Record Book Essentials

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Introduction

The Pony Club Record Book at all levels is a horseman's tool containing vital documents and explicit instructions regarding the day-to-day and the long term care of each member's horse or pony. It is a dated, working and dynamic collection of information regarding the health and training of the horse or pony. It is not a scrapbook.

The PC Record Book at all levels needs to address the following basic questions:

Who is this horse or pony?
Who owns and cares for it?
Where does it live?
What kind of care does it require (i.e. how, what and when does it eat or exercise)?

These questions need to be answered with clear enough instructions and/or maps so that someone stepping in to cover for an absent caretaker could both answer them and do what is required next in the horse or pony's daily routine in its home environment. Ideally, this Record Book should sufficiently instruct ANY non-horse person, although obviously there are limits as to the extent of care a non-horse person can provide. The care should be able to be provided with no additional assistance nor harm coming to either the animal or the person (barring unforeseen accident).

For the HB level and above, the PC Record Book needs to address the questions above as well as the situation of an unexpectedly absent owner or rider. At this level, the Record Book should make no assumptions about the particulars of horse care- detail everything! The Record Book at the Upper Levels needs to contain all current and historical documents to provide for immediate and long-term care for the horse or pony in its home environment. Provide detailed documentation and clear concise instructions which will identify the horse or pony as well as ensure its health and well being in the absence of any person who is familiar with it.

The Upper Level Record Book also demonstrates the Pony Club member's knowledge of these vital areas of horse management. The documents contained will be used during the C, HB, H and H-A examinations as a basis of discussion in the areas of conditioning, veterinary care, feeding and nutrition.

It is understood that some of the information contained in the Record Book will be duplicated and "posted" in stable for easier access but will be no different than what is submitted for the examination. In addition, some documents such as the "Training Journal" will be a supplemental notebook which is updated regularly and kept close at hand in the stable but returned to the Record Book just before the examination. Some of the historical documents may simply be out-dated feed charts or inoculation lists left behind the current one for reference or, at the discretion of the member, in some other form of list. Some information may not change and could remain in the record book permanently - such as tack, blanket or shoe sizes.

The PC Record Book is not busy work or a collection of useless information. It is the best tool any PC member has to ensure the health and happiness of their horse or pony.

Disclaimer:
"We have prepared the following guidelines to help Pony Club members in assembling their Health and Maintenance Record Books. While the Standards offer you a "jumping off place"- a general length of time required for record keeping and general requirements- we prepared these guidelines to be more of a parachute. While a parachute does not guarantee you a successful landing, it should help make the trip a little less of a free-fall."

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Guidelines

Everything in your Record Book must be dated and in a binder

RBE Color Key: (D1, D2) D3, C1, C2, HB, C3, H, B, H-A, A

All members should include everything listed in their rating color as well as everything listed in the colors of the ratings below their level. Optional: Members may include information above their level.

1. Information Page:

A) Owner and Rider contact information. [D]

B) Location of the Horse (name of stable, name of the owner of the stable and physical location of the stable.). [D]

C) The horse's description (to include enough details to identify the horse if it were stolen) and resting TPR baseline. [D]

D) Photos of both sides of the horse (for the purpose of identification) [D] and close-ups of any scars or brands. [C]

E) Names as well as contact information for veterinarian, farrier, and (if used) chiropractor, equine dentist, etc. [D] Emergency trucking contact information or location of truck keys, trailer, etc. [H-A]

F) Any equine insurance information. [D]

G) Vices of the horse, medications (if any) given to the horse and any known allergies or chronic maladies or predispositions such as scratches or hives or "stocking up". [D] Include how to remedy intermittent bouts of these conditions. [H-A]

H) The Information Page can be a copy of your "Stall Card." [D]

2. Current Health Paper work:

A) Current Coggins test (use a clear "page protector" to keep extra copies). [D]

B) Current inoculation list with dates including rabies (can be a bill). [D]

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C) (If required for purposes of rallying, etc.), a letter from your veterinarian explaining the use of any NSAID or any other medication given to the horse (i.e. Benadryl). [D]

