

Midland Polo Club

Midland Polo School

March - April 2007 Report

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Date	Student	Horse
Saturday March 3, 2007	11:00 Louisa Musselman Zach Riggs	Entre Hidalgo
Sunday March 4, 2007	3:00 Louisa Mussleman	Entre
Wednesday March 7, 2007	1:00 Mary Margaret Zach Riggs	Entra Hidalgo
Thursday March 8, 2007	3:00 Kay Hawlee Lessie Pickard	own horse Entra
Friday March 9, 2007	3:00 Mary Margaret 3:30 Zach Riggs 4:00 Madeline Walker	Hitting Cage/Entra Hidalgo Came to watch
Saturday March 10, 2007	11:00 Lessie Pickard Kay Hawlee Zach Riggs	Entra own horse Hidalgo

Sunday March 11, 2007	11:00 Kay Hawklee Lessie Pickard Zach Riggs	*RAINED OUT*
Wednesday March 14, 2007	1:00 Margaret Peterson Madeline Walker 5:30 Lynn Croas	Entra Hidalgo *LYNN CANCELLED*
Thursday March 15, 2007	5:30 Lynn Croas	own horse
Friday March 16, 2007	2:30 Lynn Croas 4:15 Zach Riggs Mary Margaret Peterson Madeline Walker	own horse Blackie Entra Hidalgo
Saturday March 17, 2007	11:00 Lessie Pickard Bob Pickard Zach Riggs Chuck McArthur Kay Hawklee	Entra Blackie Bicycle own horse Hidalgo
Sunday March 18, 2007	1:00 Lessie Pickard Louisa Mussleman Kay Hawklee Lynn Croas	Entra Blackie Hidalgo own horse
Wednesday March 21, 2007	1:00 Mary Margaret Peterson Zach Riggs	Hidalgo Bicycle
Thursday March 22, 2007	5:30 Lynn Croas	*RAINED OUT*
Friday March 23, 2007	4:15 Mary Margaret Peterson Zach Riggs Madeline Walker	* CANCELLED DUE TO WIND*
Saturday March 24, 2007	11:00 Bob Pickard Chuck McArthur Lessie Pickard	* RAINED OUT*
Sunday March 25, 2007	1:00 Zach Riggs Loretto Natividad Lynn Croas Kay Hawklee	Bicylce own horse own horse Hidalgo
Wednesday March 28, 2007	1:00 Mary Margaret Madeline Walker Zach Riggs	* MARY CALLED IN SICK* * MADELINE CANCELLED* Bicycle

Date	Student	Horse
Thursday March 29, 2007	3:00 Lynn Croas	own horse
Friday March 30, 2007	4:15 Madeline Walker Zach Riggs Mary Margaret Peterson	*RAINED OUT*
Saturday March 31, 2007	11:00 Bob Pickard Grant Wright Chuck McArthur Louisa Mussleman	Blackie own horse own horse own horse

Sunday April 1, 2007	1:00 Lessie Pickard Lynn Croas Louisa Musselman Carolyn Stimmel	Hidalgo own horse own horse own horse
Tuesday April 3, 2007	2:30 Lynn Croas	* LYNN CANCELLED*
Wednesday April 4, 2007	1:00 Mary Margaret Peterson Lynn Croas 4:15 Madeline Walker Zach Riggs Loretto Natividad	Hidalgo *LYNN CANCELLED* Hidalgo Bicycle own horse
Friday April 6, 2007	4:15 Mary Margaret Zach Riggs Madeline Walker	*MARY CANCELLED* *ZACH CANCELLED* Hidalgo
Saturday April 7, 2007 Sunday April 8, 2007	11:00 Lynn Croas Lessie Pickard Bob Pickard Kay Hawkle	*CANCELLED DUE TO SNOW*
Tuesday April 10, 2007	5:00 Lynn Croas Lessie Pickard Louisa Musselman	own horse Entra own horse
Wednesday April 11, 2007	1:00 Mary Margaret 4:15 Zach Riggs Madeline Walker Loretto Natividad	Hidalgo Bicycle Hidalgo own horse
Thursday April 12, 2007	5:30 Lynn Croas Lessie Pickard Louisa Musselman	own horse Entra own horse
Friday April 13, 2007	4:15 Madeline Walker Loretto Natividad	Hidalgo own horse
Sunday April 15, 2007	3:30 Lessie Pickard Louisa Musselman	Entra own horse
Tuesday April 17, 2007	5:30 Lynn Croas	Hidalgo
Wednesday April 18, 2007	1:00 Mary Margaret Peterson 4:15 Zach Riggs Madeline Walker	Entra Bicycle Hidalgo
Friday April 20, 2007	4:15 Mary Margaret Peterson Madeline Walker 5:45 Lynn Croas	Entra Hidalgo own horse

