



# K & C\* Newsletter

Issue 6

June 04

Ringwood Horse &  
Pony Club

## C\* Exams - A Great Effort!

### Dates to remember

- \* Tuesday 29th, Wednesday 30th June - **Two day Camp for C\* & K.** Including preparation for written Exams.
- \* June/July 2004 next **written exam for C\* & K.**
- \* 3rd August - Bookings close for those wishing to do ridden exam for C\* & K Certificate.
- \* 29th August. **PCAV Annual General Meeting** at Geelong. Come along and learn more about how our Club is run. Present a report back to your own Pony Club.
- \* Saturday 4th September - **Ridden Exam for C\* & K riders.**
- \* 29th October - Bookings close for those wishing to do written C\* & K Exams in December.
- \* **Knotting Workshops:** Tuesday 13th, 20th and 27th July, 7.30pm at Ringwood Pony Club

Our congratulations to Erin O'Callaghan from Ringwood Pony Club, who has successfully completed both phases of the C\* Certificate. The examiner was pleased with Erin's riding skills and general horsemanship. I supervised the Exam and can certainly say that Erin displayed wide variety of skills and knowledge. Pauline Hill and Georgia Appleton also sat the exams, and hope to complete their C\* Certificates in September. It was interesting to note the areas that were weakest. If you are doing C\*, the examiner is looking for an experienced rider with a broad range of skills. Horses must be presented fully plaited, including fore-

lock and tail. If your horse's tail is clipped, then you may need to demonstrate a tail plait on another horse.

Lungeing must be done safely, with knowledge of the way the rider may drive the horse, and equipment used.

A general knowledge of local poisonous plants is essential. One also be able to explain how to use common horse feeds

In this newsletter I have included several articles on areas that the girls seemed to be weakest in. Please read them, and if you have any questions, see me at the June Camp, as we will be talking about such topics on the Tuesday night.

### C\* & K Camp Reminder—June 29 & 30

You don't have much time left to register for this Camp. We have booked Linda Brooks and Paul Rassmussen, so expect some top instruction.

Let me know ASAP if you need to be examined for any K Options, so that we can book your examiners - They

cannot be anyone, they must be approved by the DZI Panel, and are experts in their field. There is an additional \$10 charge for each K Option Testing, to cover travel costs, etc.

Wet weather may limit riding, but come prepared to ride in the rain and bring



*Slippery conditions made Cross country riding difficult on the day.*

plenty of changes of clothes. Meals are included in the cost of the camp. I also suggest that you bring snacks for in between meals.

For this camp, Riders must have their C Certificate.

## Knotting Theory Nights - At Ringwood Pony Club

You may attend all three nights, or only those that interest you. Costs include a booklet on how to tie the knots and their uses.

Tuesday 12th July will cover most of the basic knots needed for the K Option and C\* (no splicing). On Tuesday 19th July you will be learning how to splice and make your own "really strong" lead rope.

On the final evening we will be making rope headstalls, including the special "Feodore" knot. This, along with the lead rope,

may be used as work samples for the "Any other Project" K Option.

Each evening will cost \$20 to cover the cost of rope used, clip (for lead rope) and photocopying.

You must ring 9722 1416 and pre-book, so that the necessary rope may be purchased.



## 40 K Ride

Congratulations to Lisa Morrison, Sherise Spooner and Rianna Tromp who did a great job preparing for a very successful outcome.

The day was not without its worries, super hot weather and one horse pulled off a shoe at the halfway mark. Luckily a farrier was able to come and replace the shoe.

I am aware that several other people want to do their 40 K ride. This is a compulsory part of the K Certificate and must be completed before you do your written exam. In discussion with St Andrew's Pony Club, North Easter and Eltham, there are plenty of riders who would like to complete the ride later this year.

I would suggest that you wait until the weather is a little kinder, the days are longer, and you have a school holiday block to put on the final finishing touches. This would bring you to about mid October, which may be a good

time.

Horses would still need to start being prepared about mid August, with at least an hour's riding each day. Days will be getting longer, which will be helpful towards the end of the training, when you will need to ride for longer in preparation for the four hour ride.

Please let me know if you are interested. There is usually a very high drop out rate, as horses become lame, or riders find they cannot put in the time to bring them up to the required standard of fitness

We have held the last few 40 K rides at Wandin, but if you have another route in mind, please let me know.

There will be a \$30 fee to do the 40 K Ride, to cover "Vet Checks" and administration. This must be paid in advance. Ring Kerry Hill if interested on 9722 1416.

