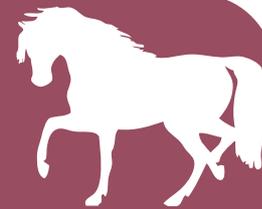


# Waitara Pony Club Newsletter



SEPTEMBER 2010

I had hoped we would have some dry grounds to ride on by now, but alas the weather is not my friend nor does it do what I tell it to. In order to stop myself getting so depressed I'm no longer calling mud mud, but wet dirt – because I don't think it sounds quite so bad. Because it is bad when all four of your horses shoes have been sucked off his feet and my gum boots aren't high enough up my leg to keep my feet dry and mud free every time I venture out into the paddock.

So as you may be aware while our grounds are so wet down at pony club we have had to ask Oakura to postpone their jumping day, as well as we may need to postpone this upcoming weekends ridden rally please watch out for emails and keep a eye on the website. This is not only for safety; it's to preserve the ground conditions we have at WPC. I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members this season and hope you will to. I'd also like to wish Hannah trot well in her upcoming trial for the Interpacific Team in a few weeks time.

We have a few things going on down at the grounds with maintenance and fencing and I'd like to thank Keith for his help with getting things ready for the crew we have working there. We have a large facility to maintain and we will be holding working bees over the season to do small jobs like painting show jumping poles, weeding/spraying etc. It makes sense that some of these jobs are done while the rally is being carried out, so please if you are at a rally and find yourself gossiping sitting down, stand up, grab a shovel or spade and gossip while you work I'd really appreciate any effort made to help maintain the grounds and our equipment.

*Pip Bint, President*

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## Check out these websites:

**[www.waitaraponyclub.com](http://www.waitaraponyclub.com)**

For up-to-date info on rallies, events, results and more.

**<http://www.snafflez.com>**

Lets you colour-coordinate your tack to suit your horse. Great for trying out different coloured saddle blankets and saddles on different coloured horses!

Just click on 'Horsemakers' on the right hand side, choose your discipline and design your tack!



### Stable of Stallions

<http://nzquestrian.org.nz/Article.aspx?Mode=1&ID=4333>

### Ibis Hotels NZ Section FEI World Dressage Challenge

<http://nzquestrian.org.nz/Article.aspx?Mode=1&ID=4155>

### Stubben Rider Rankings

<http://nzquestrian.org.nz/News/Newslist.aspx?ID=723>

## FOR SALE

Girls green woollen Pony Club jersey fit up to 11 yrs and also multiple pairs of jodhpurs pony club to show quality, fit 6-11yrs.

**Phone Janine Moratti 7522 759**

Green pony club sweatshirt to sell. Its size 8. \$10.

**Contact Dallis Barrett**

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- hot and cold running water (calliphont)
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*Please phone **06 752 0526** or **027 287 8863***

*Available for view on trademe Listing NO: 300444760*

*If you have any items you would like listed for sale or wanted you can contact me directly at [melclark44@hotmail.com](mailto:melclark44@hotmail.com) to have it listed in the monthly newsletter. Please have details and any photos in by the 16th of each month. Newsletters will go out around the 18th.*

# Floating

So you have got your horse and now you need to get it from A to B. A few years ago there was a huge scare amongst horsey people that the towing regulations that were to come in force would prevent a lot of people from being able to tow a float. Well, it has certainly slowed things down a bit but now there are more floats coming onto the market place and more people are selling their trucks to go back to floats. This move means that owners can use their 4 wheel drive wagon for towing as well as a family car. Very versatile.



## Towing Vehicle Requirements

But is the towing vehicle the correct size for the job and is it safe? Here is a check list for you to look over if you are thinking of getting a float to tow and you already have a towing vehicle and want to check it out.

