

# Spirit of Long Island

## Mounted Drill Team<sup>†</sup> Manual

“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.”

— Phil Jackson

### About Us

The Islip Horsemen's Association, Inc. The Spirit of Long Island Mounted Drill Team <sup>†</sup> (The Drill Team) has been performing their precision drill throughout New York and New Jersey since 1978. The team consists of horse and rider pairs who practice weekly. Members of The Drill Team have changed over the years, but the enthusiasm and dedication to perfection has remained constant. The drill itself contains classical dressage movements as well as the thrill of traditional cavalry routines.

The Drill Team enjoys showing that a little hard work and lots of fun can result in a performance that not only entertains but is also an excellent example of good horsemanship.

### Our Mission

To entertain and demonstrate sportsmanship, horsemanship, teamwork, and dedication.

### Overview

Founded in 1970, The Islip Horsemen's Association Inc. is a non-profit organization sponsoring the continued appreciation and education of horsemanship for both its members and the public. “The Spirit of Long Island” was formed in 1978 by IHA member, John Jorgensen who was a member of the New York City Mounted Police Unit. The “Islip Horsemen's Association, Inc. Spirit of Long Island Mounted Drill Team <sup>†</sup>” is a registered trademark.

Riding in a drill team improves both riding skills and connection to the horse. The patterns and music require riding your horse precisely and with control. Timing and synchronization are key elements. You must adjust your horse's speed, make exact turns, and ride accurate patterns to keep time with the music and other horses and riders. It is excellent training for the horse as well. He/she must listen for cues and respond to your requests immediately. In addition to improving horsemanship skills, working as a team member with a common goal for the whole team promotes cooperation and consideration. The focus is on unity rather than competition. Team members learn to support one another and help each other be successful in order to create a pleasing pattern. Riding with the team encourages good communication and compassion. Drill riding is one of the oldest forms of organized riding, and dates back to Cavalry soldiers who needed to coordinate with each other as they rode into battle.

### Code of Honor for Members

The “Code of Honor” means that you, your horse, and your trailer (if team logo is on trailer) are always representing the team, therefore:

- Respect your fellow teammates.
- Respect your horse.

- Respect your vehicle with the team logo on it.

## **Tryouts**

New members will be allowed to immediately participate in practices and performances based on horse and rider evaluations.

Either the Coach or Assistant Coach will evaluate the new horse and rider using the below criteria. Horse and rider should match each other.

Rider Requirements:

- Independent seat (rider does not use hands or legs to stay in balance).
- Sit at the trot and canter.
- Use two hands while riding.
- Ability to ride with one hand.
- Back properly.

Horse Requirements:

- Is responsive.
- Not known to bite or kick.
- Rates and bends properly.
- Backs properly.
- Horses must be sound.

## **Membership Fee**

The annual fee for all members is \$25.00. This fee does not include the cost of the team practice shirt (\$20.00). All riders will be responsible for purchasing their own performance attire and equipment for their horses.

All drill team members must also remain members in good standing pursuant to Article I of the By-Laws of the Association.

## **Attendance & Commitment**

Practices are held Wednesdays from approx. 5:45 – 7:15PM, March – October, at the Bohemia Equestrian Center on Sycamore Avenue in Bohemia, or any other location designated by the Coach.

It is the responsibility of each member to make sure they are signed in for every practice and performance before the scheduled starting time.

All riders are required to be ready to ride at the designated time for all practices and performances.

Attendance is very important to the success of the team. All members are required to attend approximately 75% of practices and 75% of all events. Failure to meet this obligation may affect the member's team status and/or end of year award.

There is a possibility that a practice or performance may be canceled due to inclement weather. In the event of a cancellation, every effort will be made to contact the team in a timely fashion; however, ultimately it is each team member's responsibility to confirm said cancellation. If

practice is not canceled, all riders will be expected to attend with their horses. If the weather is deemed unfit to ride in at the time practice is scheduled to start, then there may be a walking practice without horses.

