

IRISH PONY CLUB



ADMINISTRATION RULES

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ADMINISTRATION RULES OF THE IRISH PONY CLUB 2007

In these Rules:

THE CLUB' means the Irish Pony Club

“CLUB MEMBER" means an Ordinary or Associate Member.

‘THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE' means the Irish Pony Club
Executive Committee.

'HEADQUARTERS' means the Headquarters of the Irish Pony
Club.

1. OBJECTS

- To encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with horses and riding.
- To provide instruction in riding and horsemastership and to instil in members the proper care of their animals.
- To promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty, thereby cultivating strength of character and self-discipline.

The Irish Pony Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its members. Every individual in the Irish Pony Club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for their own and others' rights, safety and welfare. All involved should conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Irish Pony Club and embrace the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.

It is the policy of the Irish Pony Club to safeguard the safety, health & welfare of its employees, sub contractors, paid/unpaid officials, instructors, volunteers, members, their parents or guardians, visitors and anyone else, including members of the general public who may be affected by the activities of the Irish Pony Club. (see complete Health and Safety Statement)

2. MEMBERSHIP

- a) There are two classes of Club Members, as follows:
 - i. Ordinary Members - consisting of boys and girls who have not attained the age of 18 years on the 1st of January, who pay the annual subscription, and whose parents or lawful guardian shall complete and sign the Application Form/Renewal Form for membership as prescribed by the Executive Committee and submit this form to their Branch Secretary.
 - ii. Associate Members consisting of Ordinary Members who, upon attaining the age of 18 prior to 1st of January, and with the approval of the District Commissioner, continue as Club Members and pay the prescribed annual subscription. New members joining the Pony Club for the first time, who have attained the age of 18 prior to the 1st of January, must pay the annual subscription and have their parent or lawful guardian complete and sign the Application Form/Renewal Form and submit the same to their Branch Secretary.
- b) No Club Member can be a member of more than one Branch.
- c) Branches should normally accept any Application for membership from people resident within their Branch district, and may refuse application from outside the Branch district if they feel they do not have room for them. Canvassing of existing members is not permitted.
- d) Branch Committees reserve the right to refuse membership or to remove membership.
- e) Membership automatically terminates at the end of the year in which a member becomes 23 years of age.

3: SUBSCRIPTIONS

- a) The annual subscription is as follows:
 - i) Annual subscription as determined from time to time by the Executive Committee is payable on 1st January for the following year. The first annual subscription is payable upon application for membership, provided that any person who has, for the first time, become a Club member after the 30th November in any year shall not be required to pay a further subscription on the next 1st January.

- ii) Annual subscriptions are payable to the Branch of which the Club Member is for the time being a member.
- iii) Annual subscription once paid is non-refundable.
- iv) Failure to pay annual subscription shall lead to withdrawal of membership.
- v) Each Branch shall send to Headquarters such proportion of all annual subscriptions as from time to time shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

3 b) PERMISSION OR ACCESS OR ENTRY

The Irish Pony Club reserves the right to refuse permission for access or entry or involvement in any Pony Club activity, to any non-member (adult or child) without stating any reason, and to decline to renew membership of an existing/previous member.

4. IRISH PONY CLUB COMPLAINTS, DISCIPLINARY AND APPEALS PROCEDURES

The Code of Ethics adopted by the Irish Pony Club includes a Policy Statement and a Code of Conduct for Members, Parents and Officials. The Irish Pony Club is committed to providing the best possible environment for all young people involved in sport. The Irish Pony Club also has a duty to care for volunteers working with its members on behalf of the organisation. The Irish Pony Club expects appropriate behaviour from all members, parents and others participating in any Pony Club activity. Without prejudice to the generality to the foregoing the following shall be deemed to be inappropriate behaviour:

- Possession, use or distribution of any illegal drugs or alcohol
- Profanity, base &/or vulgar language or gestures
- Harassment/Bullying — using words or actions that intimidate, threaten or persecute others before, during or following Pony Club activities.
- Failure to follow rules and or obey instructions.
- Cheating (deliberate attempt to circumvent or undermine the spirit or letter of the rules as is deemed by the Committee, in accordance with accepted good practice and in conformity with the written rules).
- Abusing a horse/pony, and or any other animal.
- Dishonesty (statement or endorsement of an untruth) and or theft.

Any conduct/action not befitting or in breach of Pony Club ethos by a member, parent, instructor, official or committee member can be considered by the Disciplinary Committee.

