

COACHING MATTERS



“Success depends upon previous preparation.” We don’t claim to be as wise as Confucius but we can all agree on that statement, and this issue of *Coaching Matters* looks at the winter ahead and the work we’ll all be doing to prepare for the upcoming challenges and competitions.

Nothing brings preparation back to its all-important basics than the horses’ paces: understanding the natural pace of your horses can make a huge difference to getting the most out of them.

From rider to trainer to coach, knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the horse can shape the year ahead and determine what you work on with your horse, where improvement is needed and how race-ready he or she is.

With that in mind, we talk you through the footfalls of the basic paces of the horse and the qualities of good paces, focusing on the following areas: the halt, walk, trot, canter, gallop and, of course, the jockey.

Feel free to share your thoughts on our paces advice by [emailing us](#), or discuss getting help with your paces by contacting the [BHA](#).

One page later we turn the spotlight to 2018’s training opportunities. Whether you’re an experienced jockey or novice trainer these are invaluable courses for your career development.

With outstanding pony racing news on the back page and positive qualifications news elsewhere, this is another invaluable issue of *Coaching Matters*.

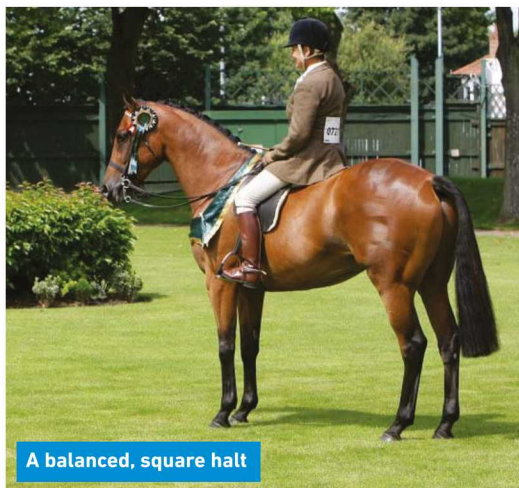
UNDERSTANDING THE HORSES' PACES

Every good rider and jockey should aspire to understand and recognise a horse's natural pace and how developing good paces can influence and enhance performance.

A skilled rider should be able to feel how a horse is moving underneath them and an understanding of the paces will not only help to develop this feel but will also aid in the rider's ability to feed back on a horse's way of going and performance.

To do this the rider should have a knowledge and understanding of:

- the footfalls of the basic paces of the horse
- the qualities of good paces
- how to enhance the paces.



A balanced, square halt

THE HALT: Although not technically a pace, it is helpful to understand the qualities of a good halt so that the horse can be observed at its best in a balanced and calm manner.

At the halt, the horse must stand quite still and straight with its weight distributed evenly over all four legs. It should stand square, with the fore feet in line with each other and the back feet also in line. The horse should be calm, attentive and accepting of the rider's contact.

THE WALK: In the walk, the horse places each foot on the ground independently so no two feet hit the ground at the same time. This is known therefore as a "four time" beat. The rider should be able to feel and count the four beats. In sound horses, the beats should be in the same rhythm and the walk should be regular with a marching and

purposeful gait. The horse should be calm and active. The sequence to the way the horse places each foot on the ground is as follows: Left hind – Left fore – Right hind – Right fore.

The walk is often the first pace viewed by both rider and trainer and much can be gained from observing the horse at walk. The horse should "over track", where the horse's hind foot should pass over and land in front of the print left by the forefoot on the same side. A long over track can be a good indication of the power and reach in the hindquarters and so very important in the racehorse.

Whilst observing the horse in walk, attention should be paid to its athleticism – a swinging back, free shoulder, active quarters and elasticity in the pace.

THE TROT: The trot is a diagonal 'two time' pace, where the horse places its feet on the ground in diagonal pairs. This means there are two beats to every stride. The trot should appear regular, active and energetic without appearing to be hurried. The sequence of the footfalls is: Left hind and right fore together – Right hind and left fore together. The horse springs from one diagonal pair of legs to the other with a moment of suspension, when all four legs are off the ground, between each beat.

THE CANTER: The canter is an important pace when training racehorses as it is the preparatory pace for the gallop – the racing pace. Canter is a "three-time" pace with three beats to each stride. The rider will feel, and be able to count, the three beats as well as the moment of suspension when all four feet are off the ground.

Within the canter, the rider should be able to recognise the "leading leg" which is the foreleg that has the most reach. When riding in a circle, it is important that the inside foreleg is the leading leg to ensure the horse remains balanced.

The sequence of the footfalls when the left fore leg is leading is: Right hind – Left hind and right fore together – Left fore (the leading leg), followed by a moment of suspension when all four legs are briefly off the ground.

THE GALLOP: The gallop is a four-time movement, with a rapid four beats to every stride with a moment of suspension when the horse pushes forward and covers the ground.

Again, like the canter, there is a leading leg. The sequence of footfalls with the left foreleg leading is: Right hind – Left hind – Right fore – Left fore, followed by a moment of suspension when all four legs are briefly off the ground.

At the gallop, the horse's frame and outline will lengthen considerably from the canter. As it increases speed the stride will lengthen and the tempo of the pace will increase – but the horse should always remain in rhythm. The horse should work into the contact and remain in balance.

THE JOCKEY: It is worth remembering that a jockey's main role is to help the horse achieve the best possible finishing position. To do this they have to decide the correct placement and pace for the horse during the race. Many horses left alone would go too fast too soon so therefore it is a jockey's duty to make sure the horse conserves its energy until the right time.



The canter

EQUESTRIAN COACHING QUALIFICATION BOOST

1st4sport Qualifications is pleased to confirm the ongoing development of the first equestrian coaching qualifications dedicated to the racing industry.