*You will be amazed at the difference the*



*training for the 40 K ride will do for your horse. Not only will he be much fitter and healthier, but also he will muscle up over the back and hindquarters.*

40 K Training information was published in the previous K & C\* Newsletter..

# Check those Paddock Weeds

*You all need to be able recognize plants that place your horse at risk, plus know the symptoms that your horse will show.*

Many plants contain poisonous substances. A well-fed horse in good condition will occasionally eat limited amounts of some poisonous plants and not suffer any ill-effects. This may lead to the idea that the plant is not poisonous. However, on another occasion, the same horse may be hungry and down in condition and may eat a greater amount of the plant and become sick or even die as a result.

**A hungry horse with an empty stomach will absorb poisons at a greater rate and thus is more easily poisoned. Most horses that are poisoned are not well fed, and are forced to eat poisonous plants because nothing else is available.**

## Cyanide Poisoning

Cyanide combines with haemoglobin in the blood stream, destroying its ability to carry oxygen. Symptoms of poisoning appear less than an hour after grazing. Breathlessness and an increased rate of respiration are two typical symptoms of poisoning. In a severe case, the horse will collapse, froth at the mouth, gasp deeply, and die. In a less severe case, the horse will become drowsy, will stagger and twitch, and its breath may smell of bitter almonds. Veterinary treatment in the early stages is usually effective.

Potential poisonous plants include **Linseed** - a field crop growing up to 1 metre tall with white or blue flowers. Young or wilted plants, and seeds are most toxic. Large amounts of the plant or seeds must be eaten by hungry horses before symptoms develop. Seeds

are made harmless by boiling.



Linseed flowers  
Linseed seeds

Another poisonous plant is **Johnston Grass**. It is most toxic when young and green, but hay containing a lot of this grass can also be toxic.



Large Amounts of **apple seeds** or cores may lead to cyanide poisoning.

## Plants that affect the nervous system

Many plants contain compounds called alkaloids that affect the nervous system of horses. Symptoms of alkaloid poisoning are unco-ordinated gaits, staggering, and trembling. Many alkaloids are also narcotics, so symptoms can include impaired vision, listless behaviour, starey eyes and generally unco-ordinated actions. The best cure is to remove stock from toxic pastures

### Poppies

The Mexican poppy (*Argemone ochroleanca*), the Californian poppy (*Eschscholtzia californica*), and the garden poppy (*Papaver* species), are all potentially poisonous if eaten in large amounts.

The Mexican poppy is an annual herb, up to 600 mm tall, and is thistle-like,

with bluish leaves and stems, pale yellow flowers and yellow sap.

The Californian poppy is also an annual herb, resembling the previous plant, except that the leaves are not thistle-like and the flowers are orange-yellow to red.



The garden poppy has soft hairs up the stem, and usually has only one yellow, orange or red flower per plant.

### Ergot of paspalum

(*Claviceps paspali* on *Paspalum distichum* or other species of *Paspalum*)

Paspalum is a tufted grass that forms a dense mat under grazing conditions. The seed head consists of two to five very thin stalks. The toxic ergot fungus (*Claviceps paspali*) invades the seed head, replacing the seed with a mass of sticky, black material, which eventually becomes very hard and seed-like.



Horses can take a liking to infected paspalum heads. Most outbreaks occur in late summer - early autumn, when paspalum flowers. Close grazing before this will reduce the likelihood of flowering.

### Hemlock

(*Conium maculatum*)

An erect annual, usually only 1 m to 1.5 m tall, with many clusters of small white

**Make your own collection of pressed weeds, or take photos.**



# Check those Paddock weeds—continued

flowers at the top of the plant. It is often confused with parsley, parsnip or aniseed. Stock generally eat the plant in the green state, when it is most toxic.

### Lupins (*Lupinus species*)

Annual herbs that grow up to 1 metre high, with leaves made up of five to 10 characteristic finger-like leaflets. The pea-like flowers are blue, yellow or white and the seeds are borne in a pod closely resembling a pea pod. The seeds are pale-coloured, varying from pale-cream to white and are slightly flattened.



All parts of the plant are toxic, especially green tubers.

### Plants that cause heart attacks



Two commonly-grown plants, foxglove and oleander,

contain compounds that cause heart attacks. Death may occur within a few hours or may be delayed for a few days, depending on the quantities eaten. Symptoms such as scouring, blurred vision, staggering and paralysis can occur.

### Foxglove

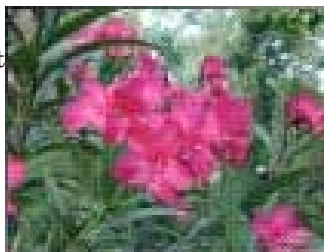


### Oleander (*Nerium oleander*)

A shrub or small tree with long, thin, tough leaves tapered at both ends. Flowers are white,

pink or red in conspicuous bunches at the ends of stems. The whole plant is toxic, especially the leaves, but stock find it quite unpalatable.

