

Golden Hills Pony Club Club Handbook

The USPC Club Number is: 075440

The colors of the Club are: red and gold

Club Officers:

District Commissioner: Bess Pieracci

1. GENERAL INFORMATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Golden Hills Pony Club is a member club of the Middle California Region of the United States Pony Clubs, Inc. (USPC). Middle California consists of Pony Clubs and recognized Pony Club Riding Centers located from the San Francisco Bay Area to Bakersfield. MidCal is home to approximately 500 active Pony Club members.

Visit the USPC website at <https://www.ponyclub.org/>.

Visit the MidCal website at <https://middlecalifornia.ponyclub.org/>.

Visit the GHPC website at <https://goldenhillspnyclub.org/>.

Golden Hills Pony Club's regular meetings are held twice a month. The Club attracts young equestrians from throughout the area, including Morgan Hill, Gilroy, San Jose, and Salinas. Membership varies, but there is an average of 12 members of various riding abilities taking part in Club lessons and activities.

Pony Club is for the young equestrian who wants to learn more than can be learned in one riding lesson per week. It is for the family concerned about responsibility, self-discipline and teamwork. Therefore, we teach all aspects of horsemanship and stable management and evaluate these skills through a rating system. The Pony Club program is designed to enrich the education of young equestrians, but is not intended to be the sole source of riding instruction. Members are strongly encouraged to have regular lessons from professional instructors.

Parental support is expected. We ask that parents ensure that members and their mounts are punctual to meetings. Parents are also required to participate in various activities throughout the year and are strongly urged to serve a term as a Club officer.

Any prospective member and a parent, or guardian, must meet with the District Commissioner (DC) or Joint District Commissioner (Joint DC) before joining the club.

Golden Hills Pony Club maintains a website at <https://goldenhillspnyclub.org> which includes information about the Club, its calendar of events, activities, members, photo galleries, competition results, links to other Pony Club sites and other related sites, etc.

2. MEMBERSHIP

It is the policy of Golden Hills Pony Club to admit to membership interested equestrians from 6 and up who can walk/trot independently while riding with a group. Membership is also conditioned upon the assumption of certain parental/responsible adult commitments and responsibilities described below.

In Pony Club, the member's age on January 1 determines the age of the member for that year.

3. MEDICAL FORM for ARMBAND

Parents / adult members are required to sign a USPC Medical Form annually, authorizing emergency medical treatment in case of injury or illness incurred at a Pony Club activity. Members are required to wear the Medical Form in an armband at all Pony Club activities.

4. INSURANCE

USPC membership includes insurance at Pony Club activities. For more information on USPC insurance, please go to <https://www.ponyclub.org/Volunteers/Insurance.aspx>.

5. DUES

Each person who wishes to become a member or maintain membership status in the Club must pay annual Club, regional and national dues. Dues are non-refundable. A member may not participate until the dues for the current year are paid, and the dues are received and processed by the USPC National office in Kentucky. A child may join at any time during the year.

Timely Payment of Dues

Dues must be paid by the cutoff date for the return of Pony Club annual registration papers. This requirement will be strictly enforced. Any outstanding amount owed to the Club from the previous year must be brought current before members can renew for

the next year. Since the Club is charged late fees by both national and regional, overdue payments will incur a late fee.

Membership dues and other fund-raising events are the primary sources of funds for Golden Hills Pony Club. These funds are used first and foremost to support and ensure the ongoing success of the instructional program.

Although Pony Club instructor's fees come from dues, fundraising may also be necessary to offset instruction fees. The Board will review instructor's fees annually.

Funds in excess of program maintenance requirements may be used for elective activities and should be allocated among the activities the Club wishes to support. Allocation of excess funds are voted on at Sponsors Meetings. Additional fund-raising may take place if there isn't enough money in the budget to support desired elective activities.

The treasurer will provide a financial update at each Sponsor or parent meeting.

6. FAMILY VOLUNTEERS

Golden Hills Pony Club is a volunteer organization and depends upon the support and participation of its parents.

