

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES OF SENECA VALLEY PONY CLUB



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ARTICLE I INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- Section 1 The Seneca Valley Pony Club ("SVPC" or "the Club") is an educational organization. It seeks to have its Members learn and grow through shared equine experiences, cooperating with others, competing with others in a team setting or as an individual where good sportsmanship, horse management and overall equine knowledge are held in the highest regard. As an educational organization, the Club's lesson program should assume primary importance among the activities organized by SVPC.
- Section 2 These Policies and Guidelines of the SVPC are intended to provide SVPC Members with an understanding of (a) the goals and philosophy of the SVPC; and (b) the administration and conduct of activities of the SVPC.

ARTICLE II RELATIONSHIP WITH USPC, CAPITAL REGION & LOCAL CLUBS

Section 1 Seneca Valley Pony Club Affiliation

SVPC is a Member of the United States Pony Club, Inc. ("USPC"). It participates in USPC activities by virtue of being a member of the USPC Capital Region. The Capital Region website (<http://capitalregion.ponyclub.org/>) includes an up-to-date list of all Regional Clubs and Riding Centers. SVPC, like all USPC Members, is a nonprofit, volunteer organization composed of young riders, parents and sponsors. SVPC fully supports the principles and beliefs embraced by USPC, and operates within the overall policy framework established by the USPC and the Capital Region. Copies of the current USPC Bylaws and USPC Regional Bylaws are provided as Attachments I - III. The Capital Region's Policies are included as Attachment VI.

Section 2 The USPC and its Mission

The USPC is an educational organization. It teaches horseback riding, equine sports, and the care taking of horses and ponies. Its mission is to develop high moral judgment, leadership and self-confidence of its Members through growth in riding skills and horse management knowledge.

Section 3 Guiding Beliefs of the USPC

- A. USPC is first and foremost an educational organization.
- B. USPC is committed to safety.
- C. USPC provides an opportunity for shared fun and cooperative work with others.
- D. Fair and friendly competition is provided as a means to develop teamwork and sportsmanship.
- E. USPC is beneficial for both horse and rider.
- F. Horse management is basic to the USPC
- G. The local Club is the core of USPC.
- H. USPC is dependent upon parental involvement and support.

ARTICLE III ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF SVPC

Section 1 Bylaws

The USPC Club Bylaws, as amended, govern the administration and operation of the Club. Where conflicts exist between the USPC Club Bylaws and these Policies and Guidelines, the USPC Club Bylaws take precedence. A copy of the current USPC Club Bylaws is provided as Attachment III hereto.

Section 2 Members and Sponsors

Members are young riders, up to age 25 as of January 1 of the current year, who have applied, been accepted and paid all initiation and recurring fees and dues. Sponsors are individuals who have paid the annual Sponsors' Fee; sponsors may be parents of Members, or other interested parties who have applied and been accepted as such by the District Commissioner(s). In addition to their important work as volunteers, Sponsors serve as the Club's District Commissioners and Officers. They also set the annual dues.

Section 3 Officers

SVPC has the following officer positions:

- A. District Commissioner (and Joint District Commissioners if desired)
- B. Secretary
- C. Treasurer
- D. Advisory Council Officers

The Sponsors recommend a person or persons as District Commissioner(s) for approval by the Regional Supervisor; the District Commissioner has day-to-day oversight and operational control over the activities of the Club and acts as liaison between SVPC and the Capital Region and the USPC. Officers are elected annually at the Annual Fall Sponsors meeting and serve one year terms. Newly elected Officers take office on

January 1 following the election. Specific responsibilities of the Officers are listed in the USPC Club Bylaws.

Section 4 Advisory Council Officers

The Advisory Council serves as the planning body of SVPC and acts in an advisory capacity to the DC(s) and other Officers. The Council Officers recommend Club policies for approval by the Sponsors and approve expenditure of funds by the Treasurer. The Council Officers serve a one year term and are elected at the Annual Fall Sponsors' Meeting. Council Officers must agree to take on responsibility as the coordinator for the day-to-day operation, under the direction of the DC(s), of one of the following functional areas:

- A. Lessons
- B. Ratings
- C. Rallies
- D. Membership
- E. Communications
- F. Coordination with the Horse Trials Organizing Committee
- G. Volunteers
- H. Bittersweet Field
- I. Pony Club Disciplines and Activities (see Art. IV below)

Section 5 Election of Officers

A. Nominating Committee

The District Commissioner recommends a Nominating Committee of between three and five Sponsors to solicit and nominate candidates for Officer positions. The Sponsors are notified in writing of the names of the proposed Nominating Committee Members; the Sponsors then elect the Nominating Committee at a meeting no sooner than thirty days after the notification and at least ninety days prior to the Annual Fall Sponsors' Meeting. The Nominating Committee solicits Sponsors to volunteer as Officers and presents a slate of candidates to the Sponsors at least thirty days prior to the Annual Fall Sponsors' Meeting.

