

# Horse Handler Training Handout

## Module 2

### I. Warm up-Hand walking

- a. Check bucket, stall, and horse board for specific instructions
- b. Your horse should be walking at a good speed; do not let them walk too slow
- c. Check for lameness

### II. Warm up-Lunging

- a. Check horse's bucket, stall, and horse board for specific instructions
- b. Only to be done by signed off Horse Leads. *Not all Horse Leads are signed off to lunge. Leading privileges will be revoked if a HL lunges w/o being signed off.*
- c. Walk your horse in hand for five minutes before lunging
- d. Check for lameness. Horse may warm up out of stiffness/lameness. Notify instructor if it does not
- e. Lunging is for warm up purposes only, not to get energy out
- f. Lunge whips are a last resort; use voice and body language first
- g. Start and end lunging sessions at a walk. Change directions at a walk
- h. Horse changes direction only when you ask it to. If it changes directions when you did not ask, make it turn around and go the direction you wanted.
- i. Horses should not become 'keyed up' during a lunging session

### III. Leading-To Mount

- a. Wait with your horse on the East side of the main ramp. Do not stop by the tackroom/volunteer area
- b. Lead your horse straight towards the ramp
- c. Go slowly, do not let your horse rush up to the ramp
- d. Ask your horse to step close to the ramp by having its nose slightly over the edge of the ramp. Put your left hand on the side of their shoulder to help guide them if they are not getting close enough.
- e. Never back your horse more than one adjustment step when lining up for mount
- f. Stop your horse in the appropriate place and ask it to square its feet
- g. Stay facing your horse during the mount; do not stand directly in front of it. Insist that the horse stands still; do not let it wiggle
- h. Do not assist in mounting ... stay focused on your horse
- i. Always wait for someone to open the arena gate
- j. Clear the stairs/ramp by walking away in a straight, slow line...the instructor will be walking down with you.
- k. Ask your horse to walk slowly away from the ramp
- l. No sitting or leaning on ramp at any time!

### IV. Leading-in class

- a. Be aware of your team while moving around obstacles, going through gates, etc
- b. Stay by your horse's head. Never walk in front of your horse or back by the shoulder.
- c. Maintain appropriate distance between your team and other teams
- d. Maintain a good paced walk as the movement is beneficial to the rider
- e. You are your horse's 'advocate' and it is your responsibility to communicate with your horse and to appropriately react to how your horse is communicating
- f. Be aware of a change in your horse's attitude during riding
- g. Horse leaders, coaches, and side walkers may not tighten the girth during class ... this is the instructors responsibility
- h. Use your voice, body language, and lead rope to change your horse's speed
- i. Do not let the horse turn in a tight circle
- j. Pass 'Left and Left' and faster horse takes inside track

V. **Leading-to dismount**

- a. Most riders dismount in the center of the arena, occasionally riders dismount on the ramp or outside the arena
- b. Once your team has stopped to dismount, turn and face your horse. Remember to not stand directly in front of it
- c. Remember your only focus is the horse. Do not aid the instructor or other volunteers during the dismount
- d. The rider may be asked to help walk their horse out. Horse-Horse lead- rider- coach

VII. **After class duties**

- a. Please clean up!!! Put things back where they belong
- b. Put horse back in stall
- c. Do not tie horse with bridle on
- e. Clean out hooves to check for rocks and to clean out impacted dirt
- f. Groom down horse. You may have to wait until the sweat dries to curry them
- g. Do not leave sweat marks! Leaving crusted sweat can cause our horses to have sensitive skin or dander and can even cause fungus. Be sure horses are well groomed after their class
- h. Return tack to appropriate place
- i. Make sure to lock your horse's gate

VIII. **Emergencies**

- a. **Horse Emergency**
  - i. Keep Calm!
  - ii. Let your team and instructor know if you feel the horse is going to spook
  - iii. Call for an emergency dismount if necessary
  - iv. Turn horses hind end away from a fallen rider
  - v. Stay a safe distance from another horse that is spooking
- b. **Rider Emergency**
  - i. Keep Calm
  - ii. Notify your instructor immediately
  - iii. Stop the horse so the rider may be taken off the horse
  - iv. Safely move the horse away from the rider and face them
  - v. If any other team has a 'fallen rider', turn your horse to face them

**Trainer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer (printed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer (signed):** \_\_\_\_\_