Under this Code the Irish Pony Club has developed a Complaints, Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure. This Procedure covers three distinct areas:

- 4.1 Difficulties or disputes which arise regarding the behaviour of members, officials, parents and others.
- 4.2 Complaints by members, their parents, and/or officials regarding any issue about which they are in dispute.
- 4.3 Difficulties or disputes which arise at competitions or as a result of competition. (These are covered separately in each Competition Rule Book).

4.1 Disciplinary Procedures

Irish Pony Club Officials are instructed to abide by the following procedure:

1. *First incident of inappropriate/unacceptable behaviour/breach of IPC Code of Conduct or Rules:*

▪ ***This incident should be reported to the DC or Chief Steward or Member of the Executive Committee who may issue a verbal warning and catalogue same in Branch records or Chief Steward competition report.***

2. *Second Incident*

▪ ***Issue a formal, witnessed, second verbal warning. This action should be reported to the District Commissioner who in turn reports the matter to the Area Representative concerned, and formally records this fact.***

3. *Third incident*

▪ ***A written warning is issued by the District Commissioner or Member of the Executive Committee referring to this and previous incidents. Area Representative, Executive Committee and HQ to be advised.***

4. *Fourth incident*

▪ ***Incurs suspension from Irish Pony Club activities. This action will be decided upon by the Executive Committee of the***

Irish Pony Club on advisement from the Disciplinary Committee.

- ***Before such action (No. 4 above) is taken, the conduct of the member or adult or other person shall be inquired into by the District Commissioner and the Branch Committee and he/she shall be given a full opportunity to defend himself/herself, and to offer explanation for his/her conduct. There must be seven or more of the Branch Committee present when the matter is discussed. If they are of the opinion that the member, adult or other person in question has been guilty of misconduct and that such member, adult or other person has failed to offer a reasonable and acceptable explanation, the majority of the Branch Committee shall forthwith inform the Executive Committee who may enforce the expulsion as in No. 4 above.***
- ***The Executive Committee shall within one week, notify such member, adult or other person of its decision in writing. Such notification to be sent by registered post to the last known address of such member and his or her parent, adult or other person, and shall also register a copy with the Secretary of the Irish Pony Club.***
- ***Any person who is dissatisfied with the decision of the District Commissioner and Branch Committee or Disciplinary Committee or Executive Committee shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Committee of the Irish Pony Club. Such Notice of Appeal shall be in writing, setting out the grounds of appeal and shall be sent by registered post to the Secretary of the IPC within seven days of the receipt by such person of the decision.***
- ***In the event of a member being expelled, such member shall forthwith forfeit all privileges and membership rights.***

The Disciplinary Committee is appointed by the Executive Committee, who will consist of three of the following:

The President of the Irish Pony Club

The Chairman of the Irish Pony Club

Member of the Executive Committee

Branch District Commissioner

IPC Sub Committee Member (SJ, Dr. Tetrathlon, Mounted Games, Horse Trials, Hunter Trials etc.)

Parent of a Member of the Irish Pony Club

The Chairman of the Irish Pony Club may appoint any additional person(s) who has in his/her opinion expertise in dealing with breaches of disciplinary procedures or disputes.

Duties Of The Disciplinary Committee.

- To deal with all matters concerning the conduct of members/parents and officials of the Irish Pony Club, or anyone else who is otherwise connected to the Irish Pony Club.
- Complaints which relate to anything occurring at a Pony Club activity or in direct connection with any activity of the Irish Pony Club.
- The disciplinary committee will deal with complaints, which must be in writing, signed by the authorised person making the complaint and either handed personally to the Chairman of the Irish Pony Club or sent by registered post to the Secretary of the Irish Pony Club. This complaint must be accompanied with any supporting evidence and names of witnesses.
- In addition any person has the right to report unseemly or unworthy conduct of a member or other adult, to the presiding officer of the Irish Pony Club activity in hand.

The Disciplinary Committee will initiate an **investigation** following a complaint into any incident of reported misconduct that does **not** relate to child abuse. It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the statutory authorities and should not be undertaken by the Children's Officers or by any other Branch official. The Disciplinary Committee should inform the Executive Committee of the progress of their investigation.

The Disciplinary Committee will furnish the individual with appropriate details of the complaint being made against him/her and afford him/her the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing.

Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the Executive Committee will notify the member of any sanction being imposed. This notification will be in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence should be addressed to parents/guardians.

Appeals Committee

If the member/official/adult against whom the complaint was made is unhappy with the decision of the Disciplinary Committee s/he shall have the right to appeal the decision to an **Appeals Committee** (independent of the Disciplinary Committee). Any appeal should be made in writing within a period of two months of the issue of the original decision of the Disciplinary Committee (such period to start from the day following that decision). The Chairperson of an Appeals Committee should be a member of the Executive Committee or a Director of the Irish Pony Club or an Appointee. The Appeals Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee when required. It shall be understood that any person(s) hearing an original complaint shall not form part of an Appeals Committee or be involved with the hearing of any subsequent appeal. Terms of reference of the Disciplinary and Appeals Committee will be determined and agreed by the Executive Committee.

