



SUMMER 2019

Grip Fast *Equestrian News*

Welcome to the summer issue of the Castle Leslie Equestrian newsletter. It's packed with all the latest news from Equestrian Centre Business Manager, Jenny Richardson and her team.

Castle Leslie Estate offers memorable horse riding holiday experiences for riding enthusiasts of all levels. So whether you're a beginner or an experienced rider, Castle Leslie Estate is the place for you. The Estate offers an idyllic setting for outdoor activity and adventure and we are conveniently located in County Monaghan, only 80 minutes from Dublin airport and 60 minutes from Belfast airport. It is the perfect place to discover the thrill of exploring the beautiful Irish countryside on horseback. We welcome riders of all ability and offer expert tuition in hacking, show jumping, dressage and side saddle along with gentle hacks and exhilarating cross country rides together with a range of certified training programmes and clubs for children. **The Equestrian Centre** combines the authentic charm of a country estate with all the amenities you'd expect from one of Ireland's best horse-riding locations:

- 1,000 acres of private estate
- 300 cross country jumps
- 21 miles of meandering bridledways
- Mile-long all-weather gallop
- 56 stables
- Horse simulator - Mechanical horse for beginners
- 50x30 metre indoor arena with indoor cross-country fences
- Tiered seating for 200 plus private dining/viewing room
- Lounge and showering facilities
- 20 x 50 Dressage Arena
- 30 x 20 Outdoor Ménage
- Sand Gallops
- SJI approved show jumps
- Horse walker
- Lorry & trailer parking
- BHS, SJI & AIRE Approved



Upcoming Events

HORSE DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDES

A horse drawn carriage ride is a wonderful way to experience the beauty of Castle Leslie Estate.

Journey back in time on an enchanting carriage ride through the tree-lined avenues and bridleways, sit back and be charmed by what awaits you on your personal tour of the most beautiful areas of the Estate. Our Stately horse and experienced driver make this jaunt a perfect way to enhance a visit to the Estate. Carriage rides may be booked through reception or directly with the Equestrian Centre. Subject to availability and advance booking is essential.

Price: €90 per Carriage Ride

The carriage seats 4 adults, or 2 adults and up to 2 children and has a 1 hour duration

Enhance your experience with: Bottle of Bubbly @ €40.00; Delicious Homemade Lemonade and Biscuits @ €5.00 per person

ADVANCED ON A PONY FOR A WEEK

15th - 19th July 2019

Children will get the opportunity to Own a Pony for a week and walk, trot and canter.

Spaces are limited and booking is essential.

From 10am - 3pm

Price: €225 per child

This is for advanced children only and discount will apply for second child.

BEGINNER ON A PONY FOR A WEEK

22nd - 26th July 2019

Children will get the opportunity to Own a Pony for a week and ride, groom and muck out.

Spaces are limited and booking is essential.

From 10am - 3pm

Price: €225 per child

Children must be 7 years of age or older.

What's New

During April we welcomed four new horses to Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre;

Ella is a stunning Bay 12.2hh 10 year old pony. Already she has fallen for Bobby Joe and is a firm favourite with our regular clients.

Tyson is a 6 year old 16.2hh Irish Sport Horse Gelding who came to us from Slane, Co. Meath. Tyson has hunted for 2 seasons and is a flying armchair when it comes to cross country.

Busby is a 14.2hh chestnut Gelding. Busby enjoys hacking around Castle Leslie Estate, loves jumping and of course munching on a few treats.

Russell is now our largest horse at Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre. He is 18.hh and is 7 years old. Staff members Wayne and Chris love riding Russell and say that he is now their favourite in the yard.

Chris Bogues who joined the team just 6 months ago has received €2,000 of a scholarship from the British Horse Society. Since joining Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre, Chris has passed his stage 1, 2 and 3 exams. Chris is hoping to use the money he got in the scholarship to go towards his stage 4 exam. To say we are very proud of him is an understatement and we wish Chris all the best with his stage 4 exam.

We are delighted to welcome Rebecca Hayes, to Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre as our new Yard Manager. Rebecca who is from Co. Tipperary took the post of Yard Manager last month. Rebecca comes to us with a wealth of knowledge and she has also brought along her own horse Harry who she hopes to compete with this year. Harry enjoys polos and lots of hacking around the Estate.

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to new staff members, Nicole Winters and Wayne Hamilton. Nicole and Wayne joined the team last month and are both very excited to be here. They've settled in really well to the yard and thoroughly enjoy teaching everyone.

