Harry Meade’s courses

Courses run from mid-September to mid-November

Cost: £230 per person for a two-day course which includes lunch both days; £155 for a one-day course. Discount rates are offered to anyone who brings a full group.

Stabling can be provided if required and full board can be arranged. To book: contact Harry’s wife, Rosie. Tel: 07946 025136 or email rosie@harrymeades.com

For more information, visit www.harrymeades.com

Hunt feature

Harry’s Top Tips:

1. Adjust your stirrups. If you’re comfortable tackling the meet, they’ll be too long when you get galloping and jumping. It will feel strange for the first hour, but bear with it!
2. Keep the revs up into a fence, but remember ear to turn, rather than to pull back and round
3. There’s nothing wrong with a good Pony Club kick. Use the back of the heel, not the ‘A’ at the girth. This is the only part of you that will create energy.
4. Don’t drive with your seat; this flattens a horse out, making it difficult for him to jump.
5. Try not to pull on your horse’s head — coming into a fence he’ll be unable to judge his own stride and he may well rush his fences. Bridge your reins if you find yourself interfering, or you’re riding a strong horse.
6. Don’t over-complicate things. It is too much to ask a horse to jump the distance to a fence; it is the rider’s responsibility to show the horse where to go, create the right amount of power, and then not interfere. Horses are better at judging distances than we are, so don’t make life harder for yourself by trying to take over.

Ready for the horses

REBECCA JORDAN tries Taunton Vale joint-master Richard Milford-Stead’s courses at Pontispool Equestrian Centre in Somerset.

“Having an experienced horse that had only hunted across Dartmoor and I wanted to visit the hunt jumping courses.

“The all-weather arena we learnt to jump gates, wire, hedges, post and rails, ditches and banks, and all levels were catered for. That afternoon we gathered for a mock meet to experience the speed involved, jumping beside other horses and how we behave in gateways and tighter corners.

“The following day the course concluded with morning’s horse work. Everything we had practised was put into play. For more information, visit pontispool.co.uk or tel 01823 461296

Putting it all into practice

ALL TipS need to be practised that their ‘default’ method is not necessarily correct and, since we all instinctively resist change, the willingness to drop old habits and adopt new ones has to come from them. By understanding what it is that causes the problems, only then do people want to change and become open to learning,” says Harry.

“Things sink in overnight, and people arrive with an understanding and a belief in what they need to correct,” says Harry.
but significant adjustments were enough to improve their riding and therefore their horses’ ways of going, and should go quite some way to making their hunting seasons happier for both. “What they learn here should equip people for the future, so that when things go wrong, as they inevitably do for any of us, instead of having a crisis of confidence, they will hopefully be able to identify the reason and know exactly what to do to correct it,” says Harry. I loved it. Jumping some decent hedges did wonders for my confidence, which rushes away forward coming down to a hedge this season, shat out at m! 1611

‘In safe hands’ with Lucinda Green
HAVING gone from an old schoolmaster, who allowed me to be a lazy passenger, to a much younger pony that requires the odd aid, a hunting clinic was ideal, writes Charlotte Mackness.

Hen McCall, a Pytchley master, organised a day with Lucinda at Milton Keynes Eventing Centre. Participants ranged from veteran Pytchley subscribers in their 60s to people with just a couple of days autumn hunting under their belts.

“We were split into groups of six of similar abilities for our two-hour sessions. From the start Lucinda’s enthusiasm was contagious and I felt confident I was in safe hands,” says Harry. “We spent a good hour tackling small but super-skinny fences, which underlined the importance of accuracy over speed. The session was about building confidence and learning to look after ourselves, which, in turn, gives our horses the best chance of jumping safely. “To end we linked six fences of our choice, finishing with an inviting brush. Seeing what my pony could jump from a slow trot and walk filled me with confidence.” For more information, visit www.petplanequine.co.uk/events/lucindagreen-dates.asp

Winter cross-country schooling
The cross-country schooling facilities listed below are open now and most are open through the winter. Weather does occasionally force closure, so do phone ahead.

Cross-country special

CC1 four-star event rider BEANIE STURGIS: “I tend not to clip the heels, because the feathers act like a ‘sandal gap’ and help prevent mud over.”