- Current WOF or COF) and registration.
- Is your vehicle the correct size to tow your horse float? Check out the vehicle's handbook or get advice from your local garage.
- What is the fully laden weight of the float? You can find this out by going to your nearest weigh station, or talk to your local council or garage and they will point you in the right direction. You need to know this so you can be sure your vehicle is big enough to tow the float safely. You will need to weigh the towing vehicle too unless its weight is stated in your vehicle handbook. (Check this out but I understand the towing vehicle should be at least as heavy as the fully laden float)
- Can your vehicle stop within 7m, when fully loaded and doing 30km/h? This applies whether your float has brakes fitted or not. Do not try this intentionally with your horse on board. Fill the float with hay or similar. It is unlikely any un-braked two horse float will pass the 7m test no matter how good are the brakes on the towing vehicle. Check the tow ball is the correct size, for the float and the weight of load you are towing.
- There are many sizes of tow ball and not all are safe for towing heavy loads. This needs to be installed correctly by an authorised dealer and will be checked during the WOF.
- Lighting. Check that you have the correct lighting and indicator, and electric brake (if fitted) connections. Again there are many different connections out there, some are round, and some are rectangular. Make sure they are working by testing them every time you hook up to the float.
- Spare wheel and tyre for the towing vehicle. Make sure it is the correct size and in good condition, fully inflated, and can do the job that will be required of it. Ensure the wheel brace is the correct size.
- Fire Extinguisher. Ensure there is a fire extinguisher inside your towing vehicle that is big enough for both the towing vehicle and the horse-float. (If you have one of these in your vehicle it can reduce your insurance premium for some companies)

## Is the Horse Float Safe?

Now you have found a 'cheap' horse float. But is it safe? And will it pass the next WOF?

- Has it got a current WOF?
- Has it got a current registration?
- Can you see any rust? If you can see rust there is bound to be more that you cannot see. Check the float all over for rust. Surface rust is neither here nor there but this too needs to be kept in control. The deeper rust can be very dangerous if not taken out. Check the tow bar, which is part of the chassis, the chassis from underneath, and the frame generally. Use a screw driver to have a poke around at surface rust to ensure it does not go deeper.
- Leaks. Look carefully over the float and try to determine where water could come in. You may see rust stains or bubbles. You could even go as far as to run a hose over the float and see if there are any leaks. If water gets in between the outer wall and the steel frame/chassis etc this is what can cause real rust problems.



- The draw bar should be made of steel, ensure that it is. This has to be very strong and able to support both the trailer and the horse or weight inside.
- Safety chains; ensure that the safety chain is the correct standard to hold the weight of the loaded float if it should come off the coupling. Some floats have two chains. Make sure they are bolted on correctly and not too long.
- Has it got brakes? Brakes are mandatory on trailers with a laden weight greater than 2000kg, which will cover most double horse floats. Make sure they work and are not seized open or shut. Find out how they work. Some have electric brakes, some have hydraulic brakes and both operate differently. Check that the brake fluid is full and clear.
- The outside materials of the float can be varied, but there should be no parts sticking out that could hurt the horse, and solid enough to withstand the occasional kick of two from the horse, but not too heavy to tow.
- If it has tread-plate aluminium sheeting mounted around the front to absorb the impact of stones etc., make sure this is sealed correctly so the water cannot seep inside and cause rust or rot.
- Back Ramp. Ensure it is attached to the chassis securely and that it is easy to lift up and put down and that the catches close and open easily. Also check there are no gaps between the door and the floor where horses can trip or get caught.
- Front door. Ensure the door can be opened easily and can be closed correctly.
- Floor boards. These need to be solid and can be of various materials. If the float has mats in it, which should be flat on the floor, take the mats out to ensure the floor is solid, and joined to the chassis. Poke your screw driver into the floor to check for rot. If the floor of the float is made out of rubber or Ruthanne floors which seal the floor surface, make sure that this surface is sealed properly. If water or urine leaks through, this can cause rust and or rot.
- Wheels and Tyres: The wheels must be balanced. Jack the float up one side at a time and spin the wheels to ensure they spin freely and evenly, ie balanced. While the wheel is spinning, apply the hand brake lever near the tow coupling and this should bring the braked wheel on that side to an abrupt halt. If there is any doubt, this should be checked out by an expert as any flaw could mean damaged bearings or brakes, which may compromise safety.
- Tyres: Check they are all the same make and type and correct size. Some floats are fitted with car tyres and heavy duty tyres are required. Check the air pressure
- Spare wheel. Ensure it is the correct size and stud pattern for the float, in good condition with the tyre fully inflated.