Each member's parent is required to provide volunteer service hours during each year in order for us to exist as a Club. Pony Club is a commitment for both members and their parents. Thus, parents are required to volunteer for at least one position each year. The annual fund-raising effort, work days, committees, rallies, driving to activities, etc., are all examples of ways that parents can help the Club.

Parent and sponsor meetings are held when needed and parents are expected to attend each meeting to be a part of the decision making for the benefit of the club, unless excused by the DC.

7. CLUB OFFICERS

All officers are elected annually by the sponsors of the Club at a meeting in the October. Officers include the District Commissioner, Joint District Commissioner, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers may serve as many terms as the sponsors wish, although it is recommended that duties revolve among as many parents as possible.

District Commissioner (DC)

The District Commissioner is elected by the Sponsors at the Annual meeting. The District Commissioner is a corporate member of USPC, Inc. and a Sponsor of the Registered Club. The DC shall direct and manage all matters within the Club. The DC, with the concurrence and support of the Sponsors, has oversight and responsibility for the Registered Club and acts as liaison between the Club, Region, and National Office. The DC is responsible for initiating, planning, guiding, and implementing the instructional program of the Club. The DC clarifies Club expectations for the members and encourages them to set appropriate goals for themselves.

Joint District Commissioner (Joint-DC)

The Joint District Commissioner is elected by the Sponsors at the Annual meeting. The Joint District Commissioner(s) is(are) corporate member(s) of USPC, Inc. and sponsor(s) of the Registered Club. The Jt-DC works closely with the DC. He/she accepts duties delegated by the DC, or very often shares such duties with the DC. The Jt-DC presides at Club Sponsors meetings in the absence of the DC, attends activities, and performs any of the functions of the DC as agreed upon between the DC and Jt-DC.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is elected by the Sponsors at the Annual meeting. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of the Registered Club funds; shall collect all dues and assessments and receive all monies; shall keep full and accurate accounts and shall present financial statements at the regular meetings of the Club and to the Sponsors of Record; shall present an annual report of the balance sheet and prepare an annual budget for the Annual Sponsors' Meeting and shall turn over to successor all books and financial records. The Treasurer is responsible for prompt payment of all dues and fees to the association and for sending copies of the Club financial statement, with all other appropriate forms, to the association office by February 15 of each year. (See Bylaws of the Registered Club 2.2.2)

The Treasurer shall issue funds and/or make payments for expenditures approved in accordance with Club policies. (See Article III)

Secretary

The Club Secretary is elected by the Sponsors at the Annual Meeting. The Club Secretary is a sponsor of the Registered Club. The Club Secretary shall keep a correct, classified list of the names and addresses of all members and shall maintain a file of essential records on each member, which shall be transferred to the successor at the end of the term of office. (See Bylaws of the Registered Club 2.2.1) The Club Secretary shall keep the minutes and the attendance of the regular meetings of the Club, Annual Meeting, and of any Special Meetings, and a current list of all sponsors of record.

8. OTHER POSITIONS

The Board may appoint interested parents/Sponsors to other positions, which will support the Club and its activities.

Dismounted Program Coordinator

The Dismounted Program Coordinator facilitates communication between the Club officers and the HM instructor, arranges for guest/visiting instructors, and then schedules Dismounted instructional meetings.

Mounted Program Coordinator

The Mounted Program Coordinator facilitates communication between the Club officers and the Mounted instructor(s), arranges for guest/visiting instructors, and then schedules Mounted instructional meetings.

Rally Coordinator

The rally coordinator is responsible for getting information about upcoming rallies to Pony Club members. This includes making sure all paperwork gets in on time for

members who want to participate and for finding a parent willing to be a chaperone at the rally. The chaperone, in turn, helps organize team practices, makes team travel arrangements, organizes team equipment and coordinates details with parents.

Rally Organizer

The rally organizer is responsible for planning and coordinating a rally hosted by Golden Hills Pony Club. This includes creating a job list and assigning members of our club to do the jobs required to host our own rally.

Ratings Coordinator

The ratings coordinator is responsible for maintaining up to date records of all member ratings, arranging for the timely scheduling of rating tests, for making arrangements for ratings examiner(s), and for recording tests and test results.

