



## POLO BARN CHECKLIST

### CONDITIONING POLO PONIES

- Turn polo ponies out at least one hour per day if possible.
- Never turn out two polo ponies in the same paddock if they have rear shoes on.
- First week: walk one hour in morning and walk one hour in the afternoon.
- Second and third weeks: walk and trot equally for one hour in morning and walk one hour in afternoon.
- Fourth week: walk, mostly trot and a little cantering for one and a half hours in the morning and walk one hour in the afternoon.
- Fifth and sixth weeks: Begin some short wind sprints and schooling in the afternoons. Walk and trot in the morning.

### EXERCISING POLO PONIES

- Turn out all polo ponies each day for at least one hour if possible.
- Never put two polo ponies in same paddock with rear shoes on.
- On days when there is no polo match or practice, walk and trot for a total of one to 1½ hours in the morning. Walk for one hour in afternoon.
- School and short wind sprints in the afternoon on the day before a polo match.
- On days when there is a polo match, walk and trot for 45 minutes before each polo match.
- Warm up each polo pony, as needed or requested, before each period of play or in the morning as needed by specific polo ponies.

### POLO GAMES AND PRACTICES

- Call the polo club to get the line-up and game time before loading any horses onto the trailer.
- Arrive at the polo field at least one hour before a game or practice.
- Have all polo ponies completely tacked up before the polo game.
- Take all equipment (mallets, gloves, helmet, clean towel, knee guards, chairs, oxygen kit, et cetera) and lay it out neatly on the polo team blanket.
- Check the oxygen kit regularly.
- Bring sports drinks, juices, soft drinks and water to all polo practices and games.
- Pay hot walkers if needed, and keep an expense record.
- Bring complete blacksmith supplies, wash water and drinking water for polo ponies to all polo practices and matches.
- Use a liniment in the wash water.
- Make sure the emergency kit, including oxygen, medical supplies, et cetera, is always on hand.
- Give polo ponies a small drink of water after each chukker or polo game at the polo field.

### TACK AND EQUIPMENT

- Wash and clean polo riding boots immediately after use. Polish polo game boots.
- Clean tack after each game, as soon as possible.
- Halter and shanks should be hung up at each stall.
- Have a bridle and martingale for each horse, marked with name of horse.
- Mark all new tack in its proper place with the polo barn's brand.
- Air and dry polo saddle blankets after each use.
- Wash leg wraps and clean polo saddle blankets as needed.
- Have broken polo tack repaired at once if it can be reused.
- Check polo tack regularly, especially billets and girths.

### NUTRITION AND FEED

- Salt in all stalls and fields (brood mares in foal get white salt, polo ponies in training get a red salt block).
- Feed by 7:30 a.m., hay first (one or two flakes as needed), then grain a half hour later, after the hay.
- Feed polo ponies hay before the oats and stuff. After their stomach starts to digest the hay, they'll digest the oats better.
- Feed twice a day. Certain polo ponies may be fed three times per day as needed, others less.
- Feed may be varied in amount, depending on condition and need of each polo pony.
- Check the quality of feed on delivery. Reject anything not of good quality (musty, non-green or sticky hay or dusty oats). Accept crimped full clean and bright oats only.
- Drive or 707 added to the evening feeding, one small cup as described.
- Oats and a cup of bran in all feed when in training except as directed below.
- Honey, one-half oats and one-half sweet feed, the evening before polo matches; oats only on the morning of polo matches.
- Hot bran mash (oats, bran, 1 cup of flaxseed, nuts) after each polo match and at least once per week.
- Order flaxseed regularly.
- No hay on the morning of a polo match.
- In Florida, when in training, keep polo ponies muzzled at all times when out of stall or in small pens, some even muzzled in stall, to prevent eating sand, which causes colic.
- Add electrolytes to water during a warm or hot season.

### BLACKSMITH

- Set up a schedule with the blacksmith to visit every four weeks.
- Keep records on each polo pony.
- Keep a record of the type of shoes and pads for each polo pony.
- Check shoeing for angle and taper on each polo pony, check front and side.
- Review all shoeing when completed with the blacksmith.
- Be especially careful of too low a heel. Stand up straight, if anything, to avoid stress to the tendon area.
- Use Huff Grip pads on all polo ponies that have leg problems, front or back.