- Changing wheels. Make sure the jack can lift the float, and that the wheel brace fits the nuts, on the wheel. If the float has tandem wheels a simple wooden ramp can be made easily for running the sound wheel onto, thus lifting the float without the need for a jack.
- Back straps. These vary from float to float. Some have chains some have bars, but which ever it has, make sure these are in good condition and join up securely.
- Centre bar in double floats. Some prefer the single bar, others prefer the ½ wall, and others prefer the full barrier between horses. Whatever is used, make sure this can be opened fully, to allow easy access for the wary horse.
- Tie up. Ensure there is a place (ring) where you can tie up the horse once the back door is closed, and that it is secure enough to hold the horse.
- Fire Extinguisher. Ensure there is a fire extinguisher in the trailer that can deal with fire emergencies.
- Try out the float with the vehicle you intend to tow it with, so you can check the connections fit, and the overall picture is pleasant for you. If the back of your vehicle drops when you hitch it up, or the float tips up and is not level, then it is not right for your vehicle. The float must sit level.
- Try your horse in it if possible. Have someone drive behind the float to see how the horse and the float travel. Beware of the float bouncing or rocking from side to side.



There are many pitfalls in buying a float, and sometimes the 'cheapy' can work out to be more expensive than buying a brand new one. Beware of the 'bargain' There is usually a reason why it is a bargain. However you are unlikely to get a second hand float with ALL of the above features and many things can be 'fixed' quite easily. Unless you are an expert in the field, it is always advisable to get the vehicle checked over by a Testing Station or a reputable garage before spending your hard earned money.

## Loading and Unloading

There is nothing worse than needing to get to a place at a certain time and your horse won't load. There are many ways of encouraging the horse to get into the float and your pony club coach or a reputable horse trainer will help in this department. Be confident when you lead a horse onto a float and have someone to help if at all possible.



- If you expect to have trouble loading, get help. Sometimes it is safer to load or unload your horse with its bridle over the halter, but make sure you tie it up with a halter and lead rope.
- Load in the safest place possible. Note that rushing is bound to upset a difficult horse. With a reluctant, frightened or stubborn horse, practise, practise, practise at home when you have plenty of time BEFORE attempting to go to an event, and allow lots of time on the day.
- Make sure the float is connected to the towing vehicle correctly.
- Use good fitting bandages or travel boots when travelling in a float.
- Load the horse away from road traffic.
- If loading or unloading beside a fence or yard, make sure the horse cannot get its feet caught in any wire or jammed in the gap between rails.
- If you have a horse that 'scrambles' check the matting is secure. Sometimes the horse prefers the centre partition removed to that it can spread its legs.
- Open the front door of the float so the horse can see a way out and the person loading can get out safely especially if the horse is playing up and they need to make a speedy exit.
- Lower the ramp, and slide the centre bar open if it is a double float, but only if the horse is wary, if the horse is happy leave it in place and save time.



- Lead the horse up the ramp. If there is one horse in a double float, load the horse on the right hand side of the float. If there is a heavy and light horse to the float, load the heavy horse on the right hand side of the float.
- Get your helper to slide the dividing rail over and slot it in place securely and connect the back chain/rail.
- Put up the ramp
- Tie the horse to the tying ring. Give the horse a pat (and tit bit).
- Shut the front door securely.
- Reverse the sequence when unloading. Get the helper to stand at the side of the ramp, ready to steady the horse if it doesn't come off straight. Rushing out can be dangerous. Never hang on to the end of the rope. Not only will you receive rope burns but the horse might hit its head. Gloves are a good precaution.
- Make sure the ramp is on a level surface, if the ramp is on a lean it can damage the springs and the alignment where it connects to the trailer and may frighten the horse as the ramp moves when the horse steps onto it.