Particular care must be taken to ensure that hay or chaff do not contain wither of these plants and that garden clippings containing them are correctly discarded.



### Privet (large leafed and small leafed) (*Ligustrum species*)

Naturalised and cultivated evergreen shrubs to small trees. Dark green leaves, opposite on stem; small, white,

heavily perfumed flowers and black 'berries'.

The poisonous part is the fruit - large numbers only.

Symptoms are Gastric irritation (purging, vomiting and pain).



### Plants that cause pho-

### tosensitisation

Photosensitisation includes a wide range of conditions in which white areas on a horse become very sensitive to the sun. The symptoms resemble sunburn or acute dermatitis. The horse rubs or scratches profusely, the hair becomes matted, and the skin sloughs off. The best cure is to move affected horses to paddocks with a lot of shade, or indoors. Veterinary ointments may be used as well.

### St John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)

A perennial herb, up to 1 metre tall, with an extensive creeping root system. It has small, bright yellow flowers on the ends of the stems. Young plants are potentially more toxic than mature plants.



### Medics (*Medicago species*)

Burr medic (*Medicago polymorpha*) is a small clover-like prostrate annual herb, with yellow pea-shaped flowers and a coiled "burry" seed pod. Lucerne is an erect growing, deep rooted perennial herb with blue to purple pea-shaped flowers. The seed pod is coiled, but is not conspicuously "burry".

Lush spring growth can occasionally cause a condition known as trefoil der-

Lupin poisoning, due to alkaloids contained in the seed, can result if large



amounts of seed are eaten in the absence of other feeds. This may be a problem if stock are put onto a lupin

stubble after harvest, when they eat the grain off the ground.

Lupinosis is a separate toxicity problem which is associated with a fungus which grows on lupin stubble, following rainfall and humid conditions in summer. The best prevention is to remove stock for one month following rains on lupin stubble.

### Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*)

This is a short lived perennial herb that grows up to 1.2 metres tall. The large, yellow, daisy-like flowers are clustered together at the tops of the stems. Leaves and stems are especially toxic. Stock will only eat this weed if little else is available.



### Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*)

# Check those paddock weeds—continued

matitis.

## Bracken Fern Poisoning

Bracken is a typical fern, with fine hairs covering the under-surface of the fronds. The plants can grow up to a metre high, though they are usually less than 800 mm tall. Bracken spreads with an extensive system of underground runners.

Bracken, (*Pteridium esculentum*), contains compounds that destroy thiamine (vitamin B1) in blood and tissues. This causes staggering, trembling, convul-



sions and abnormal swinging of the head. Horses may go down and injure themselves when struggling to rise. Death is

preceded by convulsions and grinding of the teeth. Bracken fern poisoning can be treated with thiamine injections.

New fronds and root pieces (rhizomes) are the most toxic parts of the plant. Horses should not be given more than two week's grazing at a time on pastures where bracken is dominant. Horses will generally not graze bracken fern if pasture is available.

## Marshmallow and Rye Grass staggers

Marshmallow (*Malva parviflora*) is a herb up to 1.2 m. high with rounded, seven-lobbed leaves at the end of a stiff stalk. Flowers are small, are pink or white, and are situated in small groups in the forks of the leaves.

The plant seems to be most potent after a flush of growth. Affected animals may sweat profusely, breathe rapidly, and have a proppy gait, which may lead to temporary paralysis of the hind quar-



ters. Symptoms are most likely to appear if the horse is ridden or exercised after eating large amounts of either plant.

The nature of the poison is not known, and removing affected stock from the paddock is the best cure.

## Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*)

Upright plant with large oval leaves, purple flowers, and black berries (about 10mm in diameter).

All parts of the plant are poisonous

Symptoms include nausea, diluted pupils, unco-ordinated movements, heart and respiratory problems.

## Lantana (*Lantana species*)

A naturalised and cultivated shrub with prickly stems and leaves. Clusters of colourful flowers (varying colours). Purplish - black berries.



The poisonous part is the green fruit. (toxicity varies from plant to plant)



Symptom are gastro-intestinal irritation, jaundice, muscular weakness.

## Plum Also bitter almond, apricot, cherry and peach (*Prunus amygdalus*)

It is a small deciduous tree with oval leaves, pink blossom and very small fleshy fruit.

The poisonous part is the seed (kernals) if more than 10 eaten.

Symptoms are vomiting, purging and collapse.



