From the Chairman, Charles Whittington

Welcome to the Pony Club Polo pack for Summer/Autumn 2020. We are living through some challenging times and I hope you are all well.

In this pack, there is information on COVID protocols, where to find facilities, coaches and clubs. Also, how Branches and Centres can get funding for teaching under 14s, information about a fun competition and the possibility of learning more about Polo through Zoom. We hope this will encourage newcomers to “have a go”!

If you are lacking information, please contact a member of the Pony Club Polo committee. The members are listed below in Section 10 with their specialist areas. Please don’t contact Pony Club HQ at this time as there is no support for Sports at the moment due to the Sports team being furloughed. We have limited help from other staff members, but those who are working are extremely busy.

In this pack, HPA refers to the governing body of Polo, the [Hurlingham Polo Association](https://www.hurlinghampolo.co.uk).

1. COVID19 Protocols

   1.1. Generally, the Pony Club advice is that any number of groups of 6 (including instructor and first aider) are allowed provided all other advice is followed including local HPA club advice outdoors or in covered arenas. Some of the conditions are very specific, so please make sure you are aware of all the local conditions. This advice is as of 4th July and might change at any time. Please use the links below to keep up to date.

   1.2. Pony Club – Go to the [Pony Club Coronavirus Advice](https://ponyclub.org.uk/news/coronavirus-advice) or talk to your Branch or Centre

   1.3. HPA – Go to the HPA [home page](https://www.hurlinghampolo.co.uk) and scroll down to Covid-19 Update and FAQs

   1.4. HPA Clubs – go to the club’s own website

   1.5. BEF – Go to the BEF [Coronavirus Hub](https://www.british-equestrian.org.uk/coronavirus)

2. HPA Clubs by area

   The easiest way to find an HPA registered club is to use this link – [Find a Club](https://www.hurlinghampolo.co.uk/find-a-club). You can search for Outdoor or Arena Club’s by distance from an address, which is very useful. Some clubs have Polo Schools or Academies attached or associated. Most have HPA Club Instructors and some have HPA Coaches in association.

3. Facilities

   The most useful facilities outside HPA clubs are arenas. There is a form of Polo to be played in arenas, with a ball which is like a small football, and, although not all arenas have suitable walls for competition, almost all arenas are suitable for instruction and practice at riding and hitting an arena ball.

4. HPA Instructors and Coaches

   It isn’t very easy to find HPA instructors and coaches by area. First, find your nearest HPA Club using [Find a Club](https://www.hurlinghampolo.co.uk/find-a-club), then use [Find a Coach](https://www.hurlinghampolo.co.uk/find-a-coach) using the filter on that club. Most, but not all, HPA instructors and coaches are also registered as Pony Club instructors.
The Association of Polo Schools and Pony Hirers (APSPH) are all accredited by the relevant Local Authority and are a good choice if you are older and need to hire a Polo Pony for lessons or competition. The membership directory is here.

Miles Underwood is an HPA qualified instructor who is prepared to travel subject to commitments. He will be especially suitable where there is no obvious local club or coach, or for taster rallies where there is no Polo equipment available. Contact him direct on 07833 640755 or milesunderwoodpolo@hotmail.com.

5. Grants – money is available!

Grants are still available for all training, rallies, newcomers, etc under 14. The application form is attached. Please complete it and send to Mrs Chris Eaton (U14) chris.eaton@live.co.uk, 07860 395576. If successful, payment is made to your Branch Treasurer on submitting a report form (also attached).

6. Video competition – Trophies up for grabs!

We invite you all to enter a short video of you practising on your pony. It can be riding only, penalty shots, or, if you have a suitable field, stick and ball practice. Tack and turnout will be taken into account. No longer than 60 seconds please! Any age or experience as long as you are a Pony Club Branch or Centre Member. Please email chw@hillbarn.plus.com with a short description of the entry including the name of pony and rider and what the video shows. It could be anything interesting from the first time you manage to hit a ball, a demonstration of how to tack up a pony for Polo, or for the more advanced, receiving instruction on schooling a pony and showing improvement. I will send you a link to upload your video. Only the judge will see all the videos, but we might ask you if you would be prepared to share yours. If you win, we might award one of the Pony Club trophies to your Branch or Centre.

7. Share your Polo rally, watch a Polo rally:

Would you share your rally with Branches or Centres who don’t know about Polo? We would like a few Branches to share their rally on a Zoom call which would be advertised to others to give them an idea of what Pony Club Polo is like. If you are willing, please email Charles at chw@hillbarn.plus.com giving dates and format. Thank you.

If you are new to Polo and would like to watch a Polo rally on Zoom, please contact me. Remember that all Polo rallies will qualify for a tick as long as they are open to all Members.

8. Event Organisation

8.1. Rallies – these should be organised in conjunction with your Branch

8.2. Inter-Branch competition – if you wish to invite other Branches to COVID compliant instruction and/or competition, please contact the Branch directly or through your Area Rep. If you don’t know who to contact, speak to a member of the committee and we will make suggestions. All DCs involved MUST approve the arrangements. Please let a member of the committee know where and when inter-Branch activities are taking place.

9. Looking Further Ahead

9.1. As you will appreciate, it is very difficult to look ahead, but I would make two points:
   a) We will be looking to encourage as much arena Polo this winter as possible
   b) We are looking at alternative plans for 2021 ensuring that we keep up to date with and remain in line with Government guidance going forward.
10. Committee Contact details

For Under 12s (Jorrocks), Mrs Jenny Blake Thomas jennyjblakethomas@gmail.com
For Under 14s (Handley Cross), Mrs Chris Eaton chris.eaton@live.co.uk
For U15 on Polo Ponies (Surtees), Mrs Joanna Whittington jmw@hillbarn.plus.com
For U21, one Pony (Rendell, Loriner), Brig Christopher Price ckprice@hotmail.co.uk
For U21, two Ponies (Langford), Mrs Bethan Hitchman bethanhitchman@aol.com
For U21, three or four ponies (Gannon), Brig Justin Stanhope White jstanhopewhite@aol.com

For any other queries, Charles Whittington chw@hillbarn.plus.com