## **Sponsorship for the Team**

Each year the team publishes a program booklet listing our venues and the history of our team. At the beginning of the season ad space is sold to sponsors as a way of generating funding for the team. Every member is requested to acquire at least one sponsor per year. Sponsors will have advertisements on social media and at multiple venues throughout the year where hundreds of people will be able to see their sponsorship.

## **Venues**

Whether it's a performance, parade, or competition, venues are important to drill team as they offer a goal and the opportunity to see the results of hard work. Any team member may help in booking venues. Please see the Coach for the parameters.

## **Uniforms**

There is a specified team member in charge of ordering uniforms for both horse and rider. Each rider is responsible for purchasing their attire at their own expense and must see the specified team member for ordering, sizing, and pricing of items.

### **Rider:**

The proper uniform and practice attire will be worn at all performances. When practicing at performances all riders will wear their red team shirt and long pants (no shorts). Practice sweatshirts will be available in the same color as practice shirts.

- **Headgear:**
  - Certified riding helmet with black cover is strongly encouraged. Under New York State Law, anyone under the age of 18 years old must wear an approved ASTM helmet when mounted.
  - Also permitted: Standard black molded cowboy hat (no designs and with a stampede strap attached).
  - The rider's hair must be neat and tied back.
- **Pants:**
  - Black pants that cover the entire boot while saddled. All pants will have some sort of "pant keeper" to prevent pants from inching up above the boot during a performance.
- **Shirt:**
  - Riders will have the option of borrowing or purchasing the R/W/B team performance shirt.
  - Alternatively, the team will provide a different performance shirt.

- Boots:
  - Black riding boots.

### **Horse:**

All horses will have the following tack which is considered the official uniform for all performances, and which will be purchased from the team at the rider's expense. Tack is expected to be clean for all performances.

Horses must be properly groomed for performances which includes being bathed and with their muzzle trimmed.

- Saddle (any type).
- Nylon R/W/B bridle, cavesson, & breast plate.
- Red saddle blanket.
- Blue boots will be provided.
- Flag holder.
- Artificial aids, such as crops, bats, spurs, etc. may be used to encourage your horse to move during practice. However, the only artificial aids allowed during a performance are spurs.

## **Horse and Rider Responsibilities**

The most important thing to remember is that we all want to have fun! To reach that goal, we must all respect each other and adhere to the guidelines of The Drill Team. It is each individual rider's responsibility to learn and practice the given ride. During the ride, look to your team leader for guidance.

- Always maintain a positive attitude.
- Always be on time.
- Respect the Coach and do not interrupt.
- Observe the rules of the facility we are visiting.
- Handle yourself in a professional manner.
- Be helpful to others when you can.
- Your horse must be well-mannered, in good condition, and willing to work.
- Take care of your horses' needs first.
- Check in with the Coach before leaving all practices and performances.
- At practice, riders are not allowed to leave the ring for any reason without being acknowledged by the Coach or assistant Coach.
- If a rider should fall from their horse during a practice or performance all riders are to halt and remain on your horse until instructed otherwise.
- At the completion of a performance all riders are to stay in uniform until dismissed.
- When traveling to an overnight venue:
  - Stalls will be assigned (if you need to switch, see Coaching staff).
  - Provide emergency information on the door of your horse's stall.
  - Have current Coggins and health certificate with you and copies with the Coach, also copies with trailer/car your horse is trailering with.
  - Stalls, alley, and tack will be clean and orderly with feed and tack stored properly.

- Horses will be clean and comfortable with adequate food and water.
- Area around your trailer will be kept clean.

## **Roadie Responsibilities**

Roadies are an important asset to the team. They are part of the Drill Team family, and their roles are very important to the success of the team. They will be expected to assist the Coach and the Assistant Coach where needed and help the riders prepare for practice and performances. At venues, they will coordinate with the Assistant Coach and other roadies to ensure that the following tasks are accomplished:

- Performance field is set up.
- Program booklets are made available to the public.
- Team banner & sponsor banner are displayed.
- A table for T-shirts, etc. is established.
- Team tent is set up.