If a member wishes to make a verbal representation to the Committee, the Committee will require the presence of a guardian over the age of 18 years.

The Appeals Committee will have the power to confirm, set aside or amend any sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.

Sanctions Available To The Disciplinary

And Appeals Committee

- Request an apology (whether verbal or written to be decided by the appropriate Committee).
- Eliminate the member from the competition.
- Eliminate the team from the competition.
- Suspend the adult or member for an appropriate period of time (from the Committee, Branch, or activity). Such period of time to be decided by the Disciplinary or Appeals Committee.
- Suspension or expulsion from the Irish Pony Club.

4.2 Complaints by members, their parents, and/or officials

- Complaints may be lodged by a member, parent or official.
- A Complaint must be in writing, addressed to the Secretary of the Branch concerned.
- The complaint should outline all relevant details about other parties involved and any corroborative evidence of misconduct/breach of the Code of Conduct.
- The Secretary will bring the complaint to the attention of the District Commissioner who should convene a meeting of the Branch Committee.
- The Branch Committee will investigate the matter allowing all parties involved a full hearing. They will decide if Disciplinary action is required. The District Commissioner will then inform the Area Representative and the Chairman of the Irish Pony Club and who will decide if a full Disciplinary Hearing is required.
- The Branch Committee or the Disciplinary Committee should hear the evidence from all parties involved and decide if a rule or Code has been breached. They should, inform those involved in writing of the sanctions to be imposed.
- Written notification should be given to parents if the complaint is against a member under 18 years.
- If any party does not agree with the decision of the Branch or Disciplinary Committee, they may appeal the decision within 10 days.
- The Appeals Committee may confirm, set aside or amend any sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.
- The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and brings the issue in dispute to closure.

4.3 Procedure For Dealing With Queries, Objections And Appeals At Competitions

- Competitors, and/or their parents should not approach a Fence Steward to enquire about the marking of a fence.
- Only a District Commissioner or his/her appointed Representative may query the results of a competition at the Secretary's tent. The Chairman of the Sub Committee involved or Chief Steward will explain/investigate any query or question brought to him/her.
- If the DC or his/her representative is unhappy with the explanation they must make an Objection in writing and lodge a deposit of €30, not later than 30 minutes after provisional scores have been posted.
- Queries and/or Objections will only be dealt with on the day of the competition.
- The formal Objection is dealt with by the Chief Steward and/or the Chairman of the Sub Committee.
- Each interested party must receive a fair hearing and be allowed the facility to properly state their case and present all the relevant facts.
- All relevant witnesses must be heard. Judges, Course designers/builder and Stewards who were in the area may be able to give relevant evidence.
- In the case of all formal objections the decision by the Chief Steward/Chairman of the Sub Committee should be given in writing to the Organising Committee and copies to each interested party.

If the competitor and his/her District Commissioner are dissatisfied with the ruling of the Chief Steward/Chairman of the Sub Committee on the objection – s/he has the right to Appeal.

Appeals At Competition

- When the Appeals Committee is called they will first read the decision of the Chief Steward/Chairman of the Sub Committee.
- They then hear the appellant and his witnesses followed by other interested parties and other witnesses.
- The Chief Steward/Chairman of the Sub Committee and the Appeal Committee are entitled to take into account that which they have seen happen. Interested parties may be invited to comment on the facts before a decision is reached.

- The decision of the Appeals Committee should be given in writing to the Organising Committee and copies to each interested party.
- **When a complaint has been adjudicated upon by the Appeals Committee, this decision is final and the matter is closed.**

5. ORGANISATION.

Areas:

For the purpose of administration, Ireland is divided into nine Areas as limited and determined from time to time by the Executive Committee. Areas shall consist of a number of Branches grouped together for administration purposes as defined by the Executive Committee.

6. OFFICERS OF THE IRISH PONY CLUB

6.1 Directors - The affairs of the Club shall be directed by the Executive Committee under the jurisdiction of the Directors of the Irish Pony Club Ltd.

6.2 The Chairperson shall be elected by the Executive Committee during the month of October from among its members, and shall hold office for a period of three years from the Annual Conference next after his/her appointment. A retiring Chairperson is eligible for re-election. If there is more than one nomination for the position of Chairperson a postal ballot will take place, with each elected member of the Executive having one vote. This ballot will be conducted by Auditors appointed by the I.P.C.