## Travelling

As a motorist, don't you just hate it when you are being held up on the road by a slow moving vehicle? And guess what: a lot of the times the slow moving vehicle is towing a horse float. So here are some travelling hints and tips.

- Before you load up, check all the legal requirements and the connections on both vehicles. Check the tyres and that the brakes and lights / indicators work on both vehicles, the brake is in the correct position and make sure the safety chain is attached.
- Check the fuel level, oil and water. If you are driving an automatic check the transmission fluid as well.
- Keep an eye on the temperature gauges. (Check the rubber hoses for deterioration). Towing puts extra load on the engine, the transmission and the brakes. These need to be checked each time you go out.
- Travel courteously; giving yourself plenty of time to get where you are going. Pull over to the side to allow other traffic to pass where possible.
- Travel to the speed limit. From February 2005 some new rules came into force:
- The speed limit for light vehicles towing trailers increased from 80 to 90 km/h. (At the same time, the Police will be enforcing a reduced discretionary tolerance of 5 km/h over any applicable speed limit, while this was previously 10 km/h)
- All drivers towing other vehicles must ensure the brake connection between vehicles is correctly connected so that the brakes of towing and towed vehicles operate as intended. (This links with equipment requirements in the Heavy Vehicles Rule).
- Remember that the stopping time for a vehicle towing a load is increased so drive defensively – increase your following distances.
- Do not drive to the very edge of the road. The loose gravel can drag you out to the side more and before you know it, you have a float in the drain.
- Always be looking ahead of you. There are many hazards with driving and for some reason there are more when you are towing. Other motorists think they can pull out in front of you and pass you in very strange places. Again, drive defensively to prevent any accidents.
- Drive to the conditions. If they become dangerous, slow down. Take the corners wider.
- Avoid braking through a corner, as it could jack-knife the float. Brake gently and keep on a straight line. Don't change speed and direction at the same time. A short sharp stab on the towing vehicle brakes, while not ideal, can ensure the hydraulic brakes on the trailer activate as occasionally slow braking may not be so effective.
- Use a lower gear going downhill, the same one you would need for uphill. This will reduce the amount of foot-braking and minimise the chance of overheating.
- Make sure your side mirrors are wide enough to see the end/back of the float.
- Make sure you practice reversing. One technique to remember: place your hand at the bottom of the steering wheel. If you want the rear of the float to go to the left move your hand in that direction. Reverse it for the right turn.
- Make sure you have the correct tools to carry out any small repairs as necessary ie changing wheels etc. including a screw driver for removing hub caps.

- Ensure you have emergency equipment in your vehicle; cell phone, first aid kit for both and horses and people, torch and a sharp pocket knife.

## Safety

Note all the forgoing in Car and Float requirements, Loading and Unloading and Travelling.

Here are a few extra safety tips to ensure you are safe with your float:

- Always get into a routine.
- DO NOT TRAVEL INSIDE A FLOAT WITH YOUR HORSE AT ANY TIME.
- Covers are not always required on your horse when travelling. This depends on the weather conditions. Covers can sometimes get caught on the float when loading and unloading.
- A centre head partition is a good idea if you are floating two horses.
- Hay nets are not always a good idea in a float. But if you are going to use one, make sure it is tied up securely and high enough so that the horse cannot pull it off and get his foot in it as it empties and lowers.
- Clean out the float thoroughly after each time you use it. Horses like to be clean and a messy float can become slippery and could cause your horse to 'scramble' or 'fall down' in the float.
- Do not leave your good saddle or other tack or cleaning gear where your horse can play, eat or dislodge it. Tie everything securely.
- Become a defensive driver so that you arrive at your destination safely.

## Security

No matter what we do these days, it seems as though there is always somebody who is willing to destroy it somehow. Floats are no exception. In the past few years there have been many incidents where floats have been stolen – sometimes from right outside the owner's house. Here are some things to do to prevent this and also some tips to identify your float in case the worst scenario happens.