## **Cause for Dismissal**

- Not adhering to rider responsibilities.
- Threatening to quit The Drill Team.
- Nonparticipation – including but not limited to missing three (3) or more practices in a row, habitual lateness, and/or non-response.

## **The Drill Team Committee**

The Drill Team Committee shall be composed of the Chair, who is appointed by the Board of Directors of the Association, and members of the Drill Team, who shall oversee the affairs within the Team. The Chair shall be a current member of the Board of Directors and is the line of communication between the Board of Directors and the Drill Team. A copy of the Drill Team Committee's duties shall be given to each member of the committee.

## **Coaching Staff**

### **Drill Team Coach**

- Believes in and is committed to the team.
- Provides encouragement and motivation to the team by being a positive role model.
- Explores ways to help Drill Team members by identifying training needs and areas where the Coach can help the team, or an individual, improve.
- Is open to change, will listen to Drill Team member's ideas, and will make changes to see the team succeed.
- Creates shared goals among the team and works with the team to achieve these goals.
- Helps the team stay focused on solutions to a problem rather than the problem itself.

The Coach will design the maneuvers, choose the music and uniforms, instruct the riders, and have written instructions for the ride. The Coach will work with or as PR on bookings of performances and other venues. Upon booking, the Coach shall forward the Performance

Agreement to the venue and notify the Committee Chair of the performance date(s). The Coach shall forward all contracts and agreements to the President, or his/her designated representative, for signature.

The Coach shall oversee the team at practices and performances and shall determine who rides, in which position you ride, who the team leaders are, as well as the tack and uniforms worn. The Coach shall also determine what outings the team takes as a group.

If a vacancy exists in the position of the Coach due to resignation or other event, the team may select a current member who has been an active member of the team for at least one (1) year and who shall be presented to the Board of Directors of the Association for approval and appointment. If a team member is unable or unwilling to be chosen as Coach, the Board of Directors may seek a candidate outside of the Drill Team.

## **Drill Team Assistant Coach**

The Coach will choose an Assistant Coach who is representative of the goals of the team. He/she will assist the Coach with practice and performances and oversee the roadies. The Assistant Coach will perform the duties of the Coach when the Coach is absent or, in the case of a vacancy in the Coach's position, act as Coach until a replacement is appointed by the Board of Directors of the Association.

## **Drill Team Captain and Co-captain**

Each season the team will elect a Captain and a Co-captain for the year. The captains should be representative of the goals, conduct, codes, and dedication of the team and will be a liaison to the Coaches.

The Team Captain and Co-captain:

- May be required to attend meetings.
- May be asked to lead the team in practice.
- Motivate their teammates.
- Step up when needed to serve as a model to their teammates.
- Help resolve issues arising between teammates.
- Organize social outings for the team.

## **Trailing and Trailer Safety for Horses**

Towing vehicles and trailers must be up to date on registration, inspection (if required), maintenance, and repair.

Each rider is responsible for transporting his/her own horse or have trailing arrangements made with someone else.

All trailers should be cleaned of manure before taking horses off trailers to prevent unnecessary accidents from happening.

The rider and anyone that will be taking care of the horse must have knowledge of safe horse tying. All horses should be tied with a quick release knot and all ropes should be the proper length to prevent the horse from getting caught on surrounding obstacles.

Riders must have enough hay and water according to their horse's needs and shipping boots or standing wraps are strongly suggested.

These rules are required not only for the safety of the horse but because if one horse gets injured and cannot perform it hurts the whole team.

Each member **MUST** clean up after their horse and themselves before leaving the venue. All trailers should have the necessary items for cleaning up (buckets, garbage bags, pitchfork, broom, etc.).

Whether or not you are with the team, if your trailer is carrying the team logo then you are representing the team. If you sell your trailer or vehicle that has the team logo on it, you must remove it before said sale.