6.3 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of one representative from each of the Areas of the Club, known as Area Representatives, together with up to 12 other persons, which will include the Chairmen of the sub-committees.

6.4 The Area Representative is elected by the District Commissioners within their Area, and holds office for a period of 3 years from the autumn election and is eligible for re-election.

At the end of the 3 years Headquarters notify the District Commissioners in the Area and request nominations. If there is more than one nomination a post ballot will take place with each Branch having one vote. It is recommended that an Area

Representative is not concurrently serving as a Branch District Commissioner.

6.5 Sub-Committees.

The following format for the election (which will take place at an Area meeting during October) of sub-committee members for Show Jumping, Horse Trials, Mounted Games, Dressage & Combined Training and Tetrathlon, must be adhered to:

Firstly, one nomination is sought from each Branch, secondly, these nominations are brought to the respective Area meetings where an election using voting papers is held, with only one DC from each Branch (or his nominated representative) having a vote (the Area Representative only has a casting vote). The persons nominated from these elections form the new Committee. These Sub Committee nominees are subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.

The committee members are required to attend their Area meeting.

6.6 Sub Committee Chairman

The new Committee, at its first meeting, conducts an election (using voting papers) to choose the new Chairman of that Committee and discipline. The Sub Committee Chairman may co-opt two additional advisory members to serve during his/her term of office. Any such election or co-option shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, who also reserve the right to terminate the appointment of any Committee member. Co-opted members do not have voting rights. The Chairman and members shall serve for three years. If a Chairman or committee member retires during the three-year term, the Area will repeat the election process, and the newly elected member shall hold office until the term of appointment of the replaced member is completed. Committee members or a representative must attend at least two sub-Committee meetings per calendar year, and attend the relevant qualifier and Championship. Failure to do so will result in the person being replaced by a new member from his/her Area (decided by election) to complete the remaining period of office. The Sub Committee members are required to attend his/her Area meeting when requested to do so.

All these sub-Committees are responsible to the Executive-Committee, and shall submit a report of activities, the meeting minutes, a list of recommendations for approval, and a budget to cover any proposed expenses, on request and at each Executive meeting.

No sub-committee decision is binding until ratified and minuted by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee is responsible for the appointment of the additional Committees dealing with Finance and Training and the encouragement of Youth involvement.

6.7 Extra Committees

The Executive Committee shall appoint additional Committees as it may decide to organise and administer particular aspects of its activities. These Committees will be directly responsible to the Executive Committee, and if considered to be permanent, shall undergo the same election process as the discipline committees, and shall submit a report including a budget to cover any expenses they may incur. These Committees may, at their discretion co-opt not more than two persons onto their Committee only after seeking Executive Committee approval.

7. BRANCH OFFICIALS

New Branches

7.1 District Commissioners/Assistant District Commissioners and Branch Committees. The first District Commissioner of any Branch may be appointed by the Executive Committee on the recommendation of the Area Representative and shall hold office for a period of three years. The first District Commissioner of a Branch shall within one calendar month of his/her appointment, form a Local Committee which shall consist of not less than seven persons and not more than fifteen (in branches of more than 150 members, the Committee may be increased proportionately e.g. 180 - 18, of which the District Commissioner shall be one. Committee members shall be appointed to serve for a period of three years.* see Rule 8. for responsibilities of a DC.

7.2 New and Existing Branches

A retiring District Commissioner shall be eligible for re-election. The appointment of the District Commissioner so elected shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, and references from two people must accompany the application to Headquarters. No person who is financially interested in hiring out horses or ponies for their personal profit shall be eligible for appointment as District Commissioner, except in special circumstances which the Executive Committee, in its absolute discretion, shall decide. *No person who is financially interested*

in hiring out horses or ponies for their personal profit should exert undue influence on the branch activities.

The District Commissioner may appoint his/her own officials (Assistant DC, Sec. Treas.) from within the Committee (if from outside the Committee, with the approval of the majority of the Committee), to carry out specific duties and to be responsible to him/her. An Assistant DC can be appointed by the elected District Commissioner; a Joint District Commissioner must be elected by the Committee.

Executive Committee approval is required for the appointment of Joint and / or Assistant District Commissioner.

7.3 Annual Meeting of Parents Each Branch Committee shall call (before November 30th each year) an Annual Meeting of Parents and Associate Members with a view to enlisting their help and support for future activities and of obtaining their views on matters connected with the Irish Pony Club. Former Members and /or their parents are eligible for election but do not have a right to nominate or vote for the Committee. This meeting shall have the right to propose and elect persons for election on to the Branch Committee. The election must be carried out by secret ballot with the DC having the casting vote in the case of equality of votes.

