

# The Camden Hunt Hunting Etiquette

*The Camden Hunt wishes to provide Good Hunting and Good Fun for its membership. These rules of etiquette help ensure our success.*

## **Turn Out**

To show respect for our time honored sport of foxhunting, members should be well turned out in traditional hunting attire. Horses should also be well turned out in traditional hunting tack. Conservative colors, please.

For cub-hunting, members should wear ratcatcher, for formal hunting, starting with Opening Meet, members are to wear formal attire. If the day's temperature is predicted to be very warm, the masters may announce that coats are not required. Then, for cub-hunting, a riding shirt with sleeves and a collar (may be open at the neck) is required, or, if formal hunting, a shirt with sleeves, a stock tie and vest are required. If the morning starts out at 20 degrees or below, traditional attire is not required. Cold weather clothing is allowed but must be in conservative colors.

Members should arrive at the meet in time to greet everyone and to settle the horses. It is appropriate to say Good Morning to the masters, if possible, or at least to your field master. At end of day, it is appropriate to thank the masters, huntsman and staff for the good day of sport.

Members are required to carry a current South Carolina hunting license and photo ID. No smoking is allowed. Horses are required to have a current negative coggins.

It is acceptable for members to carry cell phones for emergency purposes. However, cell phones are to be silenced and not used for other purposes. In an emergency, the field master should be called since he/she is responsible for deciding on the course of action. Field masters' cell phone numbers are published in the Hunt Directory. If a member is going to carry a cell phone for emergency purposes, these numbers should be added to the member's contact list.

## **Riding in the Field – Being Responsible Spectators**

The Field Masters have the responsibility for positioning the fields to allow the best view of actual hunting without interfering with the huntsman, hounds or staff and to deal with any problems arising in the field. Not an easy job. Field members should kindly support their field masters.

All members are to ride behind the field master in one of the fields, taking the same line and keeping the pace.

The order of riding in the First Field is as follows. The first group should be those members who are jumping all the jumps, which the field master takes; members with colors first, followed by those without. The next group should be those members who are jumping only some of the taken jumps: members with colors first followed by those without. The last group should be those who are not jumping: members with colors first followed by those without. In the Second Field, there is no jumping so it is one group, members with colors first, followed by those without. It is appropriate to share the more forward riding positions of your group. It is always acceptable for a higher-ranking member to move back to a lower ranking position. If no member with colors shows interest in riding forward, any member may take a forward position.

Junior members are to be accompanied in the field by an adult member who is responsible for their safety and etiquette.

The huntsman, hounds and staff have right of way. If a member of the staff needs to pass you, be sure your horse's head is turned in his direction.

Members should be quiet during actual hunting. If you need to warn another member of staff or a hound coming up, a hole in the path or any other danger, do so as quietly as possible.

In an emergency, the field master is to be notified and is the only one to decide on the course of action. Send word up to the field master or, if you have been separated from the field, turn on your cell phone and call the field master. If a member is in trouble, one or two other members should stay with that member until the trouble is resolved.

Members should never speak to the hounds unless requested to do so by the staff.

If the field master has called for a field reversal, continue to ride forward up to the point of changing direction. Then ride one more horse length before actually turning your horse around. This will ensure that those behind you can continue forward travel.

If a member wishes to leave the hunt early, he must ensure that his timing and his return travel will not interfere with hunting. If he is unsure, he must ask the advice of the field master. It is important that the retiring member inform the field of his leaving so that his absence is not mistaken for him being lost and perhaps in trouble.

Remember that our hunt is the guest of those that own the territory we hunt. Please be respectful at all times of the territory and our landowners. If any damage occurs while hunting, it must be reported to the field master.

## **Riding in the Field – Safety of Field Members**

It is imperative that each member of the field be actively thoughtful of the safety of the other field members.

Each member must keep his horse well back from the horse in front of him while moving. The faster the pace, the more distance is required. Even when standing still, a member should never allow his horse to invade the space of another horse or rider. If a member's horse is agitating the horse in front of him, he should find another position in the field.

When jumping, a member should never commit to a jump until he knows that the horse in front of him has landed safely and that hounds are well away. If a member's horse refuses a jump, the member must wait until the field has gone by before attempting another try. Then the member must stay in the rear of the field until a safe time to quietly reposition himself back in the field.

A red ribbon must be put in the tail of horse that may kick. No confirmed kickers should be brought to the hunt field. If a horse does kick, the horse should be promptly reprimanded. If a hound is injured, the field master must be immediately notified.

Unruly horses must be ridden in back of the field and out of danger to other riders. Severely unruly horses should leave the hunt field.

While moving on, a member should never pass another rider without receiving permission. When leaving a group that is standing or moving quietly, never do so at a high rate of speed.

If a member's horse cannot keep the pace, that member should move his horse to the side, allowing others in the field to pass. He should tell the other field members of his intention to either ride in back or drop out. If his intention is to drop out, someone in the field should notify the field master.

### **Being Awarded Colors**

The masters, at their discretion, award colors to those members they believe will continue to be valuable members of the Hunt. Some of the considerations used are these: is the member 16 years old or older, has the member ridden regularly with the Hunt for several years and has he shown that he is a responsible member of the field, does the member have some working knowledge of hunt country, has the member shown interest in supporting the Hunt in its activities and non-riding events.

### **Guests Hunting with Us**

Members who wish to bring guests to hunt with us should call a master for permission to do so. Guests and social members are allowed to cap 5 times during the season.

Guests must be accompanied in the field by their sponsor, who is responsible for their safety and etiquette. Sponsors are to introduce their guests to a master or field master at the meet.

Sponsors of guests are responsible for getting the guest's signed release form and capping fee to a master, field master or hunt secretary. These should be placed in an envelope with the name of the guest and sponsor printed on the front.

When we have a joint meet, it is appropriate to invite the members of the visiting hunt to ride forward in the fields.

## **Social Events**

We are very fortunate to be able to enjoy our hunt breakfasts and socials. Please remember to thank the hosts of each event for inviting us and providing such good food and cheer. Also, our social members join us at these gatherings. They are a very important part of our hunt.

Participating in giving a hunt breakfast is greatly appreciated and respectfully encouraged. If you wish to be a host, please contact the Hunt's social secretary.

Our clubhouse is a valuable gathering place for the Hunt. Please care for it accordingly. Any damage or concerns should be directed to the masters or the social secretary.

## **Volunteer Work**

A successful hunt is fueled by the dedication and work of its wonderful membership. Volunteer work is greatly appreciated and respectfully encouraged. If members are not able to provide volunteer work due to personal circumstances, it is appreciated if those members make a contribution to help fund the work getting done. It is helpful to share the work load.

Our Hunt events which depend on the help of our members are: hunt country clean up, the hunter paces, the Hunt Ball, the Hunter Trials, the Camden Hunt Horse Show, and the Carolinas Hound Show.

*Happy Hunting*