## Oxalate Poisoning

Oxalates lower the level of calcium in the blood, which in

turn leads to sickness or death. Symptoms are lethargy, twitching and trembling, frothing at the mouth, and collapse and coma before death. This usually occurs within twelve hours of eating large amounts of toxic plants.

Veterinary treatment with calcium injections leads to rapid recovery, but this may not be permanent due to kidney damage.

Plants to watch out for include Oxalis (sour sob or sour grass) and Rhubarb leaves.

## Rhubarb

## Soursob

## Caster Oil Plant poisoning

(*Ricinus communis*) The castor oil plant is a hardy perennial



shrub that grows up to 2 m to 3 m high. The branches are hollow, with light-green glossy leaves often tinged with red. The only poisonous part of the plant is the seeds, which are extremely toxic.



Seeds are contained in a large, three-lobed, prickly pod that bursts open when ripe, scattering its seeds.

Early symptoms are trembling, sweating and nervous inco-ordination. This is followed by a loss of appetite, colic, scouring, and weakness. Death follows if enough seeds are eaten.

## Cape Weed

## Know your weeds- Continued

Horses will graze on Cape weed, when there is no other pasture. It's biggest problem is that it is a very invasive weed, growing over complete paddocks to prevent good pasture from coming up.

Cape weed has been blamed for causing Stringhalt in horses. Stringhalt is characterized by an abnormal gait with involuntary and exaggerated flexion of the hock of one or both hind limbs during an attempted movement.

There is no proof that Cape weed



causes stringhalt, however if your horse develops symptoms, it is advisable

to remove your horse from that particular paddock and give stall or paddock rest until signs resolve. Provide good quality feed.

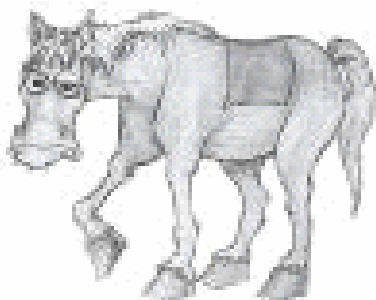
### Patterson's Curse

Also called "Salvation Jane", this plant is a noxious weed, and, by law, must be removed from all paddocks. In northern Victoria and New South Wales, it has spread to the extent that it covers hundreds of acres of good grazing land.

Over a period of several years, this attractive but highly toxic plant causes liver damage and loss of co-ordination.



### Precautionary Measures



**Make sure that your horse has the best possible feed available.**

Good management is the best means of preventing most cases of plant poisoning. The following precautions are recommended.

- Learn to recognize poisonous plants.
- Keep hungry horses or those under stress away from potentially-poisonous plants.
- Keep a close eye on stock newly introduced to a paddock.

**Be prepared to pull out the weeds in your paddock.**

- Learn the conditions under which certain plants are toxic.

Potentially-toxic plants can be removed from pastures by mechanical or chemical means. Hand pulling or hoeing gives enough control for small areas. Larger paddocks can be mown, slashed or sprayed with an appropriate herbicide, as recommended by the local Department of Agriculture Officer.

## Paddock Maintenance

Paddocks require regular care. You should walk your paddock at least once a week and remove any rubbish, fill in any holes with stones and soil and stamp it well down. Check your fences and gates at the same time and make any repairs immediately. You don't want to come back to find your horse injured or, even worse, gone!

Remove manure daily if possible (allow time to do this job each day and it won't take you long at all). If this isn't possible, then it must be done weekly. Manure left lying in paddocks sours the grass around it and is a site for worm re-infestation.

Locate your manure heap in a position that doesn't attract too much moisture, and as it builds up, and rots down you can bag it and sell it to help pay for your horse's feed. Or you can advertise for local gardeners to come and trailer it away.

In country areas, rotation grazing with cattle or sheep is most helpful. Cattle eat the rough grass that horses dislike, and sheep crop the grass quite low and virtually break the worm cycle. Horses, cattle and sheep will graze over each other's droppings but not over their own.

Another method of removing the manure problem and souring, particularly in the case of large paddocks, is to walk your paddock in your gum boots and kick the manure heaps as you go. When spread like this, the cold or heat will soon kill the worms. However, it is not an efficient practice in damp or humid conditions.

Spreading lime around is said to 'sweeten' the paddocks (especially around urination patches) and helps to discourage worms by reducing the acidity in the soil. Spelling the paddock and top dressing with a suitable fertilizer will be of great value in keeping the paddock well-grassed and sweet. Ask your local stock and station agents what fertilizer is best in your district and when to apply it.

Grass is only of value when it is growing, so you may need to slash the paddocks from time to time if it becomes too long. Harrowing to aerate the soil is also recommended practice. Seek local advice and assistance.