In partnership with the BHA, the qualifications are being written to align with national coaching standards. This means that the UKCC status of the coaching qualifications in racing will be maintained.

Through development work undertaken with the BHA this suite of qualifications provides a regulated and Quality Assured qualification, and will help to maintain and increase the professionalisation of the coaches across the racing industry for both jockey coaches and rider coaches.

We anticipate a launch date of 1 April 2018. The qualifications will feature dedicated learner supporting resources and portfolios of evidence, as well as standardised levels of Quality Assurance throughout course delivery and assessment.

1st4sport has an extensive and proven track record of upskilling and enhancing the provision of qualifications given to coaches across a wide range of sports, and look forward to using this expertise in their support of this industry going forward.

[Contact us](#) for information on developments and updates with regards to this exciting new opportunity for coaches.

2018 TRAINING DATES

Apprentice Licence Courses

15-26 Jan	BRS
12-23 March	NRC
2-13 July	BRS
3-14 Sept	BRS

Conditional Licence Courses

19 Feb - 2 March	BRS
13-24 Aug	NRC

3lb Claiming Seminars

30 Jan	BRC
29 May	TBC
13 Nov	TBC

5lb Claiming Seminars

5 March	BRS
19 July	OH
4 Dec	TBC

7lb Claiming Seminars

6 Feb	BRS
26 April	OH
13 June	TBC
7 Aug	TBC
8 Nov	TBC

Pre-assessment Apprentice

29 Jan	BRS
1 Feb	NRC
22 May	BRS
24 May	NRC
24 July	NRC
26 Jul	BRS
11 Oct	NRC

Updates on careersinracing.com

Pre-assessment Conditional

8 Jan	BRS
10 Jan	NRC
29 Jun	BRS
5 July	NRC

Category A Amateur Courses

2-3 Jan	BRS
6-7 Feb	BRS
6-7 March	NRC
27-28 March	BRS
17-18 April	BRS
24-25 April	NRC
30-31 May	NRC
5-6 June	BRS
25-26 July	NRC
22-23 August	BRS
25-26 Sept	BRS
16-17 Oct	BRS
5-6 Nov	NRC
4-5 Dec	NRC
11-12 Dec	BRS

Category B Amateur Courses

22-26 Jan	NRC
12-16 Feb	NRC
14-18 May	BRS
10-14 Sept	BRS

Additional Courses

12-16 Feb	Trainers Module 1	BRS
18-21 June	Trainers Module 1	NRC
5-9 March	Trainers Module 2	BRS
9-12 July	Trainers Module 2	NRC
19-22 March	Trainers Module 3	BRS
30 July - 02 Aug	Trainers Module 3	NRC
20-23 Aug	Trainers Module 3	BRS

For BRS regional training please contact the BRS on 01638 665103 or info@brs.org.uk

For NRC regional training please contact Sam Trainor on 07711 782272 or Sam.Trainor@northernracingcollege.co.uk



RACING'S FUTURE IS IN GOOD HANDS

The 2017 Charles Owen Series – the showcase event for pony racing – staged 26 fixtures running a total of 51 pony races, with 65 children participating: a hugely successful season.

Meanwhile, the Point-to-Point pony racing season saw 68 fixtures run, with 1,037 runners taking part in the pony races. It has been a tremendous step forward in providing competitive opportunities for nine-to-15-year-olds. The Novice Series in both the Charles Owen Series and the Point-to-Point Series have been particularly popular and have proved very successful in 2017.

The riders are always improving and this is largely thanks to the RaceTech-sponsored Jockey Coaches – Carl Llewellyn, Tim Reed, Rodi Greene, Jackie Gill and Alex Nicholls. "We are so grateful to them for their time and input; their advice is invaluable and helps the children improve throughout the Series," said Clarissa Daly, Chief Executive of the [Pony Racing Authority](#) (PRA).

This season young Ben Colmer made his debut in the Charles Owen Series. Ben does not own his own pony and started pony racing as part of the second Youth Training Scheme run at Appletree Stud in 2014. "He is a shining example of what can be done if you want it enough," said Clarissa. The Lewis family offered the ride on Little Chick to Ben this season. Little Chick is not always straightforward and Ben

must be congratulated on a fantastic first season. Fixtures are already published for the 2018 Point-to-Point Series. Dates for the 2018 Charles Owen Series will be published at the end of November.

Looking towards next season, Clarissa said that preparations are already underway: "We are currently running joint PRA/Pony Club training days around the country in order to qualify the children and their ponies for next season. Pony Club instructors teach the children about balance and riding position in a school and then in a fitness session using wobble boards, space hoppers and skipping ropes! A BHA qualified Jockey Coach will then teach them using an equicisor. Finally, they will ride up the gallops in pairs to ensure they are in control of their pony and have some idea of pace! These days are becoming increasingly popular. We will run 12 by the end of 2017 with another four booked for early 2018. We also run PRA Advanced Training Days for the older children, which are taken solely by a BHA Jockey Coach." In 2016, 273 children participated in some form of PRA pony racing training, a number expected to be exceeded by the end of 2017.

COACHES GAIN HIGHER LEVEL QUALIFICATION

We are delighted to report that five of our team of Jockey Coaches were recently successful in achieving the [UKCC Level 3 Coaching Qualification](#). This nationally recognised qualification recognises the importance of a holistic approach to coaching the rider as an athlete. Michael Hills, Kim Tinkler, Neil Pollard, Nick Bentley and Cathy Gannon undertook an intense training programme leading to a series of external assessment in order to reach the required standard.

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Coaching Matters is produced quarterly by Coachwise Creative on behalf of BHA.

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