Castle Leslie Equestrian centre reached the final of the Irish Sport Horse Awards last month which took place at the K Club in Co. Kildare. Team members Brigetta McArdle, Orla Sheehan, Jenny Richardson and Chris Bogues went along to the evening to celebrate reaching the final.



Getting the horse moving ‘off your leg’, for better XC reactions

BY TRAINER JENNY RICHARDSON, BHSAI

Eventing enthusiasts know that one of the key foundations of riding is to have your horse ‘in front of your leg’. This doesn’t mean going fast, it means going forward! And the way to have your horse going forward and in front of your leg is to have him super responsive to your leg aids.

“The other leg aids become a little hazy...”

I am sure we’ve all been there at some point; getting lulled into the habit of kicking at each stride to keep the forward momentum, and getting to the point where you don’t even realise you’re doing it, and the horse doesn’t take your ‘kick’ as a forward command any more.

And this state of play is where all the other leg aids become a little hazy, and your lateral work becomes a struggle. If you’re already kicking to go forward, how do you expect him to go sideways too? Think of it this way; if you’ve got the radio on loud, and then your phone rings, you might only just be able to hear it. Turn the radio off, and you can suddenly hear everything else, and much more clearly.

“When your horse is behind the leg, you end up doing all the work for them...”

So, if you’ve constantly got your leg on, driving the horse forward, and then ask for something else (move the quarters in, for example), they might actually struggle to differentiate between those two commands. Look at any top dressage rider; they hardly move a muscle because their horses are so in front of the leg, and so finely tuned, that only the smallest aid is necessary. When your horse is behind the leg, you end up doing all the work for them, when really it should be the other way around.

But is getting your horse off the leg easy? In theory it is, as all you need is discipline and consistency, and all he needs are a few ‘reminder’, onward kicks. When you ask for an upwards transition and it takes more than one ‘ask’, you’re being too soft. Follow that ask with a big old pony club kick, or a tap with your stick, and you’ll soon be moving. When you get that forward reaction, make sure you actually let the horse go forward (even if you’re doing flatwork in trot, and they canter off for a few strides), because after all, that’s what you asked for.

“Be very black and white, and disciplined with each leg aid you use...”

Just as importantly, give the horse a pat or kind word to let them know that the forward reaction was good. Be very black and white, and disciplined with each leg aid you use.

If the horse doesn’t go from that first ‘ask’, try to use an instant consequence. If you’re struggling to get a good enough reaction, having a fast canter down the school after a definitive kick can often give the horse a clearer idea, and get them thinking more ‘forward’.

Also, don’t worry about the quality of these transitions initially; all we want is a good reaction. You can tidy them up once that reaction is first nature; after all, you can never do too many transitions! Don’t forget transitions within the pace too, when practising at home, as these can really help get the horse between your leg and hand.

Meet the Horses

Our horses welfare is of paramount importance to us at Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre. Our aim is to provide an extremely high level of care to our horses and we work with a number of key suppliers including an equine chiropractor: Ted McLaughlin, equine dentist: Carol Perkins, farrier: Shane Cullen and vet: Donncha Houlihan MVB MRCVS. We now have 32 horses in our equestrian centre and in each of these quarterly newsletters, we will be featuring some of them. In this edition, we'd like to introduce you to 'Summer', 'Melanie', 'Bobby Joe' and 'Squire'.



SUMMER - Summer is an 8 year old chestnut mare and is 17.2hh. Summer excels at jumping but is used for beginners through to advanced riders.



MELANIE - Melanie is a 13.2hh skewbald mare, a little cheeky but everyone loves her. Melanie has been at Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre for two years and is becoming a favourite with the children that ride on a Saturday. Melanie is used for every level but she does enjoy the odd fast hack!



BOBBY JOE - Used for our lead rein children Bobby Joe is 11hh and now one of the oldest ponies at Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre. Bobby Joe enjoys lead rein lessons and his best friend is Melanie.



SQUIRE - Squire is 16.2hh and one of our only thoroughbreds at Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre. Squire who is by a sire Rainbow Quest has been at Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre for 5 years. A very gentle horse who enjoys hacking on the Estate. Squire has worked in other equestrian centres in Ireland before coming to Castle Leslie Equestrian Centre.

If you require any further information, please contact the Equestrian Centre on 047 88 535 or email stables@castleleslie.com



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