B. Election

The election of Officers, other than the District Commissioner(s), occurs at the Annual Fall Sponsors Meeting. Additional nominations for candidates may be made from the floor at the Annual Fall Sponsors Meeting. Floor nominations must be accepted in person by the individual nominated and must be seconded by another Sponsor. Each Sponsor may cast one vote at the Meeting and a quorum of one-third of the Sponsors is required for the transaction of business.

Section 6 Sponsors' Meetings

In addition to the Annual Fall Sponsors' Meeting, there shall be a minimum of one additional meeting of the Sponsors in the spring of each year. The spring meeting shall be scheduled at least thirty days prior to the start of the Rally season and will serve to inform the Sponsors of the upcoming Rallies, Ratings, requirements for participation, and to respond to any questions or concerns posed by the Sponsors. The Nominating Committee may also be elected at this meeting. Additional meetings may be called as deemed necessary by the Officers. The Sponsors may also call a meeting in accordance with the procedures outlined in the USPC Club Bylaws.

Section 7 Officers' Meetings

A minimum of nine (9) monthly meetings of the Officers are held each year. At the beginning of each new year, the Officers will set the meeting dates for the remainder of the year. The District Commissioner sets the agenda for the meetings; additional agenda items may be proposed by an Officer or Sponsor. Meetings are open to all Sponsors and parents. The meetings will be conducted using either Roberts' Rules of Order or less formal rules, as determined by the Sponsors in attendance at any meeting. A quorum of one-third of the Officers is required for the transaction of business.

Section 8 Membership Dues and Sponsors Fees

Annual membership dues for the following calendar year are set by the Sponsors at the Annual Fall Sponsors' Meeting, based upon the Club's projected budget. Dues are used to pay National and Regional membership fees, and normal SVPC operating expenses. The Officers may vote to assist Members in need of financial assistance on a confidential case-by-case basis, if funds are available. Annual Sponsors fees are set by the Officers and are not to be invoiced until after the Annual Fall Sponsors' Meeting.

Section 9 SVPC Budgets

The Officers shall appoint a Budget Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, which shall develop a proposed budget in September of each year for review and approval by the Officers. The Officers present the proposed fiscal year budget for the upcoming year for approval by the Sponsors at the Annual Sponsors Meeting.

Section 10 Club Communications

All Member families and Sponsors receive a monthly newsletter to inform them of upcoming SVPC events and Bittersweet Field restrictions. The Club also maintains a web site (<http://www.senecavalleyponyclub.org>) which provides updated information to the Members and Sponsors. Communications of a more time-sensitive nature may be sent via e-mail. Members are also encouraged to call any District Commissioner, Officer, or other member family to pose any questions they may have about the Club or its activities.

Section 11 Amendments

These Policies and Guidelines may be amended only by a majority vote of the Sponsors.

ARTICLE IV ACTIVITIES

Seneca Valley Pony Club offers the young rider the opportunity to participate in a variety of horse-related activities throughout the year. The Club's Lesson Program is of major importance in developing the members' knowledge base. The Lessons Program should be geared to providing instruction to meet the standards set forth in the USPC Standards of Proficiency for the various rating levels. Additional lessons by recognized trainers in specific disciplines may also be offered. A Lessons Coordinator shall be appointed by the Officers and is responsible for organizing and scheduling the program.

Training and competition at the Club, Regional and National levels is available for show jumping, dressage, eventing, games, polocrosse, Quiz, tetrathalon, and horse management. Less formal activities include trail rides, parties and summer camps. For a Member to be successful in SVPC, study and knowledge of horse management, in preparation for competition and advancement in ratings, is as important as riding ability.

In order to ensure participation and proper management of these activities, Discipline Coordinators shall be appointed by the Officers for the following areas: Games, Eventing, Quiz/Non-Mounted Horse Management, Dressage, Show Jumping, and Polocrosse/Tetrathalon/Other. The Discipline Coordinators shall work with the Lessons Coordinator to ensure appropriate training opportunities.