Date	Student	Horse
Saturday April 21, 2007	4:30 Lynn Croas	own horse
Sunday April 22, 2007	4:30 Lynn Croas Lessie Pickard	own horse Entra

Wednesday April 25, 2007	1:00 Mary Margaret Peterson 4:15 Zach Riggs Madeline Walker	Hidalgo Bicycle Hidalgo
Friday April 27, 2007	4:15 Zach Riggs Mary Margaret Madeline Walker	Bicycle * MARY CANCELLED* *NO SHOW*
Saturday April 28, 2007	11:00 Lynn Croas Zach Riggs Amy Venticinque	*LYNN CANCELLED* Entra Bicycle
Sunday April 29, 2007	11:00 Lynn Croas Lessie Pickard Bob Pickard	* CANCELLED DUE TO RAIN*

March-April 2007 Participants

ADULTS:

- Grant Wright:** Unfortunately the company Grant is working for has undergone some changes in the last month and Grant will no longer be able to participate in the polo school. He is looking to sell one of his horses. Still, he comes out to the club to ride his other horse around the track when he can. I suspect we will see Grant out again regularly in the fall.
- Chuck McArthur:** Chuck played polo in his childhood and took a long hiatus before coming back to the sport. His comeback is fantastic and he has made a great transition from the school back into outdoor practices and even a tournament. He was so excited to put on his whites again. He even said, "It has been twenty five years since I have put on my whites. Thanks. This is great!" His horses are coming along well and he recently added one more to his string. He is a strong supporter of the interscholastic program and we are excited to have him be a part of the Midland Polo Club.
- Louisa Musselman:** Louisa continues to be a strong supporter of the school. She joins in when she has time or feels like she needs help with the basics, but for the most part has transitioned into club practices and focused her time in the last month on the grass. Her horses are doing well and she has tremendous support from her family.
- Lessie and Bob Pickard:** I have struggled with Lessie and Bob in the past month. They do not seem to respect the parameters of the school and cancel last minute on a regular basis. I now require them to pay one lesson in advance which is something that was extremely difficult for them to understand. They tried to give me every reason in the world about why they feel they should be allowed to cancel last minute. I believe we have this problem solved now, but haven't been able to get them out to the club lately. I think we have come to the point where they need to decide if they are either "in" or "out". Lessie is riding well, but Bob still needs to work on his riding. This is something they don't quite understand either. In their minds, they are both 10 goalers already and should be allowed to play tournament polo. Yet they don't have horses and they don't want to put in the time to improve. I question whether or not they really want to play polo or if they are just like the "idea" of playing polo and being able to tell others that they play.
- Lynn Croas:** After several last minute cancellations by Lynn, I finally had a talk with her

about committing to lessons that she schedules. She is now more aware that when she says she is coming out for a lesson, she needs to follow up on this and come to the lesson. She had a great couple of weeks with consistent lessons and effort. I am not sure if Lynn will ever buy more horses and be a full member of the club, but she is a great person to have around. She is what I would call a “polo groupie”. Perhaps in the fall we can find a place for Lynn to fit into the club more through helping with club tournaments and participating in party planning.

