

Lesson Program

Riding Philosophy and Style

Our lesson program provides a fun, instructional challenge to everyone from first time riders to those with years of experience. We recognize that each rider has unique riding goals and aspirations and our program strives to accommodate each individual. Our English riding lessons teach students to ride in a balanced seat emphasizing self awareness, effective use of the body, and understanding of the horse. This “all purpose” approach to riding will not only prompt better riding, but also a more harmonious relationship between horses and riders for all disciplines and levels of experience.

We believe that all riders whether beginner, intermediate or advanced should receive the same quality of instruction and attention to detail. This means from day one we teach our campers to ride in a sophisticated manner using their minds and bodies competently to provide a solid foundation to grow as riders.

A Riding Group for Everyone

Each camper in Ranch takes a mounted riding assessment with our Equestrian Coordinator on opening day. After assessment riders are placed in groups based on both age and ability. First time riders are automatically placed in a beginner class, with similar ages, but will meet with our Equestrian Coordinator to share any goals, fears, or questions they have.

Riding Lessons

Each riding group rides at least once per day, and frequently twice per day. There are six to seven riders per group who have a primary instructor assigned to that group for the entire session. An assistant instructor is always present in the ring as well. Generally students ride a specific horse from one to three times and then try out a different horse. This enables students to experience differences in feel, responsiveness and personality of a variety of horses. Rider’s work on developing their skills through practicing traditional riding patterns on and off the rail, working over caveletti (ground poles), mounted games, drill routines, sometimes a bareback ride and jumping.



Safety

The safety of our riders is our number one priority in all activities. Working with horses assumes some risks, but we keep these to a minimum by selecting appropriate school horses, providing highly trained staff at a ratio of 1 staff member to 3 campers when working with the horses, and maintaining proper equipment and facilities. Riders are required to wear ASTM/SEI approved riding helmet (camp provides or bring your own), long pants, and hard soled boots with a small heel. We encourage riders to wear full or half chaps or tall boots, but this is not a requirement. Extremely loose or baggy clothing is not allowed when riding.

Counselors and riding staff are generally college students who have been selected through a comprehensive interview process. Riding instructors have been chosen not only for their strong horsemanship skills, but also for their ability to uphold Camp Jewell's core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Ranch staff participate in three weeks (up to 100 hours) of training prior to each summer and all are certified in CPR and Wilderness First Aid. The Ranch staff is trained by Camp Jewell's Ranch leadership staff, which is certified in CHA (Certified Horsemanship Associations) and ARIA (American Riding Instructors Association). The staff to camper ratio in the cabins is 1:5, and in riding activities 1:3. It is not uncommon for counselors in Ranch to be former Ranch Campers.



Daily Responsibilities

Each day, campers work side-by-side with our staff to care for our horses. Responsibilities include:

- Feeding in the stalls and taking hay out to the pasture
- Bringing horses in from the pasture in the morning and turning them back out at the end of the day
- Mucking the stalls and pasture
- Sponging or hosing the horses on warm days
- Oiling the tack
- Much more!

Horsemanship Classes:

All riders in Ranch Camp learn to groom, saddle and bridle their horses for lessons. Students also have several un-mounted classes (which we refer to as “off horse”) in subjects appropriate to their level. Classes might include:

- Terms and definitions to expand horsemanship terminology
- Horses' behaviors, instincts and body language
- Different types of bits and their functions
- Basic medical care (when to call a vet, preventative care, wound care, etc.)
- Taking the horses pulse, respiration, and temperature
- When, what type, and how leg wraps are applied
- Teeth 101 (dental care and aging horses by their teeth)