SVPC participates in Regional Rallies (i.e., team competitions among the member Clubs of the Capital Region) and attempts to qualify as many Members as possible for the USPC National Championships. Rally team members will be selected by the DC(s), in consultation with the Rally Coordinator and the Discipline Coordinator; participation in rallies requires that the Member and her/his family are in good standing with the Club.

SVPC will also have several mounted and unmounted events throughout the year to help raise funds and encourage participation. A Club calendar listing the dates of the year's activities is provided in the Newsletter and on the website. The calendar will be periodically updated as needed.

Section 1 Active Participation and Member in Good Standing

Maximum Member participation in all SVPC activities is encouraged and is necessary for a Member's success in ratings and rallies. The following will determine good standing for participation in Club activities:

A. Members are encouraged to attend a minimum of three Quiz or non-mounted horse management sessions. A Quiz session is an informal educational session usually

held in a classroom-type setting, where one or more volunteer instructors educate members on one or more equine subjects.

- B. It is strongly recommended that each member serve as stable manager for at least one rally a year, if possible. Members with ratings of D1 or D2 are excused from the stable management requirement, but are encouraged to help or observe at a rally.
- C. Members should participate in at least one mounted rally per year.
- D. Members should attend at least one series of mounted lessons per year.
- E. Members should attend or volunteer to help at camps or events, assist during ratings, and must volunteer at the SVPC Spring and Fall Horse Trails and field days, unless their participation is excused by the DC.
- F. Members must be current in their financial obligations to the Club and the Region

Older, more experienced Members are expected to guide and provide encouragement to the younger, less experienced Members. Older Members are encouraged to assist with lessons, prep sessions, or coaching at a rally. All SVPC Members are expected to help each other as necessary to insure the success of the Club and SVPC teams. Participation and scores in SVPC activities will be used in the selection of the Regional Rally teams and recommendations for placement on National Teams.

Section 2 Parent Volunteers

SVPC is a volunteer organization that relies heavily upon parent participation; parent and Sponsor participation in Club activities is required. A list of the jobs required to support SVPC activities is developed by the Volunteer Coordinator. Parents, Members and Sponsors must participate in two half-day field work days (which may be a “flexible” work day, if approved by the Field Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator) and must work one day at each of the horse trials (pre- and post-event work may be substituted at the discretion of the DC). Failure of a Member Family to participate in two field work days will result in the family being assessed a “Non-Volunteer Fee” of \$150, which must be paid prior to the Fall Sponsors’ Meeting.

Section 3 Horse Trials

SVPC hosts two horse trials annually at Bittersweet Field, one in the spring and another in the fall. These events provide Members, Sponsors, and other equestrians an opportunity to compete in a recognized USEA Horse Trial. The SVPC calls upon its Sponsors, Members, parents and friends for the considerable volunteer effort necessary for the Trials to be successful. The proceeds raised from these Trials underwrite the majority of the Club's expenses throughout the year and substantially reduce the cost to participate in lessons and rallies for our Members. Thus, all Members, Parents and Sponsors are required to assist in some manner at the trials

ARTICLE V RATINGS

Section 1 Purpose and Rating Levels

Ratings are a means of measuring Members' progress in attaining the USPC Standards of Proficiency. There are four broad standards of proficiency, "A", "B", "C" and "D", with the "A" rating signifying the highest proficiency. Ratings are further subdivided as follows:

- A. The "D" rating is divided into D1, D2 and D3 levels, with the "D3" rating being the highest proficiency.
- B. The "C" rating is divided into C 1 , C2 and C3 levels.
- C. There is only one level at the "B" rating.
- D. The "A" rating is divided into the H/H-A/H-M levels which cover horse management, teaching and training, and the A level, which tests the riding phase. (The "H" rating in horse management is available to those members who have attained their C3 Rating; the H-A rating is for those Pony Clubbers who have received their B rating; the H-M rating is for those Pony Clubbers who have attained the HB rating.)
- E. Within each of the D1 through C2 levels, the USPC has established an alternate ratings progression encompassing horse care/knowledge, riding on the flat and riding over fences, such that each member may choose to attempt all or part of the particular rating level.
- F. Specialty ratings in show jumping and dressage, as well as traditional, are available at the C3, B and A levels.

The USPC establishes the standards of proficiency for each rating level. A copy of the current standards are provided as Attachment IV.

