

Guidelines for Foxhunting/ Hunt Etiquette

BEFORE the hunt:

Arrival at the meet;

Please be prompt. Arrive at least 15 minutes early.

Call the Hunt recording at 908.412.2929 before proceeding to the meet to confirm the location and time.

If you want to arrange for guests to hunt with us, have them call the Honorary Secretary a day or so before the meet. (see Capping)

While loading, unloading and tacking your horse, don't allow it to step on cropped field or lawn areas. Do not clean out your trailer onto a landowner's property.

When arriving at the meet, introduce your friends to the Honorary Secretary, pay the capping fee, and then go to the Master(s) for an introduction.

Greet the Huntsman while he is gathering hounds and greet the Field Master before he/she gathers the field. Thank them both at the end of the day.

DURING the hunt:

First Flight: We keep up with hounds and jump most of what we come across. If you choose to ride in the First Flight Field, please maintain the pace of the Field Master. In our hunt country we have the opportunity to go around fences when prudent. Those who wish to pick and chose their jumps should ride at the back of the First Flight.

When jumping, don't approach the take-off area until the preceding horse and rider have taken the jump safely and advanced three or four strides.

If your horse refuses, try once again. If it refuses on the second attempt, go to the back of the field. Never go around a fence as it is being jumped.

In the course of a refusal, don't allow your horse to run into a cropped field. Remain in the rear of the jumping field until you are confident your horse will not refuse again.

Hilltopping Field: This field is provided for riders who prefer to follow hounds at a slower non-jumping pace. Various riding abilities can be accommodated;

however it is not a place to school green horses. Should your horse become overly excited and disturb other members of the field, you should excuse yourself for the day. Jumping in the Hilltopping Field is limited to logs and small obstacles.

Social Supporters:

Any non-riding members are always welcome and encouraged to follow the hunt by car or on foot, with supervision or after discussing proper protocol so as not to spoil sport for the Field. If you wish to learn more, or to accompany an experienced car follower, please contact the Honorary Secretary or an MFH to discuss.

Conduct in the Field:

The Master, Hunt Staff and hounds should be given the right of way at all times. Always turn your horse so that its head is facing hounds, Master or Staff as they pass.

Stay behind your Field Master at all times and follow his/her line. Never pass the Master or ride an alternate route without his/her permission. If he/she crosses a field by hugging the edge, do likewise. Keep up with the Field Master, since leaving large gaps can interfere with the day's sport.

Please be quiet while hounds are being cast. Speak in a low tone of voice, so as not to raise hounds from hunting. All hallooing, calling out to and attempts to give direction to a hound by members of the Field are not only bad manners, but apt to spoil sport for everyone.

However, if a hound comes in between horses or you see that a hound will be coming close to other horses let others know by calling "Hound(s) please" to alert members to give the hound the right of way. If the hound does not appear to be in a position to encounter the horses, no call is necessary.

If you see a danger to another rider, such as a hole or a low tree branch you should call out "Ware hole" or "Ware branch".

If a Whipper-in or the Huntsman is coming up from ahead or behind and will need to pass through the field of riders, let others know by calling "Whip please" or "Hunt please". ALWAYS turn your horses head toward the rider so as to prevent your horse from kicking out as it passes.

If you view a fox and the hounds are on the line, do nothing to interfere with the hounds or the fox. If you view a fox as he breaks covert and the hounds are not on

the line, do not make a sound and wait for him to be well away from the covert. Then signal the Field Master by raising your cap so he may choose whether to "Tally-ho" or to send a rider to the Huntsman. Do not lose sight of where the fox broke covert. You may be asked to show the Huntsman exactly where you viewed.

If your horse has a tendency to kick, put a red ribbon on its tail. This warning symbol does not relieve you from the primary responsibility of keeping the mount at a safe distance from others. Horses that kick should be ridden in the back of the field, even when a red ribbon is worn.

If you get lost or separated from the hunt, go directly to the nearest public road. Stay on the public roadways until you are able to rejoin the field.

Do not ride over crops, and keep off all seeded fields. Close any gates you open. Do not close any gate you find open. If you take a rail down, put it back. Leave everything as you found it.

Members of the field waive all claims against landowners for injuries to themselves or their mounts. If there is an injury a few members of the field may volunteer or be designated by the Field Master to stay with the injured party and coordinate any needed help. The rest of the field should follow the Field Master and continue hunting.

On non-hunting days and off-season:

When the Amwell Valley Hounds has been given the privilege of riding over a landowner's property, it does not mean that members, or anyone else, have the right to trespass without specific permission from the landowner, the appointed agent, tenant or farmer, whether hacking on non-hunting days, going to a meet or not keeping up or returning from a hunt. Always be conscious of ground conditions and do not ride across land where conditions are poor.