Spelling a paddock from time to time is most beneficial in keeping it in good condition. This can be done by removing the horses periodically for several weeks or more, or by sectioning of part of the paddock with an electric fence and rotating the horses accordingly.



# Round Bales - A Square Meal?

From: "Equineews", Kentucky Equine Research's Nutrition and Health Quarterly

quite intensive. Mould (microbial) growth is the primary cause of dustiness in hay that is baled too wet. What appears to be dust is actually fungal spores, which can give rise to digestive and respiratory disorders in horses.

A safety concern also exists when plants are very damp at the time of baling. Temperatures within high-moisture bales can easily soar past 60 degrees C, and spontaneous combustion is likely if core temperature exceed 76 degrees C. Self ignition can be disastrous, particularly if the hay is stored in a wooden structure.



hay directly onto the ground will cause wicking of moisture at the base of the bale and will heighten wastage. To stop this, hay can be stacked on wooden pallets, railway sleepers, or old tyres. Another way to reduce base deterioration is to stack bales on ten to twenty centimetres of crushed rock, so that water can easily drain away. Stones that 5 centimetres or larger will work best

Though it may seem like a logical location, round bales should not be situated under trees as their canopies will block wind and sunlight, two factors that speed drying following rain. In hilly countries, bales should be stacked on ridges rather than in valleys as this will maximise exposure to wind. In addition, water is more likely to pool in valleys, increasing the likelihood that bales will sit in moist areas for longer periods. One disadvantage of stacking hay on hilltops is uncertain accessibility during wet or muddy conditions.

Method of stacking is also an important consideration. Round bales should be stacked so there is approximately 45 centimetres between them. Not only does this space allow for increased airflow, but it keeps rainwater from being trapped among bales. When several bales of hay must be stored, a north-south orientation with bales positioned end to end is ideal. By doing this, the sides of the bales receive an equal amount of sunlight, which encourages more uniform drying.

Hay may also be draped with heavy, reusable tarps. If tarps are used, stack the hay in a pyramid formation so a peak is created; this arrangement al-

## Harvesting your Hay

Firstly, to maximise the nutritional content of round-baled hay, it should be mowed when plants are still immature, just prior to developing a head (in grasses such as rye, fescue, or phalaris) or blossom (lucerne or clover). Young plants pack the greatest nutritional punch because of their nutrient rich leaves, low lignin content and soft, lithe stems.

As forages grow into and beyond the bloom stages, their nutrient density wanes. stems become coarse and stiff, which boosts the fibrous fraction of the hay, and leaves are less likely to remain anchored to the plant. Leaf loss is note notable in over-mature lucerne hays.

In the production of round bales, grass hay keeps better than lucerne hay, as the grass forms a close-knit thatch, or outer covering, that protects the inside of the bale from moisture.

All hay should be baled when moisture content is 15% or less. Sweating, the heating of baled hay due to plant respiration and microbial activity following baling, cannot occur if the hay is baled below 15% moisture.

When hay is baled between 15% and 18%, enough heat is generated to cause a slight drop in digestibility. From a visual standpoint, heating may cause hay to lose much of its colour, though no significant effect on quality occurs.

Hay that is baled at greater than 20% moisture will undergo profound nutrient losses and extensive loss of colour, often darkening to a deep brown or black. Spoilage brought about by heating and development of mould can be

## Storing Round-baled hay

Second only to careful harvesting, storage is a critical consideration if round baled hay is to be fed to horses. Storing well-preserved hay in a shed or barn eliminates virtually all losses associated with exposure to elements, also known as weathering. A simple pole shed is all that is needed to protect the hay from weather-related spoilage. The shed size will depend on how much hay you wish to store, though ceilings should be sixty centimetres higher than the tallest stack to allow for air circulation and for ease of bale handling.

Less expensive ways of storing round-baled hay are available. Storing hay outdoors and uncovered is a low cost option. Losses caused by weathering, however, can be quite high. In dry areas, losses may be less, but in areas that have more than 600 millimetres of rain per year, nutrient values of the hay will plummet and wastage will skyrocket. The percentage of hay affected by weathering depends on bale size.

On an average sized round bale (1.5m diameter) if rain penetrates 5cm, 13% of the bale is ruined. If rain or ground moisture soaks into the bale up to 20 centimetres, then 46% of the bale may be ruined.

If outdoor storage is unavoidable, there are steps that can be taken to prevent weathering losses. Stacking

# Round Bales: (Continued)

lows water to run off immediately. Tarps should be constructed of canvas or other durable material and must be securely fastened to the ground. Plastic tarps should be avoided as water can condense on the underside, which may contribute to spoilage. The use of plastic tarps, however, is preferable to not covering bales at all.