Section 2 Progression from One Rating to Another

Advancement from one rating level to the next is based upon rider skill, horse management knowledge, and participation at Club events as outlined in Section 1 of Article IV. Local ratings are held twice a year (spring and fall, as noted with particularity in the Club calendar) for D1 through C 2. The C2 rating may be organized by the Region, if agreed to by the member clubs. The C3, B, H and A ratings are conducted at the National level using a National examiner.

As dictated in the USPC flow charts, each member will document proficiency in horse management and riding standards using the USPC proficiency checklist. Upon completion of the proficiency checklist/flowchart, a member must submit a written Ratings Application to the Ratings Coordinator. Upon review of the Application and, with the consent of the DC(s), the member may then be recommended to pursue that level rating (a member's participation in various Club activities throughout the year may be considered in determining whether a recommendation will be issued for that member). A copy of the Ratings Application is included as Attachment V.

In order for a Member to be successful at a rating, the following guidelines apply:

- A. Members should participate in a minimum of one rally at their present rating before attempting to rate up to the next rating level.
- B. Absent exigent circumstances, it is recommended that Members attempt no more than one rating level per calendar year.
- C. Members who wish to attend a rating should attend a rating prep recommended by the Club or the Region and be approved by the prep instructor to proceed to the rating. If there is a scheduling problem in attending the rating prep, a qualified Pony Club instructor, recommended by the District Commissioner or Regional Supervisor, may be hired to do the required skill assessment for the Member.

Section 3 Financial Responsibility for Rating

Fees associated with ratings are the responsibility of the Club. If, in the discretion of the Advisory Council, it is determined that a member has abused this policy (*e.g.*, being unprepared at multiple ratings or failure to attend a rating which the member applied for without a reasonable excuse), the Club may require payment of a subsequent rating fee.

ARTICLE VI RALLY TEAMS

Section 1 What Rallies Are and What They Involve

Rallies are team competitions among the various Clubs that constitute the Capital Region. The SVPC participates in dressage, show jumping, eventing, games, tetrathlon and polocrosse rallies each year. The SVPC encourages participation by all members at rallies for the discipline(s) in which the members are involved.

Section 2 Dressage

Teams for the Regional Dressage Rally will be selected by the DC, in consultation with the Dressage Coordinator and the Rally Coordinator, based on the members' scores from SVPC Dressage Day, participation in SVPC activities, and good standing with the Club.

Section 3 Show Jumping

Teams for the Regional Show Jumping Rally will be selected by the DC, in consultation with the Show Jumping Coordinator and the Rally Coordinator, based on the members' scores from SVPC Show Jumping Day, participation in SVPC activities, and good standing with the Club.

Section 4 Eventing

Teams for the Qualifying Eventing Rally will be selected by the DC, in consultation with the Eventing Coordinator and the Rally Coordinator, based on performance at previous horse trials, participation in SVPC activities, and good standing with the Club. Teams for the Non- Qualifying Eventing Rally will be selected by the DC, in consultation with the Eventing Coordinator and the Rally Coordinator, based on performance at D-Camp, previous horse trials (if applicable), , participation in SVPC activities, and good standing with the Club

Section 5 Games

A Games Committee will be appointed each year to oversee the Games program and assist the Games Coordinator. The Games Rally consists of a series of events that emphasize control of horses and ponies, as well as athletic abilities of riders. Teams are selected by the DC, in consultation with the Games Coordinator, the Games Committee, and the Rally Coordinator, based on the games coach's recommendations, participation in practices, and results of timed trials, if necessary, participation in SVPC activities, and good standing with the Club.

Section 6 Quiz

Teams for Quiz Rally are arranged by rating level, and will be selected by the DC, in consultation with the Quiz Coordinator and the Rally Coordinator, based on the Member's participation in Quiz prep sessions and/or other lesson programs, participation in SVPC activities, and good standing with the Club.

Section 7 Polocrosse

Teams for the Regional Polocrosse rally will be selected by DC, in consultation with the Polocrosse Coordinator and the Rally Coordinator, based on age and rating, and participation in polocrosse practices, participation in SVPC activities, and good standing with the Club .

Section 8 Selection for National Teams

SVPC Members are selected for National Teams by the Capital Region based on eligibility, individual scores at the Regional Rallies, participation in Club activities, and the recommendation of the District Commissioner.