7.4 Eligible to vote are:

- One member from each family with paid-up member(s)
- Any (paid up) Associate Member present

No proxy vote allowed

Nominations to Branch Committee:

- 1) Must be formally proposed and seconded from the floor
- 2) Nominees must be present and agree to uphold and abide by rules of the Irish Pony Club and if elected must agree to abide by the Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport.
- 3) A branch committee may, should they so desire include past District Commissioners as Ex-Officio members of the branch committee in acknowledgement and appreciation of their valued contribution to the branch.

7.5 Election for DC Each Branch Committee shall, at its autumn Committee meeting following the Annual Parents Meeting: Conduct an Election for DC if his/her term of office has

expired. If the term of office of the District Commissioner is due to expire, the Branch Committee shall elect the person whom it desires to appoint to that office for the ensuing three years. The proposed District Commissioners shall not be entitled to vote in such an election, and shall, for the duration of the election, cease to act as Chairman of the Branch Committee and retire from the meeting. The other members of the Branch Committee present at the meeting shall appoint, from among their number, a person to act as Chairman for the duration of the election, and, in the case of equality of votes the Acting Chairman so appointed shall have a casting vote only.

7.6 A Branch Committee may at any time, and from time to time, increase or reduce the number of its members which includes the District Commissioner provided the number shall not at any time be reduced below seven. For the purpose of increasing the number of its members or of filling any casual vacancy or vacancies a Branch Committee may at any time co-opt member or members to its Committee. These co-opted members may remain on the committee until the Autumn Parents meeting in the current year, where they are eligible for nomination.

7.7 If a District Commissioner should die, or cease for any reason to hold office the Executive Committee shall take responsibility for the affairs of the branch until such time as an election takes place.

7.8 If a District Commissioner should cease for any reason, to hold office as such, or, if a District Commissioner elected by the Branch Committee is not approved by the Executive Committee, the Secretary of the Branch Committee shall call and hold a Branch Committee meeting. They shall elect a District Commissioner to take the place of the one ceasing to hold appointment, or whose election is not so approved, as the case may be, and the newly elected District Commissioner shall hold office until the term of appointment of the District Commissioner who has ceased to hold office, would have expired. Any such election shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Committee on receipt by Headquarters of two independent references supporting the appointment, immediately after the District Commissioner's election.

7.9 The Executive Committee shall not be required to give any reason for withholding its approval for the appointment of a

District Commissioner elected by the Branch Committee, and any such District Commissioner shall not be deemed to have been appointed until the Executive Committee shall have given its approval.

7.10 If during the DC's term of office, the majority of the Branch Committee consider that the Branch is not being run in accordance with the objectives of the Irish Pony Club, they must appoint from amongst their number a person to report to the Area Representative, who in turn must report to the Executive Committee.

7.11 The Executive Committee may, by notice in writing addressed to a District Commissioner at his last address known to Headquarters, forthwith, or, after such a length of time as it may decide and which shall be specified in such notice, at its absolute discretion, terminate the appointment of the District Commissioner and shall not be required to give any reason for so doing. The Executive Committee shall take all such steps as may seem necessary or desirable to inform the Branch Committee of the Branch of which he/she is a District Commissioner of the terms of such written notice.

7.12 The Executive Committee may, by notice in writing to a member of a Branch Committee addressed to him/her care of the District Commissioner of the Branch of the Committee of which he/she is a member, forthwith and after such a length of time as it may decide, and which shall be specified in such a notice, at its absolute discretion, terminate the appointment of that Branch Committee member and shall not be required to give any reason for so doing. A copy of such notice shall be sent to the District Commissioner of the Branch.

7.13 If the District Commissioner is unable to be present at any meeting of the Branch Committee or shall not arrive within fifteen minutes of the time fixed for the meeting, the members of the Branch Committee then present shall appoint one of their number to be Chairman of that meeting.

7.14 The Branch Committee of each Branch shall meet at least three times in each year ending 31st December. Subject thereto the Branch Committee of each Branch may meet together for the dispatch of its business, adjourn, or otherwise regulate its meetings as it thinks fit. Questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes. In the case of equality of votes

the District Commissioner, or Chairman appointed in his/her place shall have a casting vote* only.

* A casting vote thus exercised by the Chairman should vote to preserve the "Status Quo" as there is clearly not a majority in favour of change.

7.15 Minutes of all branch meetings must be recorded and retained safely.

7.16 Branch Presidents - Any Branch Committee may appoint a President of its Branch. This is an honorary position and does not carry any voting rights. Honorary members of Committees do not carry voting rights.

8. THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AREA

REPRESENTATIVES AND DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS.