- Park your float behind a locked gate. The lock should be made out of titanium metal.
- If this is not possible, chain up your float to a ground anchor. The chain must be extra strong so normal bolt cutters cannot cut through it. Again titanium chains and locks do the trick. They are a bit more expensive – but worth it.
- Identify your float so that thieves will not be able to disguise it easily. Some people have stamped identifying words on the chassis, but it is a good idea to have something that is easily identifiable put on to discourage would be thieves.
- Some of the new floats have a removable coupling where the tow-ball fits. It would be good practice to remove this every time you park it up. Make sure it is connected correctly before use.
- Take a photo of your float, especially the place where you have put your identifiable mark. This should be left in a safe place for when it is required.
- If your float does get stolen, report it straight away to the police and then take your photo of the float and send it to as many float dealers as you can. Also send a message to your Area Website Coordinator so that this can be put on the website and word can be spread throughout the country. This method has proven very successful in the past – especially with stolen saddles.
- Take note of the make of your float tyres. Not everybody will have the same.
- Advertise for a float of the description of the one that was stolen from you. You may be surprised and someone may answer the advertisement offering your float.
- Check out Trade Me. You could very well see your 'stolen' float there for sale.

Hopefully this will help a little. The points mentioned are only a guideline, and there will be others that can be added, but by following these things I hope you will have a safer and happier floating experience.

Marj Steiner  
31.01.07

Evelyn Cooper  
May 2007



## NEW ZEALAND PONY CLUBS ASSOCIATION INC.

### Selecting and Fitting an Equestrian Riding Helmet

Safety Source is pleased to present this guide for selecting and fitting of equestrian riding helmets. We hope you find it helpful.

The recommendations provided are to be used as general guidelines only. As every head differs in size and shape, no guarantee can be given for a perfect fit in every case. No liability can be accepted by Safety Source in the case of injury due to an incorrectly fitted riding helmet. Should you require any further advice please contact:

Bryan Middleton  
Safety Source  
Ph (09) 415 6144  
Fax (09) 415 6146  
Email: [bryan.middleton@safetysource.co.nz](mailto:bryan.middleton@safetysource.co.nz)

The enjoyment of riding to many is unequalled, but along with the excitement and thrills comes the risk of injury from a fall. The most serious injury can be to the head and brain. For that reason the wearing of specially designed riding helmets is now common place, even mandatory for most competitive activities.

But as good as a riding helmet may be its ability to do the job it was designed for is greatly reduced if not fitted correctly. This guide has been produced by the NZPCA in conjunction with Safety Source to help riders select and correctly fit a riding helmet to ensure the best head protection possible for equestrian activities.

#### **SELECTING A RIDING HELMET**

All manufacturers of riding helmets face the issue of combining safety with style. Although stylish, the thin walled riding helmets of the past offered little in the way of impact protection. For a riding helmet to protect delicate brain tissue it must be able to absorb force from an impact. To achieve this, a riding helmet must have a thick energy absorbing liner.

#### **Checking Standards Approval**

Firstly check that the riding helmet preferably complies with New Zealand/Australian Standard AS/NZS 3838. You can determine this by the permanent fixed label inside the riding helmet. If the label identifies the manufactures license number, this is further assurance the riding helmet has been manufactured under an independently audited product compliance programme.

The joint New Zealand/Australian Standard is AS/NZS 3838 (Helmets for Horse Riding and Horse Related Activities). This Standard is written specifically with Australasian riders in mind and considers the environment in this part of the world.

## NEW ZEALAND PONY CLUBS ASSOCIATION INC.

### Selecting and Fitting an Equestrian Riding Helmet

The following Safety Source range of riding helmets is manufactured and certified to either AS/NZS 3838 and/or PAS015.

- Onyx
- Aintree Eventer
- Cool Rider
- Dublin Velvet

The following Standards are also accepted by NZPCA for Pony Club activities.