Fundraising Coordinator

The fundraising coordinator is responsible for coordinating and planning the fundraising activities of the Club, and regularly reports to the Club officers on fundraising activities.

Equipment Maintenance & Librarian

The equipment maintenance and librarian is responsible for the Equipment trunk inventory and check lists, organizing the equipment shed, and responsible for the Club library of books, manuals, and reference materials.

Webmaster

The webmaster is responsible for the content and maintenance of the Club's website.

Hospitality Coordinator

The hospitality coordinator coordinates and assigns families for snacks and drinks for the meetings.

Historian/Photographer/Facebook

The historian/photographer/Facebook coordinator keeps record of club events, takes photographs and uploads them to the website and Facebook.

Tee shirt/Spiritwear Coordinator

The Tee shirt and Spiritwear coordinator will place orders for club tee shirts and spiritwear.

Recycling Coordinator

The Recycling coordinator is responsible for the bottle recycling fundraiser.

Parent In Charge (PIC)

At each regularly scheduled meeting there is an assigned "parent in charge" whose function is to assist the DC or other Club officer, as necessary, and otherwise help during the meeting. The "parent in charge" responsibility rotates among the sponsors from meeting to meeting.

9. SPONSORS

Individuals who have expressed an interest in supporting the Club, have been approved by the Board, and have paid the annual Sponsor's fee may become Sponsors. Sponsors are entitled to exercise full voting rights at the Annual Sponsor's meetings and at any meetings called to conduct Club business. A participating member cannot be a sponsor. See also: Club Bylaws, §4 at 3 – 5.

10. PARENT MEETINGS

Parents and Sponsors meet when needed to discuss Club business, instructions and events. One parent or guardian of each Club member is expected to attend each meeting as important information is often handed out and members are kept updated on activities and funds.

11. PONY CLUB MEETINGS AND INSTRUCTION

Golden Hills Pony Club meetings are held two Sundays a month. All Pony Club members are expected to be punctual and prepared. Common courtesies, including respect of private property, are expected of members and their families.

Parents must be present to pick up non-boarding members at the end of the Pony Club meeting. Members who are not boarders should not be left unattended after the Pony Club meeting ends.

Mounted Meetings

Pony Club lessons are designed to prepare members for the next rating level and to be fun, non-competitive situations. Meetings are based on the USPC Standards of Proficiency. They will emphasize the basics of flat work and jumping and may include such activities as mounted games, Tetrathlon, fox hunts, clinics, etc. Mounted meetings are generally the 2nd Sunday of every month.

Pony Club members will be placed in mounted groups according to the ability of the rider and/or horse they are using. The groups will not necessarily be determined by rating level. Pony Club members will ride in the group they are assigned. Pony Club members without a mount must make arrangements with the scheduled trainer for a lesson horse prior to the mounted meeting. If a lesson horse is unavailable the

member is expected to attend the meeting dismounted, but be ready to ride should a horse become available.

Each member and horse must be inspected before riding in a mounted meeting. An inspection includes: the Pony Club introduction sentence, an inspection of the rider and their attire, the horse and its cleanliness and care, and the tack for cleanliness and fit. Inspection Form details can be found in Appendix A.

Dismounted Meetings

Dismounted meetings are learning experiences that prepare members for advancement in rating levels. Topics include horse management, stable management, trailer safety, nutrition, diseases, care of tack, etc., and include guests such as a veterinarian and farrier. Members should bring his/her manual, notebook and pencil to each meeting and wear paddock boots and their medical armband for work around horses. Horse management meetings are generally the 4th Sunday of every month.

12. ATTENDANCE

Promptness is expected! Pony Club members must arrive in plenty of time for all meetings, mounted or dismounted. Each member is expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings. They are required to respond to the reminder email sent out through Golden Hills Team Snap confirming whether they are attending or not. If a member can't attend a regularly scheduled meeting, it is their responsibility to contact the meeting coordinator by the Wednesday before the meeting. Same day notification of absence is only acceptable in emergency situations (sick child, lame horse, family emergency etc.)

13. ATTIRE

Attire must be safe, appropriate, neat and in good repair.

