

## Foxhunting Mounted Lesson Plan

### **Title: Keeping Distance Between Horses While Changing Pace and Turning**

*Level of Students:* D2, D3 or C1

*Length of Lesson:* 30 minutes

*Special materials:* Poles on the ground in the ring, and some cones, arranged randomly, at different angles, at different distances, like branches on a crooked trail, making a large loop around the ring or across the diagonal

#### **Introduction:**

1. Introduce yourself and topic, ask students if they have hunted or been on a group trail ride, have them introduce themselves.
2. Ask if any of the horses or ponies are kickers. Ask if they have ever run into a horse in front of them? Is steering hard behind a group of horses? How far behind a horse should you stay while hunting or on a trail ride?
3. Today we are going to work on quick decision-making while riding in a line and avoiding running into each other, a simulation of jumping while out hunting.

#### **Body of Lesson:**

1. What are some ways of controlling your horse or pony behind others? Why do you want to wait for the person in front of you to jump before you approach the jump?
2. Here we have a series of poles and cones that represent several jumps or logs on a twisty trail. We are going to ride thru them, at a walk, first, and each rider is going to let the rider in front get well away from the pole before approaching.
3. Demonstrate, following behind a pony, showing how you would stop, wait, then go, then stop, etc.
4. Have them practice, at a walk, making it a big loop. Some will get backed up in a queue, ask them to sit relaxed, so that when they trot, ponies will be relaxed. Ask them to keep their eyes focused on the heels of the horse in front of them and keep upper body tall and seat secure and relaxed to ask pony to wait. When turning, they can go a little wide to allow more time in between ponies.
5. As they go thru, watch for each pony's behavior and coach rider's on being soft with hands, using pulley rein or give and take on one rein, to keep moving forward when necessary and not get too far behind.

#### **Closing:**

1. How did your pony react to that exercise? What if those had been jumps?
2. Do you see how with all the excitement of hunting that could get pretty messy?
3. Comment on how each rider did something well to make the exercise work and thank them.