More hunting courses
South Notts hunt, Nottingham
Tel: 07968 603246
Cindy Sims for Tewkesbury Hunt, Gloucestershire
Tel: 07781 382900

Les Smith/Clare Dunn for Border Riding Club, Todburn EC, Northumberland
Tel: 01973 333183
Eleanor Mercer Equestrian, North Yorks
Tel: 01845 567935/07525 980371

Robert Stevens, North Wilts
Tel: 01666 852645/07973 842801
Bill Lovett, Gloucestershire
Tel: 01770 339427
Jonty Evans, Gloucestershire
Tel: 01790 859699
Chloe Newton, Leicester
Tel: 07746 982663

Blackwater Farm Equestrian Centre, Blackwater Lane, Great Witley, Worcestershire
Tel: 01562 836277; £20 per horse, £35 per rider, £30 for riders 8-18 years old and under

Boomerang Stables, Chilton Foliat, Hungerford, Berks RG17 0TW
Tel: 01767 202357; £20 per horse

Borum Farm Equestrian Centre, Southwick Farm, Buriton, Nr Petersfield, Hants
Tel: 01427 526772; £20 per horse

Brockhampton, Glos GL54 5SR
Deer Park Cross Country, tel: 01227 875281; £20 per horse, £25 for groups of four or more

Ely Eventing Centre, Wilts SN8 3EU
www.elyeventing.co.uk; tel: 01242 820881; £20 per horse

Ely Eventing Centre, Blyth, Northumberland
Tel: 01845 567853; £20 per horse

Flintshire CH8 9AR
Mostyn Farm Ride and Cross Country, Mostyn, Whitford, Holywell, Clwyd
Tel: 01444 881620; £20 per horse

Hanslope, Milton Keynes MK19 7HQ
MK Event Centre, tel: 01908 880251, 01908 889229; £20 per horse, £15 per rider, £10 for under-16s

Hillocks Farm, Newent, Gloucestershire
Tel: 01666 861245/07973 842801

Hillocks Farm, Cleobury Morimer, Shrops DY14 0EB
Tel: 01908 880251; £20 per horse

Kelsall Hill Equestrian Centre, Caldwell, Richmond, North Yorks
Tel: 07789 428201; £20 per horse

Kelsall, Tarporley, Cheshire CW6 0SR
Kelsall Hill Equestrian Centre, tel: 01666 861245/07973 842801; £20 per horse

Louth, Lincs LN11 9QX
The Hallington Ride and XC Course, tel: 01749 343384/07511 078285; £25 per horse

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Tel: 01562 836277; £35 per horse, £45 for riders 18 years old and under

Boomerang Stables, Chilton Foliat, Hungerford, Berks RG17 0TW
Tel: 01767 202357; £20 per horse

Borum Farm Equestrian Centre, Southwick Farm, Buriton, Nr Petersfield, Hants
Tel: 01427 526772; £20 per horse

Brockhampton, Glos GL54 5SR
Deer Park Cross Country, tel: 01227 875281; £20 per horse, £25 for groups of four or more

Ely Eventing Centre, Chilton Castle Estate, Chilton, Canterbury, Kent CT4 8DB
Tel: 01227 758681; £25 per rider, discounts for groups or clubs

Deer Park Cross Country, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire
Tel: 01926 409995; £20 per horse

Ely Eventing Centre, Downham Common, Little Downham, Ely, Cambs, CB6 2YJ
Tel: 01353 698839; £20 per horse

Eveline’s Equestrian, Quainton Stables, Quainton, Aylesbury, Bucks
Tel: 01296 637691; £22.91+VAT

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Tel: 01296 637691; £22.91+VAT

Field Farm Cross Country, Field Farm, East Road, Wythenshawe, Leics LE6 2EY
Tel: 01257 428447; £20 per horse

Gloucester Lodge Farm, Blyth, Northumbs NE43 3PH
Tel: 01908 633371; £20 per horse

Grange Farm Cross Country, Swaffham, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 2JY
Tel: 01295 760036; £20 per horse

The Hallington Ride and XC Course, tel: 01749 343384/07511 078285; £25 per horse

Hillocks Farm, Cleobury Morimer, Shrops DY14 0EB
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Kelsall, Tarporley, Cheshire CW6 0SR
Kelsall Hill Equestrian Centre, tel: 01666 861245/07973 842801; £20 per horse

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Mallet, Somerset BA4 4JG
Eleanor Mercer Equestrian, North Yorks
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Merton, Richmond, North Y orks
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