- **Amy and Steve Venticinque:** Amy and Steve are moving to Midland from San Antonio. Amy has ridden hunter/jumpers for several years. Steve is a newer rider, but has ridden a bit with Amy. They came into the club one day on a run and stopped by the office to talk to me. I put them on our email list and followed up with a few phone calls. I eventually got Amy set up with a lesson and she had a blast. They stayed after the lesson to watch some practice chukkas and fell in love with polo. They will officially move in late June or early July and are looking forward to the fall season. They are already extremely interested in club membership and want to continue with lessons after the summer. They have already asked about buying horses.
- **Kay Hawkle:** Kay has been a fabulous student. However, she will no longer be a part of the polo school due to her moving to Colorado. She does enjoy the sport though and says that she will try to contact me and pick up a few lessons with me in Elizabeth, CO during the summer. I will be in touch with her and hope she can make it out to the club in Colorado.

YOUTH:

- **Zach Riggs:** I also had some issues with Zach in the past month making a commitment to lessons and then canceling an hour before the scheduled time. I had a talk with Zach and his mother and think that we now have this under control. He is showing great promise in playing and I hope he can make the transition to interscholastic polo. His family has several ranch type horses and I see an untapped resource there. I recently spoke to his father and perhaps they will start working with their horses to see if they are something Zach can use for polo.
- **Mary Margaret:** Mary Margaret is a great student. She comes consistently for the Wednesday/Friday youth school and is a true pleasure to work with. While Mary Margaret needs to improve her riding, I am confident that with her enthusiasm and work ethic she will flourish in the school. I would love to see her transition into interscholastic polo as well.
- **Madeline Walker:** Madeline has been another great addition to the youth program. She comes out consistently and has improved so much over the course of the last month. Like Mary Margaret, she struggles with her riding, but her desire to improve makes up for it. She and her mother are very excited to be a part of the polo school and to have found an afternoon activity for her. They are looking for a horse to buy and really want to go for this. I have also discussed sending Madeline to the Brushy Creek camp sometime during the summer and it sounds like this is something that she will pursue.

MARCH-APRIL NOTES/THOUGHTS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

March and April were great months for the Midland Polo School. The weather is amazing and the school has been more active in the last two weeks than it has been in any other two week period.

The horses continue to be troopers. We have had a few lameness issues creep up here and there due to arthritis or old injuries, but everyone is doing well. I hope one day there will be enough

school horses that if one horse isn't 100%, then it won't affect the schedule. Nevertheless, I am happy to report that the Beal's have donated the use of another one of their horses to bring the school horse total to five.

I continue my efforts to bring more people into the club and introduce them to the sport. An advertisement was placed in the Midland newspaper in March that ran two weekends in a row. Unfortunately we received very little response to the advertisement. This was disappointing, but maybe rather than running a large ad a couple of weekends a month, we need to look into investing in a smaller ad that will run more regularly and reach more people. Other advertisement that has been done for the school includes fliers that have been placed everywhere imaginable as well as a package of lessons sold in a school fundraiser auction.

Perhaps the biggest lesson I have learned since I last reported to you is that there must be a cancellation policy enacted with every student when they sign up for lessons. I struggle with current students to fit polo into their routines and lives. I received numerous last minute cancellations in the last two months. Therefore, I found it necessary to require people to pay a lesson in advance, the policy being that if they cancel within 6 hours of the lesson than they forfeit that payment, for the lesson. Perhaps in the future, we should only sell lesson packages. My thought is that if we sell lesson packages and we set up specific days and times designated to the school, maybe we will have fewer problems with cancellations. If people pay for lesson packages it is likely that they will be more committed to the school schedule. If they fail to show up for their lesson, then they lose out on what they have already paid for. Also, if a group is on a weekly schedule for their lessons and there is inclement weather, I feel that with a lesson package it would be easier to encourage students to come out anyway. Rather than doing something outdoors, we could have a classroom session watching video, going over rules, discussing club membership, and talking about horse buying and horse ownership, etc...

These are all just ideas that I have for the future. Overall, I truly believe that the Midland Polo School improves and becomes stronger every week.. If we keep pushing forward and building upon what we learn, it will only grow.

As always, if you have any comments or suggestions please feel free to contact me. If there is something that you have found to be successful in your own programs for advertisement, cancellation policies, or lesson packages to name a few, I would love to hear about your experiences.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

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