for/means to them.” We finish with a question and answer period and then enjoy a pot-luck dinner that allows everyone new & old to mingle. Parents/New Members are given a deadline at this meeting to make their decision to join and have payments/paperwork in. We do a follow-up/reminder email the week before the deadline.
- New members (and their parents) are assigned a “mentor.” The new member has another current member of the Pony Club to contact with any questions. The parents of the new member are given another “mentor parent” to answer their questions as they come up.

Members and Rallies

- It is mandatory that all new members attend at least one rally as a Stable Manager before they will be permitted to take a mount to a rally.
- New members are strongly encouraged to attend Quiz Rally as it is not only an excellent educational experience, but an extremely bonding experience for all of our club members.
- In order to encourage all of our members to participate in Quiz each year, all fundraising money earned in the previous year is first used to pay for any/all members to attend Quiz Rally for the lowest cost possible (often for free- including the hotel & food, depending upon the money available). Any money left over after paying for members to attend Quiz is used to pay for Stable Managers to attend Rally for free (including hotel & food). If there is still money left, it is divided amongst the riders to off-set the costs of entries to Rally.
- Riders that have been members the longest get seniority over newer members. Members with seniority get first pick of Rally mounts and teams. The CA has final say on all mounts used.
- Riders taking a mount to Rally must lease the mount for the 10-week Spring Session to allow time to develop the condition needed for both the rider and the mount before Rally.

- Senior members (Bigs) are assigned a younger/junior member (Littles) as their “partner” for the days of Rally. All Littles are to direct any and all questions to their Bigs before coming to the Coach/CA.

Parents of Pony Club Members

- In order to stay in good standing parents must participate in Quiz or Rally or 4 on-site show positions.
- Championships – expect to attend and/or drive if your child qualifies & participates
- Off-Site Shows – if your child rides you need to be prepared to drive to/from the show, bring food/beverages and assist in any way needed at the show. For the safety of the riders, one parent from the group competing must be present at all times for the duration of the show.

Certifications

- Two certifications are offered each year. In the Spring (May) all new members are certified and current members may rate-up in Horse Management and/or Flat. Fall certifications are held at the end of August/early September for riders to rate-up to higher levels in the Classic format.
- Senior members hold “Mock Certifications” where they run new members through the examination both unmounted and mounted (this is good practice for both members)
- Senior members videotape and photograph each other during their regular weekly lessons and during the PC mounted meetings and critique what they see themselves and others doing that is good/bad and whether it would meet the standards for the level they will be testing.
- The classroom is set up with materials needed for testing each section of HM for two weeks before each certification. Members can use the classroom individually or as a group anytime during stable hours.

Fun Things the Group does together

- The club puts on a tailgate every year at Rolex on Saturday for XC
- Members go out to eat together after mounted meetings each week
- Study groups are formed various nights per week at rotating houses for any member who is available to get together to study for Quiz during the weeks leading up to Quiz Rally- this is in addition to our weekly unmounted meetings (each week covering a different section of Quiz- Barn, Classroom, Mega-Room, etc) held in Jan/Feb