If the haymaker is using a late-model baler, plastic wrap can be applied to round bales at the time of baling to help preserve the hay. Different types of plastic can be used. Specialised plastics, such as those with ultraviolet inhibitors, can be costly. A less expensive alternative is net wrap, a porous covering that shields bales from water but allows greater air-flow than plastic.

## For horses?

Round-baled hay offers several advantages to horse-men. At the top of this list is cost. On a weight-for-weight basis round bales are often less expensive than square bales because manufacture of round bales is less labour intensive for hay producers.

For large bands or several small groups of horses, round bales offer the distinct benefit of convenience. Manoeuvring round bales with machinery one or twice a week (or however often is necessary) is easier than throwing individual portions over fences several times a day.

If enough horses dine on the hay, a round bale may not last long enough in a group feeding situation to worry about wastage. Four horses can usually consume a round bale before significant wastage occurs. If, however, the bale will keep fewer horses satisfied for a longer period, it is best to offer the hay in a covered area such as a run-in shed. If more than six horses are pas-

tures together, at least two bales should be placed in the field in separate locations to prevent a dominant horse from monopolising the meal.

Round-bale feeders specifically designed for horses are available. One distinct advantage of these feeders is a reduction in wastage when compared to offering free-standing bales. Horses will often soil unwanted hay and have been known to bed down on generous expanses of hay if it is not contained in a feeder.

Feeders intended for cattle should be avoided. Most horses are tall enough to reach over the top of these feeders, misshaping the bars of the feeder in the process. As the hay is eaten, the bale often collapses, and horses may have to put their heads between narrowly spaced bars. Such tight places can lead to head and neck injuries if horses are startled when feeding.

Horseman should be aware of one decided disadvantage to feeding round-bale hay. Round bales stored outdoors are more likely to develop mould than those protected by a barn or otherwise covered. If horses eat mouldy hay, there is a chance that colic may ensue. Low levels of mould may also increase the possibility of respiratory disease. Therefore, it's imperative that only high-quality hay be offered to horses. Any hay that appears mouldy should be discarded.

## Nutrition

As with other horses on all-forage diets, those that consume only round-baled hay, regardless of its quality, should be fed a vitamin and mineral supplement. Even the finest hay loses much of its vitamin content between cutting and feeding. A well-balanced

vitamin and mineral supplement will compensate for such imbalances in key nutrients.

When round-baled hay is used, horse owners forfeit the ability to closely monitor intake. This may result in easy keepers becoming obese.

Round-bales hay can be a safe forage for horses. Selection criteria for round-baled hay differs little from that of traditional, square-baled hay. Aromatic hay that is free of weeds, dust, and foreign objects is always the right choice. If large quantities of round-baled hay are purchased, proper storage is imperative to reduce the amount of forage affected by weathering.

**Remember - For K Certificate and C\*, you will be required to talk about the way that you feed your horse.**


Look for this New Magazine:

**Horse's \$6.00**

**Down Under**

*Lots of interesting articles and information suitable for your certificate theory notes.*

- ◆ Aloe Vera for wounds
- ◆ Riding on roads
- ◆ Stringhalt
- ◆ Herbs for Horses
- ◆ Safe Fencing





# Stabling Your Horse

Extract from: "Equineews", Kentucky Equine Research's Nutrition and Health Quarterly



Horses are stabled for a variety of reasons. Injured or sick horses are often confined while they mend or recuperate. Quarantine regulations, either to prevent the spread of disease or as part of importation and exportation requirements, sometimes dictate that horses be housed for long stretches. In recent years the dwindling number of acres dedicated to horse production have drastically altered traditional, free-roaming management systems such that horses are spending more time in stalls than ever before.

Show horses spend much of their lives in the calm and usually comfortable surroundings of spacious stalls. Which such a management system reduces the risks of blemishes that are almost inescapable in turnout situations and ensures a rich, flawless coat necessary for the show ring, continual stalling has its downsides. One possible disadvantage, even danger, is exposure to aerial ammonia. (The smell of horse urine)

The short-term athletic ability and long term welfare of horses are largely dependent on respiratory health and well-being. Although high levels of am-

monia may not directly cause respiratory disease, sustained exposure to the irritant may weaken the defence mechanisms of the lungs, giving pathogens such as bacteria and viruses the opportunity to take hold and flourish.