- Helmet – Must be properly fitted, ASTM/SEI certified with chinstrap secured at all times rider is mounted, longeing, etc.
- Footwear – Must be thick-soled, heeled shoes/boots (short or tall). Must cover the ankle. Must be in good condition. Must be made of leather or synthetic materials. Must be entirely closed and must be securely fastened.
- Pants – Breeches (worn with high boots) or jodhpurs (worn with jodhpur boots or paddock boots), conservative color. Belts must be worn if pants have belt loops.
- Shirt – Pony Club shirt tucked neatly into pants.
- Jewelry – Pony Club pin. All visible piercings or other body jewelry-type adornments must lay close to the skin, i.e., stud or post. Because of the danger of entanglement in a barn or riding environment, no hoop or dangling adornments of any type on any visible body surface is acceptable. Members wearing any jewelry other than what is

permitted will be asked to remove the jewelry.

- Hair – Neat and tidy; shoulder length or longer hair should be fixed in a ponytail, braid or in a hair net. Hair should never be in the rider's eyes.

Please refer to the USPC Horse Management Handbook and Rules for Competition 2010 for more information on attire and equipment.

Exceptions to the above must be discussed with the instructor or DC.

14. MOUNT AND TACK

It is each member's responsibility to obtain an appropriate horse or pony for his/her lessons. Horses must be properly shod, well groomed and in good physical condition.

- Stallions are not considered suitable mounts.
- Mounts must be at least five (5) years of age in order to participate in USPC competitive, instructional, and recreational programs and activities. Bs and above are allowed to participate in noncompetitive programs on horses or ponies that are four (4) years of age. In establishing the age of mounts, the first year is considered to be January 1 following the date of foaling.
- Mounts must be serviceably sound, in good overall health and in condition for the activity in question.
- Mounts must be appropriate for the rating level of the rider and must be at a level of training to participate safely in the activity.
- A mount must be excused from any activity if in the opinion of the instructor, examiner, or appropriate official at a competition; it is unsafe either to its rider or to other riders or mounts.
- Ownership of a mount is not a prerequisite for membership in USPC, Inc.
- The responsibility for obtaining a suitable mount for mounted activities rests with the parents or guardians of the individual member.
- The DC and RS shall have the responsibility for this policy at the local and regional levels.

Exceptions to the above must be discussed with the instructor or DC.

Equipment must be safe and in good repair and must reflect regular, proper care, and when appropriate, must comply with requirements in the appropriate Discipline Rulebook.

- Saddle – Clean, properly fitted and in good repair. English preferred.
- Bridle – Clean, properly fitted and in good repair.
- Bit – any bit used in Pony Club to provide control for the rider must do so without causing pain or injury to the horse.

- Whip – dressage or jumping
- Grooming box – with required brushes, etc.

Please refer to the USPC Horse Management Handbook and Rules for Competition 2010 for more information on attire and equipment.

Exceptions to the above must be discussed with the instructor or DC.

Workmanlike Habits are expected at Pony Club.

- Pony Club members must be aware of their surroundings and will keep them tidy up at all times. Piles of manure around trailers will be picked up and deposited in a container or at the manure pile. Those who groom their horses in the barn will pick up manure immediately and will sweep their grooming area before leaving it.
- After the mounted lesson, both horse and tack require attention. When cool and dry, the horse's coat is to be groomed free of sweat marks, the feet picked out and eyes, nostrils and dock sponged clean.
- Tack is to be wiped off and the bit wiped clean. All tack should receive the same treatment, regardless of whether it is privately owned or is the property of a school horse.
- Pony Club members should make a habit of putting all grooming tools in the appropriate grooming box immediately after use. The tack should then be carefully placed on the appropriate racks and the cleaning materials, rags, sponges and soap put away. Wet or damp cloths and sponges should be placed to dry in hanging baskets.

15. USPC RATING SYSTEM

The Pony Club rating system is designed to measure the progress of each member's riding ability and horse handling and stable management skills. Each Pony Club member joins as an unrated member and progresses through the levels at his/her own pace. The beginning level, D1, is given to new riders as soon as they demonstrate simple horse handling and riding skills. Ratings then progress to D2, D3, C1, C2, HB, H-HM, C3, H, B, H-A and A. Rating tests are positive educational experiences that consist of riding evaluations and verbal knowledge of horses and stable management as members progress up the levels ladder established by the USPC Standards.