All riders are required to wear a properly fitting, securely fastened, correctly maintained riding helmet meeting one of the following standards while mounted:

#### FOR ALL MOUNTED ACTIVITIES AT PONY CLUB

- AS/NZS 3838 (joint Australian/New Zealand standard)
- PAS 015 (British standard)
- BSEN 1384 (joint British/European standard)
- EN1384 (European standard)
- ASTM F1163 (American standard)

#### International Quality Standards

Another indication that when you buy Onyx and Aintree is that Safety Source is registered to ISO 9001 for the manufacture and supply of equestrian safety helmets. This provides a formal recognition that Safety Source has systems in place to ensure consistent quality.



#### Additional Selection Points

Look for designs that offer sizes in incremental steps or have an adjustable harness to assist in getting the best fit.

Do not purchase a riding helmet with the intention of the rider growing into the helmet, this is potentially dangerous.

In most riding helmets is white or black expanded polystyrene foam (known as the impact absorption or EPS liner) that sits between the shell and sewn comfort liner that provides the

## NEW ZEALAND PONY CLUBS ASSOCIATION INC.

### Selecting and Fitting an Equestrian Riding Helmet

bulk of protection against impacts. Check to see if the impact absorption liner extends right to the very edges of the shell. While this is not mandatory in some safety standards, it does give added protection.

#### **FITTING A RIDING HELMET**

The following procedures will help ensure the riding helmet of your choice will fit correctly to give the best level of protection and comfort possible.

Step 1) Select the correct size. Choose a riding helmet which initially feels the most comfortable. Wear it as low down on the forehead as you can without blocking your view.

Note:

- a) Checking if the riding helmet is it too small: Check for any pressure points as this is an indication that the riding helmet is too small or the wrong shape. Try the next size up until no pressure areas are felt.
- b) Checking if the riding helmet is it too big: Place both hands on both sides of the riding helmet and move the riding helmet backwards and forwards checking for excessive movement. If you can place a half finger to a finger between the riding helmet and head it is likely the hat is too big. Try the next size down until the movement backwards and forwards is at a minimum.
- c) Over time it is likely the soft sizing foam and comfort lining will flatten out and mould to the shape of the head, therefore recommended to start with a riding helmet which is of firm fitting, but without pressure points.

Step 2) Do up the chin strap. Tighten chin strap under the lower jaw for a firm fit. The firmer the better, but not so firm as to be uncomfortable.

Step 3) Adjust the side/nape straps so they are under mild tension (firm but not uncomfortable). If the riding helmet has an adjustable ratchet harness follow the manufactures instructions.

Step 4) Final Safety Tests:

- a) Try to tilt riding helmet forward – the riding helmet should not obscure vision.
- b) Try to tilt the riding helmet backwards – the riding helmet should not expose the forehead excessively. If the riding helmet fails this basic test, then re-check steps one to three.

Note: Remember to re-check the riding helmet is correctly adjusted every time it is worn and check the chin and side/nape strap tensions during long or vagarious riding. Any excess forward or backward movement could cause a distraction while riding.

# NEW ZEALAND PONY CLUBS ASSOCIATION INC.

## Selecting and Fitting an Equestrian Riding Helmet

### CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Your riding helmet has been made to exacting standards and although strong in appearance, to provide protection the riding helmet requires care.

#### Do Not:

- a) Store in direct sunlight or in confined space where temperatures are likely to exceed 50 C.
- b) Drop heavily or use as a seat – the result of this may be damage to the impact absorption liner or outer shell.
- c) Clean with solvents.
- d) Paint the riding helmet.

#### Do:

- a) Read all instructions labels supplied with the cap.
- b) Clean the riding helmet with warm soapy water.
- c) Inspect the riding helmet regularly for damage such as cracks, rust, corrosion, frayed stitching or webbing or broken buckles. (Dulling of the outer shell may be an indication of shell degradation due to excessive exposure to sunlight. If there is signs of this destroy it and replace it or return it to the manufacturer for inspection).

**Warning:** If a riding helmet receives a severe impact for any reason it should be destroyed and replaced or returned to the manufacture for inspection. If you are ever unsure as to the safety of your riding helmet, please consult with your local equestrian supplies retailer or the manufacturer.