Be courteous and friendly to the public. A smile, wave of the hand or tipping one's cap does wonders for the good of our sport. Do not impede traffic while on your horse. Public relations are everyone's responsibility.

(Link for separate page)

Capping

Cappers are non-subscribing guests who pay for a day's ride with the hunt. A capping fee is required to be paid prior to the start of each day's meet. Please find the Honorary Secretary at least 15 minutes prior to the meet time, to pay your capping fee and sign a liability waiver.

Adult capping fee:

\$50 on Wednesdays and Sundays for regular Cubbing and Formal Season meets.

\$100 for Opening Day, Thanksgiving and Boxing Day meets.

Junior capping fee:

\$35 on Wednesdays and Sundays for regular Cubbing and Formal Season meets.

\$100 for Opening Day, Thanksgiving and Boxing Day meets.

Pony club members are not charged for capping with the Hunt.

Capping is limited to three times during the season, unless otherwise permitted by the joint Masters.

Members with "colors" have earned the privilege of riding up front. Members accompanied by their specific guests should ride behind members with "colors". Cappers should ride behind members.

There is no capping fee during summer Roding. All are encouraged and welcome to join us. You may also contact the Huntsman to inquire about participating in daily hound walks.

(Link for separate page. Consider inserting photos of informal vs. formal attire, ladies vs. gentlemen.)

Proper Attire

Ratcatcher attire is worn during cub hunting and on Wednesdays or by days after Opening Day. Formal attire is worn on Sundays and Holidays after Opening Day.

Informal attire: “Ratcatcher” refers to a tweed hacking jacket and a shirt and tie or colored/patterned stock. *(see attached)*

Formal attire: Black meltons are worn as formals prior to being awarded colors, and when capping during the formal season as a guest with another hunt. Colors are worn as formal attire only after being awarded by the Masters. *(see attached)*

Neat and clean clothing and tack are expected. Ladies’ hair should be restrained with a hairnet. Perfume & cologne are inappropriate to wear during hunting.

Tack:

- Heavy, plain leather bridle with heavy gauge reins and a hunting breast plate.
- A standing martingale may be used.
- Properly fitted jumping or all-purpose saddle
- White fleece or sheepskin saddle pad, fitted, not square, and without ornamentation.
- Braiding is proper for Opening Day and Holiday meets.
- Braiding is optional at Joint Meets and other meets, but is always encouraged.

A more complete explanation of hunt etiquette, attire and hunt terms is available in "Riding to Hounds in America - An Introduction for Foxhunters", a booklet by William P. Wadsworth available through the Chronicle of the Horse. You may find information on the Masters of Foxhounds Association’s website at www.mfha.org .

It is our pleasure to share and discuss safety, preparation, protocol and etiquette. Please contact Mrs. Mary Pat Gallagher, Honorary Secretary (908) 328.1017

(Link for Separate page)

Consider inserting photos of MFH's & Hon. Sec. for cappers to identify. Huntsman & Whipper-Ins could also be shown here.

Some nice photos of hounds at the bottom of the page would be a nice finish.

Hunt Staff & Committee

Joint Masters of Foxhounds;

Dr. Ralph Reilly, MFH

Joanne Maltese Possumato, MFH

Dr. Brendan Furlong, MFH

The Masters are responsible for all aspects of the hunt, including;

- development and maintenance of Hunt country and relationships with Landowners,
- kenneling and breeding of hounds
- supervision of professional staff
- maintaining the observance of hunt traditions
- award "colors" to Subscribers for service and commitment to the Hunt
- promote good sport for members of the Field

Huntsman:

Steven Farrin (Professional)

Responsibilities include but are not limited to;

- Hunting pack of hounds
- Hound care & training
- Maintenance of Kennels
- Training and organizing Hunt Staff
- Maintenance of Hunt country

Whipper-ins (all Honorary):

Dr. Ralph Reilly, MFH
Michael Harper
Lisa Tartaglia

The role of the Whipper-In is to provide assistance to the Huntsman in hunting the hounds. They are an extension of the Huntsman, and prevent hounds from running onto roads or land not open to hunting. They know the hounds well and help the huntsman with a myriad of tasks related to the hunt.

Hunt Committee:

- Dr. Ralph Reilly, MFH
- Joanne Maltese Possumato, MFH
- Dr. Brendan Furlong, MFH
- Dr Roy Feldman, President
- Mary Pat Gallagher, Honorary Secretary
- Brian Skowronek, Honorary Treasurer
- Stephen Buxton
- Dr. Wendy Leich Furlong
- Dr. Jeanne Sharpe

The Hunt Committee, also known as the Board of Trustees shall manage the general affairs and business activities of the Hunt.