



De La Brooke Foxhounds W

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HUNT ETIQUETTE

Proper etiquette is as much a part of Foxhunting as are the horse and hound. Etiquette lends an air of elegance and helps assure the continued good relations with landowners and friends. “Rules in the hunt are applied common sense and polite behavior. Most people who break them do so either through ignorance or through lack of courtesy. Primary consideration goes to hounds, landowners, staff, fellow riders and your horse (in that order)”

The traditions and etiquette have been established for many centuries. Briefly, the structure and guidelines for De La Brooke Foxhounds are:

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1. **LATE:** Be mounted on time!
2. **LOUNGING:** Not more than an walk with your horses by the trailers before and after the hunt.
3. **LARKING:** Only when released to do so.
4. **LECTURING:** Please don't give unsolicited instruction in the hunt field. We are not out here to take lessons or to school our horses.

GUESTS:

1. Privilege of membership allows you to invite a guest to ride three times each season.
2. Guests may be invited by properly receiving a fixture card.
3. Guests may be invited by calling the Master or the Field Secretary.

DRESS:

We do ride formal attire during our hunt season (please see the section on attire). At joint meets it is proper to wear colors if our hounds go. However, guest hunts at De La Brooke are allowed to wear colors even if their hounds are not present. As a member of De La Brooke you may be invited to hunt with other hunts. Unless specifically invited to wear colors, it is inappropriate to wear colors. If invited into the fixture, you should always clean your boots before entering.

HUNTING:

The huntsman, hounds, and staff always have the right of way. They are working to provide the days sport and must not be interfered with. We hunt with three fields or flights, which provide for all abilities. You should choose your field based on your ability and your mount, and most importantly on where you think you should and can ride. If you have a guest this should also be considered as you are to ride with your guest(s). It is common courtesy and traditional, to yield position behind the Field Master to members with colors and members. However, there are always common sense exceptions. When moving on, retain your position, if someone is not keeping up with the pace, you may request to go by and then do so at a reasonable pace. Remember horses love to race as flight animals, and De La Brooke does not encourage this!.

When you are approaching a jump allow jumping room and in the event of a refusal, move to the rear.

Juniors are at the rear of the field; however, once again, in the interest of safety and common sense, there are also exceptions. Since Juniors are not awarded colors, many of them have a great deal of hunting experience, and that will be taken into account.

Colors are awarded based on many criteria and the contributions to De La Brooke Foxhounds W, and not necessarily on the riding experience.

Field Masters ride out front! This is so they may hear, assess, and react to the hounds. They too are working hard to provide you with a wonderful day of sport. If invited to ride up, please do so, it is really the choice of the individual Field Master. Stay up with your field.

Lastly, we enjoy our sport and the company, but loud and boisterous behavior ruins the hunt for the rest of the field. At checks, be sociable, but "Hark" to hounds.

TURNOUT:

Please refer to the Proper Attire Section for acceptable attire for those riding with De La Brooke Foxhounds W. De La Brooke Foxhounds W expects, in addition, proper turnout of your mount. Tack should be clean, your saddle cloth should fit the saddle and should not extend excessively beyond the perimeter of the saddle. Braiding, while not required, is encouraged, especially for opening and closing meets. Mud tails are appropriate for wet and muddy days. Ribbons in the tail should indicate if your mount is inexperienced (green ribbon), or kicks (red ribbon).

LANDOWNERS:

We enjoy probably more than any other Hunt the number of fixture sites and certainly, the number of homes that are opened to us, by our members as well as many of our non-member landowners.

Be aware of landowners' generosity and the privileges they give us to access their land, without which our sport would not exist in its present form. We all must be fully aware that we are the guests of our hosts and extend courtesy, civility and good sense which will help perpetuate our enjoyment and our organization. We are responsible for our guests as well as ourselves, and must honor and respect the property and privacy of those who host us. Stay off crops and follow the direction of the Field Master. If you must leave, obtain permission and follow the directions, so as not to interfere with the hunt or landowner relations.

STANDARDS OF ETIQUETTE:

The following are minimum standards of etiquette expected of De La Brooke Foxhounds W members and guests. All quotations are from Wadsworth's guide "Riding to Hounds in America."

1. "Never do anything that may harm a hound." Hounds have the right-of-way and if hounds are ahead of you over a jump, hold back and allow them to get well clear before you go forward. When possible turn your horse's head toward hound to prevent them from getting kicked.