3. Daily Feed Schedule:

A) To include times and amounts of feedings in pounds for both hay and grain (there can be a weight volume equivalent chart using a universal measure; i.e. quarts or cups). [D] Include pasture time if considered part of daily feed. [C]

B) List of supplements, including when and how they are fed [D] and reasons for giving them. [C]

C) Water and salt source locations. [C]

D) Include hay analysis (if not computer analysis then type of hay, i.e. "Local first cut grass") and grain nutritional breakdown (feed bag tag or computer print out). [C]

E) Contact information and/or location of hay, grain and bedding suppliers. [C]

F) History of seasonal feed changes (do you increase the horse's grain in the winter?) [C] and work related feed changes (do you feed for more energy in the summer as the horse's work increases?). [HB] You may use your old feed charts for this. [C]

4. Horse or pony's daily schedule; "a day in the life of..."

A) Location of feedings (for example- in stall in feed pan on the floor or out in paddock using blue fence feeder, hay on the ground). [D]

B) Turn out & in time as well as location of paddock and "paddock partners". Include any special things that need to be done regarding turnout (plug in fencer, tie lead rope around gate to secure, do not hang lead ropes on gate or horse will chew them, etc.). [HB]

C) Include directions regarding any special boots or blankets used during turnout and where to find them, including seasonal changes. [C]

D) Note usual riding/exercise time and duration. [HB]

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E) Include a list of riding equipment (to include things like boots, polos, "riding fly masks" and "quarter sheets." [D] Include type and size of bit; size of bridle; type of saddle; pads, risers, wither's pads; girth size and type; and which of these are used for flat work, over fences or in the open. This could be in the form of an "Equipment List". [H-A]
F) Optional but helpful: list of sizes of blankets and styles that fit, sizes and brands of boots, etc. Also helpful are specific blanketing guidelines addressing the temperatures/conditions at which blankets are worn or changed. [HB]

5. Maps of Stable/Barn Area and Grounds:
A) Site the stall/shelter, tack, water sources as well as hay and grain storage areas (which have labeled bins). Also locate first aid kits, fire extinguishers and tools (for fence and stall repair). [C] Include location of main power and water shut-off. [H-A]
B) Map of grounds to include paddocks with location of gates, water sources, power sources for fence (if any) and manure pile. [C]
C) Attached to this could be instructions on operation of water sources, fencers, etc. including how often to clean water tanks and how to prevent freezing in the winter.

6. Training Journal:
A) To include a historical and dated list of lessons, clinics, competitions and PC rallies. [D]
B) Dated daily log of the horse's activities including rider's regular assessment of horse's weight/condition, any injuries or maladies (cuts, scrapes, skin conditions, etc.) including dates of "time off" or "lay up", etc. This should follow your planned conditioning schedule or note why not. [HB]
C) There should be a record of the horse's pulse and respiration rates at rest and immediately after exercise at regular intervals. [HB]

7. Planned Conditioning Schedule (for appropriate Ratings):

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A) This is the conditioning schedule you *hope* to complete which will prepare your horse for a specific level of competition or PC Rally. [C]
B) It should be based on a rotating schedule of days of the week of which not more than two are concentrating on conditioning alone. The others will show the planned training and development of the horse using school figures, suppling exercises and jumping exercises (if required) for the other phases of the competition (if there are any) as well as rest days within the preparation period and after any competitions. [HB]
C) It should show a logical and progressive development of fitness resulting in a horse who has successfully completed the required distances of the level of competition at the required speed over similar terrain (or demonstrate compensation for the difference in terrain trained on and that of the competition) within 7 days of the end of the outline or date of competition. [H-A]

8. Shoeing and Farrier visits:
A) To include dates and action taken (trimmed, reset or new shoes). [D]
B) Include horse's hoof size/shoe size (even if no shoes are presently worn) and the angle of each hoof. [HB]
C) Type of shoe used and why (drilled for studs, clips, rolled toes, etc.) and the seasonal changes (i.e. borium in the winter and "keg" shoes in summer). [HB]
D) (If required) description of any corrective shoeing including a history of changes. [H-A]

