

## WHO'S WHO

**The Master:** Is the most important person in a Hunt and his/her word is law. Anyone who goes out hunting has placed themselves under the Masters direction and must be prepared to take orders from him/her. He/she wears a Red Coat.

**The Huntsman:** Is under the direction of the Master and is responsible for hounds. The huntsman's job is one of the most important and difficult ones in the hunt as the success of a days hunting depends largely on the performance and fitness of the hounds. He/she wears a Red Coat.

**Deputy-Masters:** Help the Master in the field and take his place when absent. He/she wears a Red Coat.

**Whippers-In (Whips):** Assist the Huntsman with the hounds, responsible to the Huntsman.

**Field Master (Green Coat):** Is responsible for the observance of rules and manners in the field. He/she is ably supported by deputised 'Green Coats' in the field.

**Drag Layers:** A team of 2-3 riders who ride out before the hunt run starts to lay the false scent known as 'The Drag' which the hounds scent for and subsequently chase or follow.

**Committee Members:** Are responsible for the general running and administration of the Hunt—be courteous to them and offer to help when asked.

**Secretary:** Administers the hunts communications with members and stakeholders, collects capping fees, and subscriptions.

**Hounds:** Our hounds are Harrier Hounds, notable for their ability for hare and drag hunting. A hound has poor vision as they can only see 20 inches above the ground, therefore they are entirely dependent upon their scenting powers. Hounds are always counted in couples, e.g 10 1/2 couples is 21 hounds. They are always referred to as Hounds, never dogs.



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Waitemata Hunt Incorporated



# Hunting in a Nutshell

## A short guide for hunting with Waitemata Hunt Incorporated

We hope that you find this a useful guide to learning about Drag Hunting with Waitemata Hunt Inc. This guide covers the essentials of what you need to know to come out hunting with us, and we hope that this demystifies hunting a little.



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[www.waitematahunt.co.nz](http://www.waitematahunt.co.nz)

## ORDER OF EVENTS

At a typical hunt the following order of events normally applies:

- Riders arrive 30 minutes prior to the time set on the hunt card.
- Unload, brush, and tack up your horse, and change into your hunt attire.
- Riders should always greet the Master, and pay their capping fee to the Secretary if they are not a member.
- At the time set in the hunt card, all riders meet at a communal point for the Masters pre-hunt address.
- Following the address, riders return to their horses and fit their bridles and mount up.
- All riders congregate behind the Master and head out for the first run of the day.
- The Huntsman will lead the hounds into the first field and 'cast' them so they search for the scent. Once they have picked it up and the field is moving this is called a run. In between each run there is a break so horse and rider can catch their breath and socialise.
- At the end of the days hunting all riders return with the field to the Huntsmans truck so that the hounds can be loaded into the truck, and the officials are thanked.
- You can then return to your vehicle, untack, wash, and feed your horse.
- Still wearing your hunt attire, we then meet without horses for the Hunt Breakfast—bring a plate to share.
- The Master then makes a speech thanking the landowners and officials, then we share the breakfast.
- Following the breakfast you can bid farewell and head home for a good nights sleep!

## ATTIRE

Attire in the hunting field is largely traditional and essentially practical. Much of the pageantry and colour of the chase that thrills so many is due to the dress that is worn.

**Coats:** Black or dark grey coats (with blue velvet colour on the collar for members).

**Jodhpurs:** Preferably beige or fawn in colour and not white or cream as these colours are for hunt officials.

**Boots:** Black full length boots, or short boots and chaps (both black).

**Helmets:** An approved safety helmet must be worn. Black velvet helmets are preferred.

**Stocks:** Stocks should be white in colour. They must be tied neatly with the correct hunting knot. A small plain stock pin is placed just below the knot.

**Gloves:** Gloves are optional, but recommended and should be of a material that does not slip when wet.

**Spurs:** Spurs should be worn around the ankle and not the heel.

**Junior Members:** Junior members are correct in wearing tweed hacking jacket, jodhpurs, jodhpur boots, collar and tie. For Childrens Hunts eventing attire is acceptable i.e black jacket, collar & tie.

## HORSES

Any breed of horse or pony is suitable for hunting. The horse should be physically sound and adequately fit for an outing of several hours. Highly excitable horses usually calm down considerably after a few times out. In fact, these excitable horses often take intense pleasure in hunting once they get used to the routine. It is not unusual for the horses to attentively listen to the hounds, turn to face them when they give voice, recognize calls on the hunting horn, and anticipate the moving-out of the field. A kicker should wear a red ribbon in it's tail and stay at the back of the field. A green horse should wear a green ribbon.

Horses should be reasonably, clean, during hunting season. We anticipate hunts to last 2 to 3 hours. Though the hunt does not encompass cantering the entire time, the horse should be fit enough for short cantering/galloping spurts of roughly a kilometre before checking (stopping and waiting for hounds to pack-up or find the scent).

If at any time you feel your horse is becoming physically stressed, notify your Field Master at the stop, who will likely

allow you to hack back to the trucks. At no time should a rider simply drop out of the field without notifying the Field Master.

It is not necessary that your horse jump in order to hunt. There will always be alternative routes around the fences, with plenty of senior members doing the same. You will not be the only "Gater". If you wish to Ramble—viewing the action from the races or hill tops—this is also allowed.

Jumps are anticipated to be not more than 100cm. Most will be more on the order of 70cm to 90cm.

Be able to control your horse—often this means "stepping-up" your bit choice in the hunt field from what you normally use. It is highly improper and dangerous to run ahead of the Master or right-up on the heels of another horse. Anticipate your horse being stronger in the hunt field while moving with a "herd." If a stronger bit is used, e.g. a gag, be sure you know how to properly use it and practice with it prior to hunting.

## MANNERS

Manners play a big part in hunting—the ordinary rules of politeness and courtesy apply. Here are some of the important ones:

- Be punctual and arrive with plenty of time to prepare your horse so that you are ready when the hounds move off.
- Greet the Master, and if bringing friends, be sure to introduce them to the Master, Field Master, and the Secretary so they can pay their capping fee.
- Stop and say hello to the landowner and farm workers.
- Give way to the Officers of the Hunt—particularly anyone in a Red Coat, Hounds, and the Whippers-In.
- When riding through a gate that has been opened be sure to say "Gate Please" so that the rider behind you can pass the message down through the field and the gate gets closed.
- If your horse refuses a jump and there is someone waiting to jump the fence, let them go first and rejoin the queue, after 3 unsuccessful attempts always go through the gate.
- Report any damaged property or fences to the Field Master.
- Say thank you to the Hunt Officials—particularly the Master, Huntsman, and other Officials—they have been working hard for your pleasure and a word of thanks is very much appreciated.

For more information visit [www.waitematahunt.co.nz](http://www.waitematahunt.co.nz)