Area Representatives - will represent the Area on the Executive Committee during his/her term of office. District Commissioners meet under the Chairmanship of the Area Representative. Each Area must have a minimum of 3 meetings in each year.

8.1 Duties of an Area Representative:

- a) Ascertain views and wishes of their Branches and represent them at Executive Committee meetings.
- b) It is the Area Representative responsibility to inform Headquarters of any matters in their Area requiring their attention.
- c) To help co-ordination between Branches in their Area over such things as visiting Instructors, local courses, senior camps etc.
- d) To arrange suitable venues, organisers and dates for all Area Qualifiers.
- e) To arrange suitable venues, organisers, examiners and dates for Area B Tests.
- f) To attend all Championship Events, Instructors and District Commissioners' days. When not possible, a substitute should be nominated.
- g) To advise the Executive Committee as to the suitability of new District Commissioners, when elected, and new Branches, when proposed.
- h) To be available to help and advise District Commissioners in their Area when requested by the DC.
- i) To advise the Executive Committee on the suitability of applicants from their Area for overseas visits and other activities.

8.2 Duties of a District Commissioner - it is the responsibility of a District Commissioner to ensure that:

- a) References from two people are sent to Headquarters immediately after his/her election as District Commissioner. S/he must sign and agree to abide by the Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport and enforce the rules of the Irish Pony Club.

- b) The Branch Committee shall meet at least three times in each year and be responsible for organising the Annual Parents, and Associate members meeting.
- c) A complete record is kept of all Club members of the Branch, with the date of birth of each member and Tests achieved.
- d) Annual subscriptions are duly collected.
- e) All such remittances and returns that are requested by the Executive Committee are rendered to Headquarters when due.
- f) Simple accounts of the financial affairs of the Branch are kept (to Nov. 30th), and details sent annually to Headquarters by 31st December.
- g) That all communications from Headquarters are placed before the Branch Committee and relevant details are sent to members.
- h) Rallies and lectures covering all aspects of the Irish Pony Club activities are organised. The interests and welfare of all members must be catered for.
- i) The District Commissioner is responsible for the appointment of a Branch Official to be present at every function carried out by a branch and at every event in which a team or individual representing the Branch takes part. That the rules of the Club are applied, especially with regard to entry and eligibility for competitions (see special rules for competitions).
- j) That Headquarters and the Area Representative receive notification of all Branch activities (i.e. Branch Newsletter) before they take place.
- k) A District Commissioner may appoint officers for specific duties from the elected committee.
 - l) The DC should also appoint a Chief Instructor to advise him/her.
 - m) Ensure that no child participates in any Pony Club Branch activity unless membership has been paid. The membership card must be produced for Inter- Branch activity.
 - n) Risk Assessment must be carried out at each venue to be used for Pony Club activities.
 - o) Two References must be obtained from all Branch Officials and Instructors who have substantial access to members

of the branch. These references to be kept on record in the branch.

9. VISITING MEMBERS

All Club members will be welcomed as occasional visitors to the Working Rallies or Camp of any Branch with the approval of both District Commissioners and the Area Representative. No test may be taken outside the Branch without the written permission of both DC's and the Area Representative.

10. TRANSFER RULE

Pony Club policy is that a member should join the Branch in whose district he/she lives, and, on change of residence, should either remain with his/her existing Branch or transfer into the Branch in whose District he/she is going to reside, with the member informing the existing PC, and asking permission of the DC of the Branch which he/she wishes to join. If there is any doubt about the 'bona fides' of a transfer, the Area Representative must be consulted.

The Area Representative should refer the matter to Headquarters if necessary, but in all circumstances, the welfare of the member must be given priority.

No part of the annual subscription of a member transferring for the year in which the transfer is required shall be payable to the District Commissioner to which the transfer is made, but any arrears of such subscriptions shall be collected by the District Commissioner of the initial Branch.

No member may compete in official competitions for different Branches or International Teams for two months after transfer unless that member has changed residence and has joined the Branch in whose district the member has come to live.

11. BRANCH STATIONERY

If printed stationery and fixture lists are used, care should be taken that the title is correctly worded, viz. The — — — - Branch of the Irish Pony Club NOT The ———Pony Club. Official IPC Logo should be used (available from HQ).

12. BADGES AND TIES.

Badges and ties of membership are supplied to Club members by District Commissioners on payment of such charge as shall, from time to time, be notified by the Executive Committee. Membership badges and ties shall be worn at all Branch rallies and Pony Club activities.