2. Never speak to or interfere with the hounds except in emergency situations such as to protect them from road traffic or to prevent an attack on a landowner's pet.
3. Give every consideration to landowners, through whose hospitality and sufferance hunting is made possible.
4. When the Hunt has been given the privilege of riding over the property of a landowner, it does not mean that members or the Hunt, or anyone else, have the right to trespass without the specific permission of the landowner, the appointed agent, tenant, or farmer, whether hacking on non-hunting days, going to meet, or returning from a hunt.
5. "Never damage a landowner's property or allow his livestock to escape. Stay to the edges of fields. Avoid unharvested crops. Do not take shortcuts. Follow the Fieldmaster thus preventing overrunning the scent or damaging the landowners property."
6. "The 'last man' has the responsibility of closing any open gate or raising any bar that might have been let down. The nearest person should wait and assist him." If there is a doubt whether the gate was open or closed to begin with, close it. It is much better to annoy with a closed gate than to be responsible for a lost steer.
7. Report any damage to the Master or Field Secretary as soon as possible.
8. No one should speak to the huntsman without first riding up to the Master and getting permission to do so. The less the huntsman is spoken to, the more time he will have to attend to the business at hand.
9. If you view a fox, stand still with your horse in the direction taken by the fox and hold your hat in the air. Pass the work quietly to the Master. You should only shout "Tally-ho" when you are unable to get the Master's attention. Remember, "To raise your voice when hounds are hunting may cause them to raise their heads and cause a check. The huntsman decides whether your fox is the hunted fox.
10. " 'Hold hard,' signaled by a vertically raised forearm, requires you to stop

where you are, standing still and quietly.” This is not an opportunity to catch up with the field. You should raise your own arm to signal those behind you. Also any time the hunt stops, be prepared for a reverse signal.

11. “ ‘Staff please’ requires your immediate yielding of the right-of-way to the huntsman or whipper-in.” You should back your horse off the trail so the staff may pass quickly, unmolested by your horse’s hooves.
12. “ ‘Reverse please’ is the warning that the field will be turning around. Back your horse off the trail, allow any hounds, staff, and those previously ahead of you to pass. Then fall back in line.
13. Hazards are signaled by saying “ware” followed by the kind of hazard, i.e. “ware hole,” and pointing at the hazard. The warning should be in a voice “suitable to carry to the next riders only.” and thus passed along.
14. Upon arriving at a meet, it is traditional to greet the Masters and their Staff; thank the host and any landowners present.
15. If you have guests, introduce them to the Masters and the Hon. Secretary. The cap should be enclosed in an envelope with the guest's waiver and your and your guest’s name and date printed on the outside. The cap should be paid before the hunt starts, and before the guest is mounted. Your guests are required to sign the De La Brooke Foxhounds W waiver of Liability. If a child or inexperienced adult is your guest, it is your responsibility to stay with them and to assist them throughout the hunt. Remember, Juniors ride at the rear of the Field.
16. “Total attention to the hunt is your reason for coming. Conversation while hunting should be limited.”
17. Decide in advance whether you wish to ride with the first Field, the second Field, or the Hill Toppers, stay well up with that Field. Should you wish to change fields, do so only when the other Field is in close proximity, and with the permission of the Fieldmaster. Do not go into the woods on your own as this will distract the hounds, disturb the game, and make it difficult for the huntsman to draw the covert properly. During the meet, if you must leave the

Field for any reason, please inform the Field Master or the Hon. Secretary and get their advice on which areas to avoid so as not to disturb the Foxhounds.

18. Do not over-ride or crowd the Field Master. “Do not even come alongside him without his invitation.” At a check keep your horse quiet so the Master can listen for hounds.
19. “Do not crowd the horse ahead of you. It is neither polite nor safe; it may result in a kick.” Try to keep at least one length between horses. If you can not fully control your horse, if he is green or a kicker, or if you can not stop him from running up on the horse ahead of your, stay to the rear of the Field. “If your ineptitude or your mount’s misbehavior interferes or slows the rest of the field, ask permission to return to the stable. This courtesy to other riders also saves you the embarrassment of being asked to leave.”
20. Horses that are known to kick should have a red ribbon braided into their tail. This does not relieve the rider from responsibility for his horses behavior. If your horse kicks, scold him and take appropriate action for the situation. Also, a rider with his arm held horizontally across his back is warning that his horse is annoyed.
21. At a jump, form a distinct line and jump in order. If your horse refuses, go to the rear of the line before having another go. If you have a timid jumper, follow a trusted one.
22. If a rider has trouble, the nearest rider should lend assistance while the rest of the field continues.
23. It is best not to smoke in the hunt field, but if you must, try to wait until in an open field when standing, and before moving on put out your cigarette thoroughly on the bottom of your boot so you do not chance dropping a lit cigarette in dry grass or leaves.
24. If you do not understand why the Field Master, Huntsman, or Staff do something, ask them questions after the meet. They will be more than happy to help you and to explain.
25. If hill topping by automobile, please stay to the main roads, and do not interfere with the Staff or Field. Car exhaust and engine noises are a detriment to

hunting. If you are on foot, please try to stay out of the woods as you may disturb the draw of the covert, or foil the line of the fox.

26. When returning to the trailer parking area, please be mindful of tied horses at the trailers. It is proper that horses be kept at the walk in the area of the trailers.
27. The Open bar at Opening and Closing meets are for the landowners and their guests. Members are expected to provide their own beverages.
28. Before partaking in the Hunt Breakfast, please clean your boots and remove your spurs.
29. At the close of the day - when you leave the pack to go home - ride up to the Masters, Field Masters, Huntsman, and Staff and say, "Thank you." A written note is always appropriate. It is the least you can do for those whose one thought all day has been to show you a good day's sport. It means a lot. Be