## From Feed Stuffs to the Stable floor

The chief waste product of protein digestion is urea, the majority of which is excreted from the horse in urine. The concentration of urea in urine is largely relative to the amount of protein being consumed by the horse. As more protein is digested, levels of urea voided in the urine escalate. Any condition that impairs this elimination can lead to uremia, a potentially fatal build up of urea and other nitrogen wastes in the blood.

Once released by the horse in its urine, urea is employed by certain bacteria as a source of energy. A product of this second hand usage by bacteria is ammonia, which yields the familiar pungent smell. Tightly closed, heated barns, like those that house show horses, or poorly ventilated stables are frequently rife with ammonia fumes.

Because ammonia lingers near the



stable floor, specific attention must be

given to stalls inhabited by foals, weanlings and yearlings. Young horses spend much of their time lying down and therefore can be subjected to more concentrated levels of ammonia.

*It has been learnt that the more protein a horse intakes in his diet, the more water he is required to drink. One undeniable effect of increased water intake is a rise in urine output.*

Superfluous protein may be caused by the feeding of legume hays, namely lucerne. Lucerne hays contain significantly more protein than grass hays of similar quality. (Twice as much protein) Though lucerne hay is appropriate for some classes of horses, particularly those with above average energy requirements, most adult horses fare well on grass hay or lucerne/grass mixed hay. If you are feeding mainly lucerne hay, less protein is needed in the rest of his "concentrate" diet.

Through providing a balanced protein diet to the horse, urea concentration in the urine will be kept to a minimum and aerial ammonia will decrease.

## Keeping Ammonia at Bay

Stable maintenance is important, when horses are stall-bound. (eg: illness). Removal of all waste and soiled bedding is an obvious must-do. Bedding type (straw, sawdust, sand and shredded newspaper) does not seem to affect the ammonia levels. However

## *Stabling Your Horse (continued)*

bedding depth may. If the bedding is deep enough that the urine soaks through to the floor without appreciable accumulation on the surface, ammonia odour will be diminished. If a scant amount of bedding is used, obvious wet spots or, in worst case scenarios, pools of urine are likely and aerial ammonia will be profound.

The use of certain substances, such as zeolite, hydrated lime, or sodium bisulfate reduces the level of ammonia in stables by absorbing moisture from the stall floor and neutralising foul odours.

In addition to wise stable-keeping, atmospheric ammonia levels can be diluted by appropriate ventilation. Properly situated and adequately sized wall and roof vents are necessary to make full use of natural ventilation forces. In

barns that are particularly long or wide, powerful, industrial-strength fans may aid ventilation efforts.

Reducing the ammonia build-up in stables is achieved by offering well-balanced rations that contain enough protein for optimal growth or performance without surplus, by cleaning stalls fastidiously, and by ensuring well-ventilated housing for stalled horses. Reducing aerial ammonia will promote long-term respiratory health and provide yet another step in ensuring that equine athletes lead long, productive careers.

*Stables must be easy to clean.*



## **K Option - Lungeing**

***Over half of the riders who ask to be tested on this Option, fail. Don't assume that you can do it, because your horse usually runs around in circles when you put it on the lunge rope - have at least two lessons from an experienced instructor, read the lunge notes from the "B Certificate Book", Lungeing Guidelines from an earlier "C\* and K newsletter", and the Pony Club Manual No 2.***

**The Candidate must:**

Know the principles, uses and benefits of lungeing a horse.

Know the equipment needed to lunge a horse properly and how to fit the same.

Wear safe clothing (full pony club uniform for the test), and handle the horse and equipment safely and efficiently.

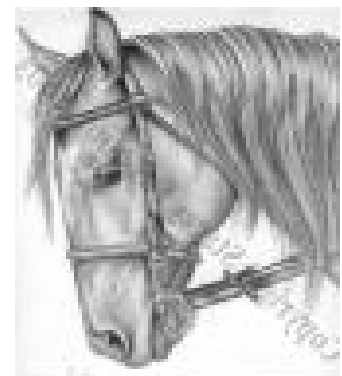
Keep the horse out on the circle and maintain a good even contact on the rein.

Lunge the horse correctly on both reins at the walk and trot (canter is not required)

Be able to recognise when the horse is not performing correctly, and if not, why?

Make Sure that you really do know how to Lunge and you will

**We are looking for people who know what they are doing and can tell us WHY!**



pass this option easily.