## **Caravan Etiquette**

THE PURPOSE OF CARAVAN ETIQUETTE IS THE SAFETY OF ALL!!! *Everyone* should know what they need to do, when they need to do it, and how to do it right so the entire caravan will run smoothly.

### **SPEED**

The maximum speed of the caravan will not exceed the published speed limit. The lead car must maintain the speed limit or slower and when going through towns and lights must be aware of the trailing vehicles. If all cars do not make it through a light or a town slow down or pull over and wait for them to catch up. When coming to lights, double up! Two lines can get through the lights much more quickly.

The maximum speed of the caravan will be determined by the maximum safe speed of the slowest vehicle.

### **STOPPING**

IF ANYONE STOPS, THE ENTIRE CARAVAN STOPS UNTIL THE REASON FOR THE STOP CAN BE DETERMINED AND THE APPROPRIATE ACTION TAKEN! If the vehicle in front of you stops, YOU STOP TOO!

Emergency stops must be communicated to the lead vehicle as soon as possible.

### **PASSING**

Passing each other in the caravan should not be necessary.

If the caravan leader decides to pass a slower moving vehicle, he/she will wait for the last vehicle in the caravan before resuming normal speed. When the caravan is passing a slower moving vehicle, remain in the right lane until it's your turn to pass.

### **SPACING**

Although we would like the caravan to run together as a group and not be divided by non-caravan vehicles, always keep a safe distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. If you notice a non-caravan vehicle moving through the caravan, assist them by slowing down a little and leaving additional space between you and the vehicle in front of you.

## **LEAVING THE CARAVAN**

If someone needs to leave the caravan temporarily, (extra pit stop, etc.), make sure the vehicle behind you knows that you are departing the caravan, so the rest of the caravan does not follow by mistake. Also let the lead vehicle know that you are leaving the caravan and when you return.

## **LINEUP OF VEHICLES IN THE CARAVAN**

The recommended line up of the caravan is as follows:

Older vehicles right behind the lead vehicle followed by slower moving vehicles. There should be one leader for every 5 vehicles towing trailers.

**Vehicles not towing a trailer stay at the back of the caravan.**

## **COMMUNICATION**

The primary means of communications for the safety of the caravan is walkie talkies therefore EVERY vehicle in the caravan must have a walkie talkie and current member contact list before the caravan starts.

COMMUNICATE with each other. If there is a problem, COMMUNICATE with the lead vehicle. If some cars didn't make it through a town or light COMMUNICATE with the lead vehicle.

\*\*An EZ-Pass is required when traveling off Long Island for all trailers and cars joining the caravan.



## **IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ISLIP HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION RULES OF CONDUCT:**

Conduct by judges, IHA members and non-members, volunteers, exhibitors, trainers, owners (and their representatives), spectators and all other persons present on the show grounds or in show facilities shall be orderly, responsible, sportsmanlike, courteous, and respectful. Direct abusive and threatening conduct while on the show grounds will not be tolerated and the offending person(s) may be asked to leave the show grounds in order to preserve the decorum of the show.

A violation of this rule will first result in a written warning from the drill team Coaching staff to the party(ies) involved in the initial violation, which shall also be forwarded to the IHA Board, within five (5) days of the incident; a second violation of this rule will be brought to the IHA Board for review and any action will be left up to their discretion, which may include but not be limited to disciplinary action and/or suspension from IHA club activities for a period of time to be determined by the IHA Board.

No stallions shall be permitted to compete at any Association horse show, event, activity, or Drill Team performance or on the show grounds during any Association competition or event.

No alcoholic beverages are permitted at Association-sponsored events, including but not limited to membership meetings, clinics, Drill Team performances, and horse shows. The exception would be the annual dinner dance and fundraising events held at a public venue.

Revised 3/2023 DT; 5.2.2023 BOD; 5.15.2023 BOD; 7.17.2023 Final