9. Veterinary history:
A) To include history of dates and lists of all annual, semi annual and quarterly inoculations and well horse care (i.e. teeth). [D]
B) History of all veterinary visits for any reason [D] to include treatment given and its duration. [C]
C) Deworming history [D] and planned schedule. [C]

10. Expense and Income Summary:

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A) Lesson and clinic fees. [D]
B) To include price of hay, grain and bedding. [C]
C) Board fee (if applicable). [C]
D) Income dedicated to horse expenses. [C]

Notes

Description of the horse: The description of the horse, for the C level and above, needs to be detailed enough to positively identify the member's horse in a "line-up" of others of the same sex and basic body color. This situation is sometimes posed to a H-A candidate:

"Is the information contained in your Record Book detailed enough to prove to a well intending, over worked, non-horsey disaster official that the horse you have picked out of a field of 50 (of which all look remarkably similar) is indeed yours?"

Identification Photos: The horse or pony ID photos contained in the Record Book are for that purpose only and are generally not "sales" photos showing the horses best conformation. It is a good idea to stand the horse or pony so that all four legs are visible from each side. This shows how the markings on the inside of the legs may differ from the outside. Photos of the horse sniffing the camera *may* be the best ID angle of the markings on the face. Try to include the ears as the size and bend at the tip can be unique. Photos showing the horse or pony under saddle are not useful, however exciting they may be to look at.

Traveling Stall Cards: Traveling Stall Cards (for use at rallies, competitions or testings) can be both permanent and flexible by creating one page which contains all the relevant information excepting the rider's emergency

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contact information (for that specific event) and the horses daily feeding information (for the duration of the event). These temporary details can be written on an index card and affixed to the bottom section of stall card when all the information is obtained. The permanent section of these Traveling Stall Cards can serve as the information page in the Record Book.

Feed measurements: There is always animated discussion about the requirement to list feed in units of weight rather than by volume. It is known by examiners that candidates do not generally weigh the feed at each feeding time. The question then arises "why does PC require feeds to be listed in pounds?" The best answer (we think) is because it is the safest way to feed. The potential for harm to come to the horse or pony from overfeeding is greatly increased if fed by volume. In general, richer (high food value) grains (concentrates) are heavier than grains with less food value when compared by equal volume. Therefore, if the horse or pony is fed by weight, even if fed the wrong grain, he will be less likely to become ill than if fed the wrong grain by volume.
When listing the amount of feed given to a horse or pony, PC allows a weight/volume equivalent chart. The weight must be converted to a "universal measure" of volume (i.e. quart or liter) rather than a "can" or "scoop". This means that the amount of feed can be calculated by anyone, anywhere, with no confusion about how much volume is in a "can".

Daily Schedule: This page in the Record Book is analogous to the list or directions one would leave for anyone coming to "horse sit" for a day or two. It is the instructions for how to care for your horse or pony (knowing all his quirks and tendencies) in his home environment. This can be challenging for those who board their horses or ponies, as they may not be in control of this daily routine. This page is a validation that even though a candidate may not be the one deciding or doing these chores, they are aware of what is being done.

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Training Journal: This document should be a chronological list of activities the member has done relevant to horses. This is the source for the answer to the "test application" question: "what have you done to prepare for this testing?". This list will also be valuable when members are composing their CV or resume in the future.
This Training Journal should also contain day-to-day notes on the horse or pony's condition during training as well as the training exercises performed.

List of tack and equipment: The Upper Level members of Pony Club are generally a very transient group; not only moving their horses repeatedly to compete; but from barn to barn as they come and go to school, work or training. It is a very prudent idea to catalog your equipment for insurance purposes in case it is stolen, damaged or destroyed (i.e. by fire or flood). It is an especially good idea to mark your most valuable and easily transportable items, such as saddles and bridles, in an obscure location (under the skirt or in the gullet). Wood burning or leather branding tools are excellent for this purpose as are photos of the tack. This list of tack and equipment can be used in the Record Book for guidance on what is used on your horse in your absence.

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