ARTICLE VII

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

SVPC, as a USPC member Club, and in order to provide prior notice of potential sanctions, believes it appropriate to set forth its disciplinary policies. The following disciplinary actions apply to Members, Sponsors, parents and guests. Serious misconduct at any Pony Club activity may result in suspension or restriction of Pony Club privileges including restriction from the use of Bittersweet Field and/or participation in local, Regional and National events. Examples of unacceptable conduct include: violation of the USPC Code of Conduct; poor sportsmanship; riding without a certified helmet; abuse of a horse; theft; cheating on a written test; misuse of Bittersweet Field; and breaches of rally commitment. Unacceptable conduct is subject to disciplinary action.

Parents are reminded that they are also subject to the USPC Code of Conduct and the disciplinary policies established by the Club and USPC; failure to abide by those standards may be subject to disciplinary action.

The Capital Region has adopted a policy (included in Attachment VI), binding on each member Club, for resolving disputes. The Club will follow that process in resolving any disputes between members, families, or Club officers.

ARTICLE VIII

USE OF BITTERSWEET FIELD

Section 1 Overview

Due to the graciousness of the Austin Kiplinger Family (a founder of the SVPC more than 30 years ago), SVPC is privileged to have access to Bittersweet Field, located at the intersection of River Road and Partnership Road, for recreational riding, group and individual training sessions, hosting our local and regional events, and conducting fund raising horse trails. Certain rules and regulations must be complied with to ensure rider safety, protection of field and equipment, and for insurance reasons.

Section 2 General Rules for Use of Bittersweet Field

A. Field Availability. Use of the field is limited to Open Schooling Days, Club Schooling Days and days of scheduled SVPC events. Club Schooling Days are Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Federal Holidays which fall on Mondays. Open schooling days are held on designated days during the week following the Spring and Fall Horse Trials. Restrictions on use of the field apply depending on classification of membership and affiliation with SVPC, as discussed below. Guests may ride at the field on Saturdays and Sundays only and must be accompanied by a Member.

- B. Insurance. USPC medical insurance only applies when a Member is participating in an SVPC-sponsored event (e.g., Open or Club Schooling Days, clinics, rallies, camp, etc.)
- C. Hold Harmless. A Hold Harmless Agreement is required of all riders using Bittersweet Field or at a sanctioned Pony Club event. Members must annually sign a new Hold Harmless Agreement. Guests must sign a Hold Harmless Agreement each time they ride. An annual Hold Harmless Agreement for a guest is not authorized.
- D. Weather Conditions and Field Closing. No one should ride at Bittersweet when weather or field conditions would result in damage to the field or jumps, or when posted in the newsletter that the field will be closed. When conditions are questionable, err on the side on not riding. Use of Bittersweet is also limited in the weeks leading up to the Spring and Fall Horse Trials; check the USEA Omnibus for exact closing dates.
- E. All Riders Must Wear Pinneys. All riders must wear a teal and black Club-issued pinney while on the field; riders are strongly urged to wear protective cross country vests at all times when schooling at Bittersweet. Pinneys can be obtained from the Membership Coordinator. Pinneys are limited to one per parent or Member. Guests are issued pinneys only on a daily basis.
- F. Field Security and Jump Relocation. If jumps are relocated, they must be returned to their original location prior to leaving the field. Stadium jumps must be returned to the jump shed; **do not** move crosscountry obstacles without explicit permission from the Field Coordinator. For protection of the field and equipment, the gate must be locked when exiting the field.

Section 3

Authorized Riders

Use of Bittersweet Field is limited to:

- A. SVPC Members and Their Parents may use Bittersweet Field during Open Schooling Days, Club Schooling Days, and during scheduled SVPC events. SVPC Members may bring one guest per member on Saturdays and Sundays only, and must have a Hold Harmless Agreement signed by their guest prior to use of the field. Members under 18 years of age must have their trainer or an adult on the grounds while using the field.
- B. Sponsors who are not parents of a Member are granted use of Bittersweet Field on Open Schooling Days only. All rules that apply to Members concerning use of the field apply to Sponsors of SVPC.

C. Honorary Members of SVPC may be selected annually by the Officers and are granted privileges for one year. Honorary Members are those people who have volunteered their time and services above and beyond the normal participation of the many friends and supporters of the Club. Honorary members pay no fees and are granted access to the field in the same manner as members and parents.

Section 4 Use of Bittersweet Field by Trainers

Trainers, regardless of status as a Sponsor or Honorary Member of SVPC, may only instruct persons at Bittersweet field who are Members, Sponsors, or Honorary Members of SVPC. The occasional guest of a Member may be included if a Hold Harmless Agreement is obtained. The only deviation from this will be if the trainer is authorized by SVPC to conduct a clinic or fundraising event for SVPC or an entity that works in concert with SVPC.

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