



WHAT IS PONY CLUB?

Pony Club is the largest equestrian educational organization the world. The cornerstones of our foundation are education, safety, sportsmanship, stewardship, and fun. Members learn riding and how to care for horses through mounted and unmounted lessons. The skills, habits, and values instilled through horsemanship will apply to every part of a member's life. Many of our graduates feel that Pony Club helped shape their character and the choices they have made as adults.

ABOUT IRON BRIDGE HOUNDS

Iron Bridge Hounds Pony Club (IBHPC) is a not-for-profit organization and a member of the Maryland Region Pony Club. IBHPC is committed to teaching its members about horsemanship and riding. IBHPC's educational program places equal emphasis on the teaching of riding skills, horse-care fundamentals, health and safety of both horse and rider, and team participation. Through this, members develop character, leadership, and confidence and develop good safety habits.

IBHPC is a volunteer driven organization administered by parents and other adult volunteers. IBHPC relies on parents and volunteers to continue to make its program successful.

WHAT WE OFFER

Mounted and Unmounted Lessons

Our lesson program offers lessons with instructors that are experienced in pony club standards and expectations. Most of the instructors are recent pony club graduates and have experience in various riding disciplines including eventing, show jumping, games, polocrosse, and tetrathlon. The training program is kid-friendly and the instructors know how to handle difficult horses as they are current riders in training. Unmounted lessons are provided January—March every Wednesday from 6:00—7:30 pm. Once the weather warms, mounted lessons begin every Wednesday with a choice of 5:30 pm or 6:30 pm for a one-hour lesson.

Your child will learn how to properly care for their mount, practice proper equestrian safety, gain knowledge in equine behavior and training, health and fitness, nutrition, and veterinary care. Your child will also learn the correct uses and maintenance of equipment. In short, your child will gain independence, learn how to effectively communicate, how to work well with other team members, leadership, responsibility, time management, and how to prepare for competitions. Your child will learn and live the Core Values of Pony Club: Horsemanship, Organized Teamwork, Respect, Service, and Education.

Rallies, Ratings, and Awards

Rallies (competitions) are open only to pony club members. There are rallies in all the disciplines of riding: Quiz (unmounted knowledge competition), Games, Dressage, Eventing, Show Jumping, Tetrathlon, and Polocrosse.

Ratings give the pony clubbers an opportunity to work towards earning certification in riding and horse management skills. There are specific requirements for each level set by the U.S. Pony Club Association and each rider must make the commitment to learn and improve their riding skills and horse management knowledge to test and increase their certification level.

If the rider makes National level competitive status, IBHPC will pay the first entry fee, then 1/2 the entry fee for the following years.

Year-End Banquet: At the end of the year, IBHPC holds an Annual Pony Awards Banquet. The riders are recognized and provided with a picture plaque acknowledging all their accomplishments.

WHAT MAKES IBHPC DIFFERENT FROM OTHER CLUBS?

The IBHPC District Commissioner (DC) and her spouse are both graduate A-rated pony clubbers. The DC has evented through the advance level until 1993, and since then has trained horses off the race track to start a new career in the show world. IBHPC has the best instructor in the country for unmounted knowledge who has been teaching for over 20 years.

IBHPC is a close-knit and very active group of very focused members who enjoy each other's company; therefore, lesson programs are very well attended. IBHPC has performed extremely well in rallies with several members that have gone on to compete in the Pony Nationals Championships representing the State of Maryland.

In 2014, IBHPC pony club members won Nationals in the 3-day Novice Eventing and Games.

Club and Team success is stressed as opposed to individual accomplishments to instill pride and support among the whole club. Teams (3 to 4 riders with 1 stable manager) are formed based on rider and horse readiness (with instructor's approval) for rallies and how the dynamics of the team will work best together. Groups are mixed every rally so each rider gets to work with other members in the club, building close relationships, and making evenly skilled teams from our club. Team competition is a fun and important part of Pony Club's education and training, and builds a strong bonding element.

HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

IBHPC uses a yahoo group that new members are invited to join. Weekly emails are sent typically on Sunday night or Monday morning. IBHPC also has a Facebook page and Web page.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

- Access to an appropriate mount for lessons.
 - Rider must be able to ride independently in small group, walk/trot at a minimum
 - Transportation to lessons
 - Mandatory Volunteer for the IBHPC Spring Horse Trials (1st Saturday in May) and Fall Horse Trials (1st Saturday in October). No experience required, instruction will be provided.
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WHAT DOES IT COSTS?

The following is the cost breakdown for new members:

\$140.00 Nationals New Member fee

80.00 IBHPC fee

15.00 Maryland Region fee

10.00 Sponsor fee (optional) Provides you voting rights at the fall sponsor's meetings to decide on any changes and vote on leadership positions.

50.00 Ad fee. This is a family minimum. Families must obtain ads from the local community to be published in IBHPC's 2 program books for its horse trials. You are encouraged to obtain as many ads beyond the \$50 fee to assist in offsetting the costs for other club activities.

TOTAL FEES: \$295/year which includes all the lessons, rallies, and the initial rating.

ADDITIONAL COSTS:

\$35.00 Any D rating after the initial free fee

\$70.00 Any C rating

\$15.00/day for club-sponsored riding camp if offered during a week or two of summer

OFFICERS

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