

From Our Regional Instructional Coordinators

Notes on Record Books

Choose carefully the information you include in your horse's records. What is essential to his well-being? What is a memo to the caregiver? Always consider whether what you include is truly pertinent to the horse's well-being. You must separate your book of memories from the useful guide to your horse's care.

A separate scrapbook is a personal treasure, but is not helpful for the purpose of a good record book. Your records should be easy to access, accurate, pertinent to the horse's history and care. As you examine your records consider:

1. Is this item truly necessary
2. Can another caregiver really use the information included
3. Does this bit of information belong in the record book or in a separate scrapbook of special memories
4. Is the information accurate and helpful in the horse's care

Use the guides from national Pony Club to help you build an accurate, timely and concise record. Keep this record handy as a tool in your horse's care. When you present this record to an examiner be sure it is accurate, neat, complete and in a notebook which is easy to understand. Keep the scrapbook as a personal treasure.



Conditioning Plan

There needs to be clarification on the difference between a conditioning plan and a conditioning record. A plan is done in preparation of a working schedule. It sets a time line with goals relative to the efforts made to improve physical, mental and training for a particular time period. The plan usually has a particular event in mind, but is always a conscious effort to improve the condition of the horse and his performance in a particular time period. It should include consideration of both physical, attitude, training and general health attributes of the horse. The plan should consider the condition at the starting point with careful notes on general condition, level of training, level of fitness, TPR at rest, general work ethic, and attitude. The plan should include *goals* with a time line carefully considered. It should include a *plan* for exercise, feed changes, skill improvement, and methods to monitor progress. This is done in relation to the desired outcome at the end of a particular time period.

This *plan* is a conscious effort to guide you in preparation of your horse for particular outcome – event, show, whatever....

Conditioning Record

A conditioning record logs various parts of your plan. It uses your plan to guide your activity during a time period. It must be carefully noted that the actual condition of your horse during the time period may require changes to your plan. The requirement of keeping the record of the daily activity helps you determine how successful your planning was. To be of value you must be honest and diligent in comparing your planning to the actual growing needs of your conditioning program. To become a more proficient horseman you need to improve the efficiency of your plan and make adjustments which enhance the conditioning process. **Accept the learning curve!** Let the actual condition of your horse help you develop better skills in creating a worth *plan*. Beware of jamming your actual conditioning process into your preconceived plan, but rather use your plan to guide your activity toward your goal realizing that day to day activity may alter your general plan.

At a rating the Examiner wants to see a logical plan. The elements to consider in the plan are an exercise schedule, a training schedule, a feed schedule with changes, any vet or farrier requirements, and a method of assessing condition (TPR). A record logs the actual activity, timing, physical changes, mental changes, appearance, attitude, work ethic, etc. The two are related, but each (Record – Plan) is separate with different requirements and understanding.

If your sole purpose of creating a conditioning plan is to go to a rating, you are missing the point!!! The plan and the record are to better create a method of improvement for you and your horse. The rating should not be the reason to plan – rating is incidental to the process of becoming a better horseman.

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Record Books: Meeting the Standard

Why do we do them?

- ◆ They allow someone else to take care of your horse if you are gone.
- ◆ If your horse is sold or leased, a copy should go with your horse so the new caretaker can provide appropriate care.
- ◆ It provides an accurate reflection of services and care provided.
- ◆ Your record:
 - ◆ at D3 level reflects your ability to demonstrate simple skills without assistance and to use common horse terms while discussing care of your mount.
 - ◆ At C1 level reflects your developing awareness of cause and effect in the care of your mount.
 - ◆ At C2 level should reflect your solid awareness of cause and effect in the care of your own mount.

General Information

- at D3 level, 3 months of records; at C1 level 6 months; C2 level 9 months minimum.
- Start a new record each January, keeping the current year in the front.
- Use USPC format as a guide. You may customize the pages as long as all of the information is included.
- Do not use as a scrapbook.
- Keep in a 3 ring binder.
- If desired, personalize with a cover page.
- When presenting your record for a rating, be sure to total columns in pencil.
- Contact information for: rider, owner, horse, veterinarian, farrier, insurance if applicable.

Horse Information

- Identifying factors
- horse description (or photo of untacked horse)
- vital signs at rest
- vices
- special medical information
- registration information, if not applicable write “unknown” or “n/a”. Do not leave blank.
- Inoculation schedule: what, when, how.

Routine Procedures and Annual Care

- ★ Immunizations: date given, what type of vaccine, when is it due again, cost.
- ★ De-worming: date given, brand name of wormer, when is it due again, cost.
- ★ Shoeing: date service performed, what was done, what is the date of the next visit,

cost.

- ★ Dentistry: date service performed, what was done, note any special needs, is there a recheck date, cost.

Feed Schedule

- ➔ Measurements should be in pounds and ounces.
- ➔ Document changes in feed.
- ➔ Be knowledgeable about basic principles of feeding.
- ➔ Document type of roughage, concentrates, supplements and salt source.

Conditioning Schedule

- Goal is to show exercise of training routine for an average week.
- Document activity done.
- Document how many days of the week the activity is performed.
- Document average number of minutes in each specific activity.

C2 Record Book 6 Week Conditioning Plan

- ◆ Separate written 6 week conditioning plan for a specific event of your choice
- ◆ Description of conditioning activities should be done at least on a weekly basis
- ◆ Include a paragraph about what is conditioning and what condition your mount is in when you begin the process.
- ◆ Should reflect an understanding of conditioning principles with TPR's at rest.
- ◆ TPR's should be done at least weekly. Some examiners at the HB level are wanting to see TPR's at least 3 times a week while conditioning.
- ◆ Plan does not have to be for your mount, but is highly recommended
- ◆ Remember this plan will be in your record and evaluated for your HB rating as well.

Activities

- Should reflect all horse related activities
- Date; Activity: lessons, clinics, competitions, rallies, practices, camps, unmounted meetings, group trail rides, etc.
- Comments
 - What was worked on
 - placing in show or rally
 - progress made in an area worked on
 - what you liked or did not like about the activity.
- Cost

Extra Vet Visits

- ★ These visits are above and beyond your routine care of your horse. They may include: lameness, sickness, x-rays, joint injections, injuries.

- ★ Be sure to include information about: why the mount was seen, what procedure was done, any diagnosis made or treatment done, cost, date.

Feed & Board Expenses

- ➔ Include date, item and cost.
- ➔ If your horse is kept at home, the feed expenses should be itemized and estimated on a monthly basis.
- ➔ Be sure to track all supplements or additional feeds purchased.

Other Expenses

- The level of detail expected is reflective of the horse management expectations for the rating level.
- Expenses to be tracked include: tack, barn equipment, rider clothing purchased, horse clothing purchased, rally or show costs, trailering fees or maintenance.

Income

- ◆ May include monies earned from horse related activities such as: horse sitting, grooming jobs, braiding at shows, sale of used tack, body clipping horses, stall cleaning, lessons, etc.
- ◆ May include non-horse related activities such as: chores, babysitting, birthday or Christmas money, allowances, working as a camp counselor, etc.

Exceeding the Standard

- ★ If you are interested in exceeding the standard for records, look at the expectations for the next rating level.
- ★ Personalize record pages.
- ★ Add more depth of knowledge to comment or description sections.