

Frequently Asked Questions About Games and Polocrosse

1.) What sort of horse do I need for Games or Polocrosse?

Any horse or pony of reasonable soundness and temperament can play games and Polocrosse. You do not need to have a pony for games, although it is easier for smaller players to reach some of the equipment on a smaller horse. Those on larger horses just learn to be more nimble! As always, a calm attitude on the part of the horse is helpful.

2) Is there a horse I can borrow if I don't have one?

It may be possible to arrange to borrow a horse. Such arrangements are made between you and the horse owner, although the organizers may be able to provide referrals. The nice thing about games and Polocrosse is that the horse doesn't need any special skills or ability—your neighbor or friend may have a horse or pony who needs some work, and you can provide it!

3) Do I need to buy a Polocrosse racquet?

No. Equipment is available for you to borrow. All Games equipment will be provided as well.

4) Do I need to have any special equipment for myself or my horse?

For games, no special equipment is necessary. You may use any form of snaffle bit, a curb kimberwicke or Pelham bit with converters for games. (See Games biting rules.)

For Polocrosse, you need to have polo wraps or sports medicine boots and bell boots for protection of your horse's legs. You will also need a breastcollar to keep your saddle from moving around. Your horse's bit should not have any kind of shank that could catch in a Polocrosse racquet net. Call the organizers or consult the Polocrosse rulebook for more information.

For the rider, standard Pony Club attire is all that's required. Games players tend to prefer paddock boots to tall boots for maneuverability; Polocrosse players play in "whites," that is, white breeches, when competing, but any color is acceptable for practice. At our June rally, the "whites" rule will be relaxed so that any conservative color is permitted.

5) I haven't been riding very long. Can I really play Games or Polocrosse?

YES! Did you know that Polocrosse was originally invented to teach people how to ride horses? Both Polocrosse and Games teach you the fundamentals of balance and control, and you and your horse will have fun doing it! If you can bend down and pick up a ball from horseback, or steer your horse accurately enough to spear a ring, think how much

more accurate your approach to a jump will be. Games and Polocrosse skills translate well to any other horse sport.

6) I've never played Games or Polocrosse before. How much experience do I need to go to a Rally?

Ideally, you should plan on attending at least one clinic prior to the rally. At the very least, it is only fair to your horse to introduce him/her to the equipment and experience beforehand. You and your horse will have a much better rally experience if you know what to expect. But if your horse has a lot of experience with, for example, Western games, he/she will probably do just fine with Games and Polocrosse in Pony Club.

7) I'm a D.C. of a Pony Club. The kids in my club are new riders. Are they ready for Games or Polocrosse?

Absolutely YES! Games and Polocrosse both can be great learning experiences for beginners, and they offer endless opportunities for advancement as the kids improve. Timid riders learn confidence as they get brave enough to reach down and pick up a cup from a barrel; the rider having trouble keeping his horse straight to a fence learns to stay straight to pop a balloon. And ponies or horses learn to become unflappable in the face of the unusual—the horse that plays games or Polocrosse will not freak out in the show ring when someone else's horse is acting up or gets loose. There are no more cross-country fence demons when you can stand still while someone on your back dunks a ball in a net.

8) Okay, so the kids in my club can play Games and Polocrosse. But can they really go to a rally?

Of course. Rallies are no more than extensions of what you have been teaching them at home. Games and Polocrosse in particular are very inviting first rallies. No fancy attire is required. These are truly team sports—you are working together for a single cause. The team takes its formals at the same time, rides at the same time, does turnbacks at the same time, so time management is simplified - everyone is working on the same tasks at the same time.

Above all, a Games and Polocrosse Rally is intended to be an educational activity. Your members will have lots of fun. They will also learn how to truly work together, how to care for their horses away from home and how to rely on each other. You'll be amazed and very proud of what they show you they can do!

If you have any other questions about Games or Polocrosse or the upcoming clinics or rallies, please contact Renee Samuelson at 952-913-5192 or rjsams001@charter.net.