

Eventing C Mounted Lesson Plan

TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO CROSS COUNTRY DITCHES

OBJECTIVES

Long Term Goal: Riders will learn how to successfully jump ditches on cross country courses
Short Term Goal: Rider will review and practice appropriate techniques for approaching and jumping a ditch.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

Warm up area with a small spread and/or some poles on the ground to mimic a ditch, a field or area with a shallow, natural ditch and/or some other small constructed ditches.
 Resource: Blyth Tait's Cross Country Clinic, Kenilworth Press, 2004

AGE & RATING OF STUDENTS:

D3 or C1 and up; Age 10 & up

What (Phases)	How (Exercises, system, games)	Why (Goal Setting)	Time (Estimates can be adjusted)
<i>Intro/Welcome</i>	Game or Method: Welcome riders, let them know that today's focus will be on approaching and jumping ditches.	Teacher's goal: Meet riders, set expectations	2 min
<i>Warm-up</i>	Game or Method Introduce concept of introducing a horse to ditches. Emphasize the importance of keeping the eyes focused on the landing side of the ditch and ahead, avoiding looking down into the ditch.	Mental/Physical Prep A "follow-the-leader" system might be good to utilize if some of the horses new to ditches can follow a more experienced horse.	7-8 min
<i>Feedback</i>	Question/Sharing Have the riders share back any experience they have had with ditches. Allow questions, discussion.	Teacher's Assessment Check for understanding. See if any of the horses or riders have previous experience with ditches.	2-3 min
<i>Transition</i>	Practice or one time around to get idea of lesson/game, relax Review basic readiness, including the riding straight forward to an obstacle, willingness of the horse to listen to the rider's leg and lengthening the stride. This can be practiced within an arena first, with a small spread or even with a tarp on the ground between two poles on the ground between standards.	Cement for lesson Reminders: eyes up, trot at first with slightly lengthened stride and good impulsion just before the small spread or rails on the ground. Lengthen the stride after the jump.	10-15 min

<i>Lesson</i>	<p>Game/Method to teach Goal:</p> <p>Have riders take turns walking or trotting the ditch. This can be done in a “follow-the-leader” system at first, with the most experienced horse and rider leading. Repeat this several times for each rider, providing feedback each time. Riders should then jump the ditch without a leader. A controlled, yet energized canter can then be practiced following the same principles.</p>	<p>Achieve Goal</p> <p>Riders will have some repetitive practice with a leader and individually. Practice at a trot and then at a canter. Remind riders to engage the horse in a more positive trot or canter after the jump. Start with a shallow, natural ditch if possible and then move on to another if available</p>	20 min
<i>Conclusion/ Feedback</i>	<p>Slow paced game/activity while teacher & students ask/answer questions</p> <p>Review the experience and have riders give feedback about what they expected vs. what occurred. Review strategies should a rider experience any difficulties.</p>	<p>Check for understanding and/ feedback for next lesson</p> <p>Stress the importance of practicing w/ small ditches and then gradually moving up so that the horse develops trust and is comfortable with the task.</p>	3-4 min