13. RALLIES.

- a) Rallies shall be held as, and when, required by the Branch Committee and no person shall hold a rally or give instruction at a rally unless authorised by a Branch Committee or District Commissioner. To ensure Insurance cover, Headquarters and/or Area Representative must be in possession of Diary of Branch activities before they take place.
- b) It is of great importance that at every function carried out by a Branch, and every event in which a team or individual representing the Branch takes part, a Tack Inspection is carried out (see special rules for Tack). A Branch Club Official shall be present to accept responsibility for the proper conduct of affairs or to deal with unwanted incidents. Such person may be either the District Commissioner or some other member of the Branch Committee specially detailed to act on their behalf.
- c) At every Working Rally instruction shall be given, followed by games or sports.
- d) Team work shall be encouraged in preference to individual competitions.
- e) Dismounted rallies should be encouraged, when visits to kennels, riding establishments, lectures etc. will impart information, knowledge and experience.
- f) There shall be no awards at Working Rallies, but an occasional competitive rally may be arranged such as a gymkhana, hunter trial, dressage, mounted games or show jumping competition at which prizes may be given.
- g) Money prizes may not be given.

14. COMPETITIONS ORGANISED BY BRANCHES

At all Inter-branch competitions, the name of the competitor's Branch must appear on the entry form and the entry form must be countersigned by the District Commissioner of the Branch from which the Club competitor is a member.

15. CLASSES OPEN ONLY TO CLUB MEMBERS

At a County or Local Show classes confined to Club members, may be arranged only with the consent of the District Commissioner of the Branch in whose district the class is held. He/she must approve the conditions of the classes and the persons appointed to judge them. Headquarters must be notified for verification of Insurance.

Prize money is forbidden.

16. EXCHANGES BETWEEN BRANCHES

The exchange of visits and interchange of ideas between Branches can be beneficial to all concerned. The sharing of common interests and the spirit of friendship engendered among members, from different backgrounds has everything to recommend it.

17. THE EURO PONY CLUB, to which the Irish Pony Club is affiliated, was formed in 1990 and currently has membership embracing 16 European countries. Its object is to promote cultural exchanges among Pony Club members from the participating countries. Contact HQ for details of IPC representative.

18. FINANCE: District Commissioners are not allowed to contribute in cash towards the expenses of their Branches. However, Branch fundraising may be undertaken. Branch Officials are entitled to be reimbursed for branch running expenses i.e. post, phone, photocopying etc incurred in running their Branch.

19. DISPLAYS

Branches shall not undertake to give displays or to stage competitions at Shows or other public gatherings without first obtaining permission from their Area Representative. Headquarters must also be consulted.

20. CLOSING OF BRANCHES.

If a Branch shall, for any reason whatsoever, cease to exist, it shall be the duty of the District Commissioner holding office at the date of such cessation, or, if there shall not be any such District Commissioner, then of the members of the Branch Committee then holding office, forthwith upon such cessation, to send to headquarters:

- a remittance of all funds of the Branch under the management of the Branch Committee.
- all records of Branch members.
- all minute books and statements of accounts pertaining to the Branch
- all other documents held by the Branch

- an inventory of all equipment (such as jumps) held and owned by the Branch.
- to dispose of or transfer all such equipment as is referred to in the preceding sub paragraph as the Executive Committee shall direct.

21. LEGAL LIABILITY

Neither any branch or the Executive Committee of the Irish Pony Club or any person acting on its behalf shall accept or be held responsible for any accident, damage, injury or loss at rallies or any other meetings to Club members or their animals.

22. STANDARDS OF EFFICIENCY

- In order to encourage Club members to improve their equestrian proficiency and knowledge and to encourage pride in their work practices, a series of standards has been introduced, for each of which an Efficiency Certificate is awarded.

- There are seven standards:- A - H - B - C+ - C - D+ - D of which A is the highest and D the lowest. Club members shall take these in reverse sequence. An Efficiency Certificate is awarded for each standard: these certificates are signed by both the examiner and the District Commissioner of the Branch to which the candidate belongs.

Tests for D, D+, C standards shall be carried out by an examiner listed in the current year book, being on the approved examiners lists and appointed by the District Commissioner.

C+ standard Tests may not be taken until the candidate has passed the Riding and Road Safety Test.

C+ must be examined by a Senior and Medium examiner from outside the Branch who have not been instructing the candidates.

- Tests for B standards shall be carried out by two examiners, both of whom must be from the Pony Club list of senior examiners and must be organised by the Area Representative.

- Tests for H and A standards shall be carried out by examiners approved by the Executive Committee and will be organised by the Training Chairman and Headquarters. Candidates for H Test must have passed B, and candidates for A must have passed H Test including the Breeding section. Candidates for A standard must be of 17 years of age or over and be certified by the District Commissioner as ready and fit to take the Test.