Have a clear idea of how to go

## K Option - Pace Work

*The Syllabus states that the Candidate should be able to ride at 220, 300, 350, 400 and 450 metre per minute. This is also a compulsory requirement for C\*, so it is very important that you know your horse's speeds, and how fast you need to travel in Show Jumping and Cross country. We only touched on pace work at the recent Clinic. This is an area which needs to be covered on a regular basis at your Pony Club.*

**It is important to be able to judge pace for the following reasons:**

Competition - which may be as diverse as Endurance Riding, Steeplechasing, Showjumping, Cross Country, etc. A rider may need to ride to ideal time, or may have to face penalties if under or over a time allowed. Often in jumping competitions penalties are incurred after exceeding the Time Limit, whereas in other events, such as Navigational Rides, penalties are incurred if

the rider arrives either before or after the time set. Often an early arrival incurs a greater penalty than a late arrival.

Conservation of horse & rider - This may or may not be for competitive work. The 40K ride comes into this category. The rider needs to complete the ride within a given time, without exhausting the horse or himself. Those riders who did their 40K ride had to work out the required average speed that they had to travel, to cover the 40 kilometres in three and a half hours. It was calculated that if the rider travels at 13km per hour he would have time to rest, and to still finish the ride with plenty in reserve. The amount of "resting time" and speed of travel should be worked out well before the ride. If a Candidate is keen on Endurance Riding or Eventing, judgement of pace is very important in preserving a horse's energy.

A knowledge of a horse's average speed at the various paces is useful for calculating the time that will be needed to ride a given distance - for treks, exer-

cising or going to Pony Club, for example.

### Learning to judge pace and speed

This is essentially a "feel" exercise and can be learnt in two ways -

- A) by following a car at the pace desired. Often competitive cyclists use this method in training
- B) by timing oneself over a given distance.

You can measure a distance (minimum 100 metres) and practise your paces and times over that distance. If you do it regularly, you will be amazed at how accurate you can judge your horse's speed. My horse's paces are shown in the table below. Try to work out your own horse's speeds, on a similar basis. Remember that all horses are different. It is the rider's responsibility to discover the exact speed of his horse's paces.

\* Speeds that riders will be tested on at Pony Club. The other speeds have been included for rider's interest.



## Ringwood Horse & Pony Club

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C\* & K Certificate Newsletter

### K Option - Pace Work

#### *Continued*

#### Practising Pace:

Please note, when learning to judge speed, start with the slower paces. Try to find a measured kilometre between signposts on a quiet road, or use the speedometer of the car to measure a kilometre between landmarks. See if your horse can actually walk a kilometre in ten minutes, or trot one in five. Then try timing yourself between power poles, which are usually evenly spaced, to test the regularity of your speed. You will need a digital watch for this, or a cheap stop watch.

For faster paces, a large flat paddock is ideal. Once again use a measured distance, or have someone drive a car beside you and call out the speeds you are travelling. You will be going at 20km/h for the canter. 455 metres per minute is a strong canter or steady gallop, and you will be travelling at about 28 km/h. Practise until you can feel these speeds beside the vehicle - until you can tell the driver if it is correct. You should not be able to judge your speed over a measured distance without the aid of the vehicle.

This judgment of speed is essential for event and endurance riders.



## SPEED TO SAFETY

In July/August riders will be given opportunity to practise riding for the "Speed to Safety" competition.

Practises will be organised by Prudence King (ring 9844 2332) and will be held at the Yarra Glen Race Track.

These practises may be used as a part of your K Certificate Pace Option.

## EASTER C\* & K CLINIC REPORT

The one day C\* and K Clinic at Ringwood Pony Club kept riders busy, preparing for K Option Examinations. We had Rachel Keskinen and Melissa Ball and their respective horses looking very swish, as they presented for and passed the Showing Option. Our thanks to Diane Baxter who was able to organise the examiner, at short notice, for this option. Rachel also passed her pace option. Well done. Melissa, on a very talented horse, also passed her Show Jumping Option. Two riders were tested on Lungeing, but both were not ready to be signed off as passed. They will need to represent at a later date.

At the Clinic, Sue Chandler was able to fit in some flat work, show jumping and formation team riding. Sue noted that many riders are not ready for C Grade Show jumping, as they were letting their horses rush at the jumps, not showing rhythm and control. Also, in flat work, riders need to concentrate more on using their seat and legs, less hands and reins, and have their horse listening to their aids. Our formation riding was good - it got us thinking about movements to develop for our Musical Ride for Zone flat teams. Thanks Sue for all the useful ideas and patience in teaching our less experienced riders.

### Saturday 17th July - Pre Bookings Essential

#### SHOW JUMPING CLINIC

Instructor - Linda Imms

9am - 11am D GRADE / 11am - 1pm C GRADE

Lessons will include some flat work to prepare for jumping, refining your jumping techniques and competition skills.

The aim is to prepare you for Zone Qualifying Day and State level competitions. Enquiries: Kerry Hill (9722 1416) email: evtech@alphalink.com.au