The USPC Standards of Proficiency

The USPC Standards of Proficiency provide a core curriculum for individualized instruction for young riders by describing a clear progression of skills in riding and horse management. The Standards also provide opportunities for goal setting, as Pony Club members are encouraged to proceed through those skills at a pace that is comfortable for them.

Purpose of a Rating Test

Pony Clubs use the Standards of Proficiency as a plan for instruction programs. Therefore, rating tests are an evaluation of the Pony Club members' progress through the rating levels. At the same time, the rating tests should be a positive educational experience.

Evaluating a Pony Club Member's Readiness for a Rating

The Standards of Proficiency describe the specific requirements for each level. A Pony Club member is ready for a rating test if he or she is able to perform the requirements for that level in a supervised teaching situation. After passing a test, a Pony Club member may or may not be ready to attempt skills required at the next rating level. If not, he or she will continue to receive instruction appropriate to the lower level until a greater degree of proficiency is achieved. Pony Club members are encouraged to progress at a pace that is comfortable for them.

Pony Club instructors should be familiar with the Standards of Proficiency so that the instruction program is based on the clear progression of skills described in the Standards. It is recommended that candidates make arrangements for assistance by an older Pony Club member or knowledgeable adult in preparing for the rating test.

A Pony Club member should discuss their intent to rate with the DC before the Rating meeting.

About Rating Levels

The D Ratings are an introduction to the fun and challenge of riding, establishing a foundation of safety habits and knowledge of the daily care of pony and tack. The D1 through D3 Pony Clubber learns to ride independently and with control, maintaining a reasonably secure position at the walk, trot and canter, and over low fences. All D ratings are given at the Club level.

The C1 and C2 ratings involve learning to become an active horse person, to care independently for pony and tack, and to understand the reasons for what he/she is doing. The C level goes into more depth in all areas. The C shows development towards a secure, independent seat and increasing control and confidence in all phases of riding. At the C rating level, the Pony Clubber needs to be proficient in his/her knowledge and able to pass it on to younger members in a teaching situation.

The HB, H-HM, C3, B, H-A and A ratings are national ratings and require a much greater depth of knowledge and proficiency than the earlier ratings. Successful candidates are competent, all-around horsepersons, and are active and contributing members of USPC who participate in a variety of Pony Club activities. They are also thoughtful leaders who set a good example at all levels and are able to teach other Pony Clubbers.

Testing Information

As much advance notice as possible will be given all members before a ratings test date. We strongly recommend scheduling no other activities on the day of the test, which consist of a riding evaluation and a verbal horse management exam.

Retesting: At the D1 through C2 ratings, if a candidate does not meet the Standard, a re- test may be scheduled on sections not passed. Only the original examiner may authorize such a re-test and must so indicate on the candidate's test sheet. Such a re-test must be completed in one day and within one month of the original testing.

At the very first rating, a candidate may receive permission to try for more than one level. After the initial rating is achieved, a member may only advance one rating level at a time.

Rating Information

D1 - C2 The DC, with assistance from qualified instructors, older pony club members or other qualified adults, is responsible for evaluating a member's readiness to rate.

All members are expected to read and understand the Standards of Proficiency in order to understand the expectations of the rating.

Golden Hills Pony Club will offer D1 - D3 rating opportunities at least twice a year.

It is the Pony Club member's responsibility to notify the DC of his/her desire to rate. It is the member's responsibility to contact the DC if he/she must withdraw from the test.

HB, H-HM, C1, C2, C3, H, B, HA and A HB / C3 candidates are expected to attend preparation clinics held by the region. Participation in a rally is a requirement for the test. HB candidates must have teaching experience prior to taking the test.

Golden Hills Pony Club will pay part of the cost of their National Ratings (HB, H-HM, C3, H, B, HA and A ratings) funds permitting. Only the first rating at each level will be supplemented.

