



WELCOME to RIDING TO HOUNDS with WELLINGTON-WATERLOO HUNT

**We want you and your horse to have a safe and enjoyable experience watching and following our hounds.**

**Please take the time to review the important information below.**

**INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE HUNT DAY - SUNDAY** hunts start @11am SHARP. Riders should be mounted at least 15 minutes before hounds move off **so please arrive in good time to register with the Field Secretary and tack-up** – an hour ahead is suggested. (You can check our Website or contact any hunt member to confirm start times).

When you arrive on hunt day, the Field Secretary will ask you to provide **proof of current Ontario Equestrian (OE) membership**, sign a waiver which includes emergency contact information and pay a capping fee (or present your certificate). Junior riders (under 18) **MUST** have their waiver signed by parent (or legal guardian) – which can be obtained in advance by asking your sponsoring member. All riding disciplines are welcome but **Junior riders must wear an “ASTM approved” riding helmet and boots with ¼ (min.) inch heel** (both **strongly** recommended for **all** riders). Traditional English Hunt attire is tan breeches, dark jacket, white shirt and stock tie with pin, but you are welcome to wear normal smart hacking clothes.

**If your horse kicks, a Red ribbon must be tied in its tail. If your horse has not hunted before, a Green ribbon should be used.**

#### **NEW TO THE HUNT**

There will be at least two groups of riders, known as **Fields\***, each led by a Field Master who ensures that a safe and respectful path is taken by the Field during the hunt and will strive to give you the best view of the hounds working.

**Certain Meets are particularly suitable for Horses &/or Riders new to riding to hounds who will be accommodated in a special Novice Field\*\* at these hunts.** Please contact a Master for details (see Fixture Card for contact information).

#### **\*HUNT FIELDS**

**First field** is for riders and horses that can safely meet all challenges in the hunt field (individual field hazards, jumps, ditches, etc. may be bypassed when safe to do so). Riders in this field must be prepared and able to follow the pace and lead of the Field Master.

**Second field** is for riders and horses that can meet a reduced level of challenge in the hunt field. Pace will not exceed a canter, and field hazards may be bypassed by the Field Master.

In both fields, following hounds for good views and good sport is the objective of the Field Master.

**\*\*A third (novice) field offered at specified meets** in order to introduce new riders and/or horses to riding to hounds in a controlled manner. Due to the novice nature of this field, it is not expected that riders in this field will be able to follow hounds to the same extent as the regular fields.

**Before hounds move off, a traditional Stirrup Cup is provided.** The Masters introduce Guests, other announcements may be made and Field Masters will be identified.

**All first-time guest riders must start the Hunt in 2nd Field**, which is slower than 1st Field with no jumps. You may ask permission to move into 1st Field at a check if your horse is under control and you feel able to handle a faster pace.

**BASIC ETIQUETTE: See next page**

## **BASIC ETIQUETTE**

### **DO NOT PASS your Field Master.**

If you need to retire early, **do not leave the field until you have spoken to the Field Master** - we want to ensure your safe return to the trailers.

**NO Smoking** once mounted at any time until back at the trailers after the hunt.

At all times your horse should be **at least 1 horse length behind** the rider in front of you. If your horse is out of control please CIRCLE to the BACK of the field.

**Do not allow your horse to kick any hound.** Hounds and Staff (Huntsman and Whippers-in) always have right of way. When stopped ALWAYS stand with your horse's head towards the Huntsman and hounds.

JUMPING - Do not crowd the rider in front of you. If your horse refuses and you want to try again, return to the BACK of the line, otherwise carefully go around the jump.

**If a rider falls make sure someone knows** (you may shout "Rider Down") BUT it will not be your responsibility to help. Look to the Field Master or another hunt member for direction and guidance. We have a protocol in place for this situation.

Please **don't grab and hold onto branches** while in the woods - they turn into weapons when one lets go. Better to duck to avoid them.

In addition, Traditional Hunting Etiquette is as follows (some repetition of above, but important!)

## **TRADITIONAL HUNTING ETIQUETTE**

- The land you are riding on is the Farmer's; abuse it and you lose the privilege.
- Close all gates that you have found closed.
- Ride around the edge of fields, unless otherwise informed.
- **NO SMOKING** during the hunt.
- Cease all talk while hounds are working.
- **Cell phones MUST be turned off while in the field.**
- Do not crowd the rider in front of you at any time.
- If your horse refuses a panel, PLEASE wait until all riders have cleared the panel.
- A horse that kicks **must** wear a red ribbon in its tail.
- A newly entered Hunter (green) should wear a green ribbon in its tail.
- **DO NOT INTERFERE WITH HOUNDS**, unless asked by the Huntsman or a Whipper-in: PLEASE OBSERVE.
- Hounds always have the right of way.
- TIMES GIVEN ARE FOR MOVING OFF. Please be ready and mounted 15 minutes prior.
- Introduce all guests to the Masters. **Guests must sign waivers before mounting.**
- **Members: Ride with and mentor your guests.**
- For further hunting information as to hunt day etc. contact the Masters.

If in doubt, or you need help, please ask any one of our members – we're happy to assist you.

**ABOVE ALL - Enjoy your day! We're delighted to have you join us!**