- Club members shall not be examined for standards in any Branch other than their own without the consent of their own District Commissioner, and the DC of the host branch.
- A minimum of two months must elapse before any failed test is re-taken, with the exception of A test where three months must elapse before the Test is retaken.

Parents may not organise Efficiency Test for their children.

The written consent of parents / owners should be obtained when riders change ponies/horses during examinations.

23. PONY CLUB TIE AND FLAG

In the Pony Club tie these colours are to be worn in the proportion, pale blue 9; gold 1; Purple 9.

Only those entitled to wear an official Pony Club badge as a Club member, or an official, are entitled to wear the Club tie. There is also a dark blue tie with an embroidered Pony Club badge which may be worn by Associate members and officials.

When the Club colours are flown as a flag, the stripes shall be horizontal, blue being the uppermost, and purple at the bottom.

The proportion of the colours in the flag shall be: pale blue 9; gold 5; purple 9.

24. PONY CLUB ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A meeting of Area Representatives, District Commissioners and representatives of the Branch Committees shall be held at least once a year at a time and place appointed by the Executive Committee. At this meeting subjects put forward by the Branches will be discussed, and any recommendations made shall be considered subsequently by the Executive Committee.

25. HATS / HELMETS

The wearing of hats or helmets is compulsory and must comply with the regulations in the current Pony Club Tack Sheet. Hats must be worn with the chinstrap correctly fastened at all times when mounted. Body protectors must be worn when jumping. Failure to comply with this provision shall amount to a breach of discipline.

26. UNSUITABLE PONIES AND SADDLERY

It sometimes happens that children come to working rallies with ponies which are quite unsuitable for them, or with ill-fitting or unserviceable saddlery, thereby rendering instruction in

equitation difficult if not impossible. This is more particularly true of members attending a rally for the first time who may have no understanding of Pony Club standards and traditions and no home background of horse knowledge to guide them, It is the special duty and privilege of the Pony Club to function as counsellor and friend in such circumstances. This calls for sympathetic understanding and handling. The operative word in our 'object' is 'to encourage' not to reprimand or condemn. Strict adherence to the procedure which has served us so well, being the routine inspection, of rider, saddlery and pony at the outset of every Working Rally, this is our best safeguard against sub-standard turn-out. In cases in which action is called for, the child should be dismounted and the matter referred to the Pony Club official in charge of the Rally. If an approach to the parents concerned is deemed necessary or desirable such should be initiated by the District Commissioner or official and Independent action by instructors is undesirable. The following are regarded as unacceptable at Pony Club functions:

Ponies that are too young, (under 4 years of age) or are infirm through old age; ponies that are visibly ill, thin or lame; ponies that are a danger to their riders, or to other members or their ponies; mares heavily in foal, mares in milk or with foal at foot. For obvious safety reasons, stallions may only be ridden at Pony Club activities by members, if they have written permission from a District Commissioner to do so. The DC must inform in advance the organiser of the competition that a stallion will be competing, and must also guarantee that the stallion will only be ridden by the nominated rider and remain under named adult supervision when not being ridden.

All ponies are expected to be properly groomed and well turned out.

27. THE IRISH PONY CLUB INSURANCE POLICY

This is insurance to cover the legal liability of the Irish Pony Club. An insurance Policy is effected by the Executive Committee on behalf of the Pony Club to cover the legal liability of Club officers for accidents caused to third parties. The 'third party' includes Club members. It must be emphasised that this policy relates solely to liability at Common Law, which implies proven negligence against the Club

28. ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT.

It is most important that liability should, in no circumstances, be admitted on behalf of the Club, either verbally or in writing if any accident should occur, even though it may appear that the accident was, in fact, caused by negligence on the part of the Club or official. Any admission of liability may very seriously prejudice subsequent defence, or even invalidate the Policy. In the event of an accident, immediate notice, giving full details of the circumstances must be sent to Headquarters. If any communication is received from a third party, this must, at once, be passed on unanswered. If an answer is essential, this should merely acknowledge receipt of the communication. The main points to remember are that before any Pony Club function there is an up-to-date minuted list of Branch officials/Committee members, also including the names of people in charge of special events such as Camp, Gymkhanas, Hunter Trials, Horse Trials Mounted Games etc., also that there is an authorised official at every Camp or Rally deputised to be responsible safety of all fixtures such as jumps, fences, tables, tents etc. which might cause an accident.

The safe construction of all fixtures is the responsibility of the organising Branch Officials.

29. SPONSORSHIP

Applications to potential sponsors of all National Championships and all international teams must be approved by the Executive Committee before confirmation to avoid possible conflict of interest.

30. ALTERATION OF RULES

These Rules may, from time to time, be added to, rescinded either wholly or partly, or amended as the Executive Committee may, desire.