### NORMAL VITAL SIGNS OF POLO PONIES

- Temperature: 100.5°F
- Pulse: 36 to 40 beats per minute
- Respiration: 12 to 16 breaths per minute

### SICK OR LAME POLO PONIES

- Use an ice boot or ice machine for strain, ligaments, or a blow to a leg by a mallet or a ball, for 20 to 30 minutes, two to three times a day, and as soon as possible at all polo games.
- Use good judgment, call a veterinarian if necessary.
- If a polo pony has colic, give 1 gallon of mineral oil at once, both oral and rectal. Give 10 cc of Banamine intra-muscular. Keep the polo pony walking. Call the veterinarian. Do not give the polo pony any grain until manure is passing normally again.
- If a polo pony is lame from the knee down, put on an ice boot at once, and then three times a day for four days. Administer other medication as needed.
- Keep a calendar record of the time and date mares are "in season".
- If a polo pony ties up, keep it warm with a cooler; do not walk it, and give 10 cc of Banamine intra-muscularly plus 1 cc of Ace intra-muscularly. Call the veterinarian if the polo pony is not better in one hour.
- All shots are given intra-muscular.
- Never give a vitamin B plus iron combination shot. Vitamin B alone is okay as needed.
- Poultice all polo ponies' legs after a polo game or practice.
- Inform the owner immediately, by phone, of any problems with their polo ponies.

### REGULAR POLO PONY CARE

- Check all polo ponies daily when grooming, walk and trot out, paint sores and put Vaseline on old cuts, and give medication as needed.
- Paint Hooflex on hooves at least three times per week.
- Wash hoof after exercise and each polo chukker with a wash liniment.
- Cool polo ponies well before loading into trailer. Walk polo ponies for at least 15 minutes.
- In cool weather be sure to have extra sheets at all polo matches.
- Clip manes and trim head and feet as needed.
- Have extra water for polo ponies to drink at polo games before loading and driving home. Also provide water after a chukker if the polo pony will play a second chukker.
- After a polo practice or polo match, poultice the legs from knees down to below fetlock and put on standing bandages.

### POLO BARN

- Keep feed bins closed.
- Water buckets should be emptied and rinsed out daily.
- Keep barn and driveway area clean and swept.
- Hang up all tools.
- Roll up and hang all hoses.
- Keep brushes, curry combs, hoof picks and medicine clean and in the proper cabinet.
- Keep tack rooms neat and clean.
- Keep the polo barn cleared of cobwebs.
- Keep the polo barn windows washed.
- Empty trash cans daily.
- Spread manure daily if the spreader is more than half full.

### FENCING

- Keep all fencing in good repair and check regularly.
- Have other needed repairs done as soon as possible, such as carpentry, plumbing, et cetera.
- Check all stalls for protruding nails or wood splinters, et cetera.

### POLO FIELD AND LAWNS

- Where applicable, have the stick and ball area mowed weekly.
- Cut pastures 4 inches high depending on growth.
- Trim around the polo barn weekly.
- Have pastures dragged and fertilized as needed.

### BEFORE LEAVING THE BARN

- Turn the lights out.
- Turn the water off.
- Check if all tack room doors are locked.
- Check if all outside doors and gates are securely shut.
- Check if all tools, tack, halters, hoses, buckets, et cetera, are stored in their proper place.
- Check if all droppings have been picked up.
- Check if all walks are swept and the yard is raked.

### TRUCK AND TRAILER

- Sweep out the horse trailer after each use.
- Wash the truck and trailer regularly as needed.
- Keep the truck interior clean.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Clean, repair or paint equipment.
- Clean the polo barn, tack rooms, et cetera.
- Take bridles apart, clean, and apply saddle soap.
- Shine bits and irons.

### TRAVELING

- Plan ahead. Then check the plan. Confirm everything.
- Make reservations for people and horses well in advance.
- Pay all travel expenses except bar bill. \$25 per day for food while traveling on the road. Use a double room, two per room.
- Be sure to have all necessary veterinary certificates and trip tickets as required. Save them all after each trip.
- Save all expense chits and turn them in.

### BILLY YLVISAKER

Billy Ylvisaker is credited with originating this polo barn checklist and encouraging others to add to it.