Teaching at the Club Level

Pony Club members at C1 level and above are expected to help instruct lower-level members. For this duty, they should carefully study the Manual of Horse Management and the USPC Instructor's Handbook, and other pertinent material available from the USPC Bookstore. Higher rated members should take advantage of regional clinics and seminars to help them with their teaching techniques and skills. All teaching by members shall be adult supervised.

For the C1 and C2

It is recommended that C1s and C2s assist with teaching (with supervision) at Pony Club meetings, both mounted and dismounted. C1s and C2s should be assisting with grooming and tacking, safety inspections, turnout inspections and scribe at club level ratings.

For the HB / C1, C2, C3

HB / C1, C2, C3's will assist in mounted and dismounted programs with the direct supervision of the instructor. HB / C1, C2, C3's may help on ratings days by scribing for the rating examiner. The HB / C1, C2, C3, at the discretion of the DC, instructor and rating examiner, may conduct the actual rating test for D1 and D2 levels.

For the B, H-A and A

B and H-A candidates need to get as much teaching experience as possible. They should work together with the instructor and the DC to outline their goals in this direction.

16. RALLIES

Rallies are fun, team-oriented competitions held for Pony Club members from throughout the Middle California Region, as well as between other regions. The region typically offers rallies in these disciplines: Dressage, Eventing, Games, Quiz, Show Jumping and Tetrathlon.

A Pony Club team for a mounted rally consists of three or four riding members and a Stable Manager (dismounted). Members must compete at his/her rating level at rallies. Rally costs (such as transportation, trailering, entry fees, food, lodging, etc.) are paid by the participant's family. Individual rally fees must also be paid to the Club prior to the entry cost being sent to the region. Anyone who doesn't submit the entry fee on time will not be included in the registration for a rally.

As a competitor in a rally, each member of the team is there to learn and have fun. Sportsmanship is all about positive play. At rally we will:

- Respect the rules of the game. This allows us to keep the game fair.
- Honor your opponents. Without opponents we would have no competition.
- Respect the officials. Even if we do not always agree with the call.
- Honor your teammates. Team play is more than just your own performance.
- Honor and respect yourself. Live up to your own highest personal standard. (from Positive Coaching Alliance)

Rally Selection

In order to be selected for a team, a Pony Club member must be a Member in Good Standing and express an interest in participating. Team members are expected to attend scheduled practices and to help in preparing the tack and equipment needed for the rally.

Additional Rally Information

Team Selection

Golden Hills Pony Club will attempt to place all members who want to participate on rally teams. Members who can't go to a particular rally because it is filled will be given priority for the next event that is held. In some cases rally organizers have "scratch" teams put together with members of various Clubs where the teams were already full.

Stable Managers

The Stable Manager is the key position on the team and a Pony Club Member. The Stable Manager is responsible for assisting teammates in maintaining the rally tack

room, for equipment inspection and for assisting team members in getting to their scheduled events on time. All members are encouraged to participate as Stable Managers to increase their horse management skills.

Rally Coordinator

The rally coordinator is responsible for getting information about upcoming rallies to Pony Club members. The Rally Coordinator will distribute rally entry packets and collect the paperwork and fees by a specific date. This includes making sure all paperwork gets in on time for members who want to participate and for finding a parent willing to be a chaperone at the rally. The chaperone, in turn, helps organize team practices, makes team travel arrangements, organizes team equipment and coordinates details with parents. The DC, in consultation with the Board, will decide on team make- up for all regional rallies. The Regional Supervisor chooses the Middle California team to send to USPC Championships.

Rally Volunteers

A parent of each rally participant must be actively involved in some way and be willing to sign up for some task prior to the member signing up for a rally.

Appendix A

Inspection Sheet Categories:

Rider

- On time
- Medical Armband
- Approved Hard Hat
- Approved Footwear
- Belt if loops, hairnet
- Neat and Clean attire

Horse

- Hooves cleaned with regular care
- Regular grooming and clean
- Eyes, ears, nose, dock clean

Tack

- Proper fit of tack
- Stitching and condition of leather
- Clean bit and saddle pad
- Enough holes on all buckles
- Equipment free of sweat and dirt

Amended: 1/17/22

Approved: 11/18/12

RS Approval: