



## Feeding the Horseball horse

### Feeding

As you increase your work you will need to increase the amount and nutritional value of the feed you are giving your horse.

Your horse or pony should be fed a balanced mix along with chaff and sugar beet (plenty of variety's are available). For a thoroughbred I would advise a conditioning or competition based feed dependant on your horse.

The amount you feed your horse will vary on its size and its individual requirements, it is advised that you begin with the recommendations given on the bag of feed itself, but to give you an idea early in the year my horses receive 2 feeds a day with each feed containing the following;

- 1 round scoop of mix (conditioning/competition)
- 1 -2 round scoops of chaff (alpha A oil) extra fibre beneficial
- 1 round scoop of sugar beet (alphabeet)
- 2 egg cups of oil (vegetable or sunflower)
- 1 egg-cup full of electrolytes (see below).
- Plus as much hay/haylage or grass as they like. Don't forget this – hard feed should supplement your horses forage intake. But beware this once the spring grass comes..... you don't want a fat horse.

Each individual feed should not exceed this total size, i.e feeding one HUGE feed a day is very detrimental to your horses health. As the fitness levels/ requirements increase an extra feed or two should be added per day (especially if you are preparing for international competitions).

It is however vitally important to ensure that your horse is **not obese** before undertaking final fitness preparations – if your horses is overweight they are more likely to experience heat stress and/or orthopaedic injury – this is just as bad as having an underweight horse.

Dehydration: when your horse loses more water than it is drinking. When competing this is likely to occur due to your horse not drinking enough during transport and once they have arrived at the venue, and also by sweating excessively. One of the ways to help hydrate your horse is to encourage it to eat wet sugar beet/ soaked feeds. Also providing your horse with in feed electrolytes will help it to maintain hydration levels. Giving electrolytes in water is ill advised as the horse may decide not to drink the funny tasting water – therefore not receiving the electrolytes or the water!

## **Electrolytes**

You may choose to purchase ready-made electrolytes as infeed preparations of pastes – please ensure they are free of prohibited substances.

If not you can make your own with 2 parts table salt to 1 part Lo-salt. A maximum of 30g should be fed per feed. Feeding electrolytes will stimulate your horse to drink so ensure fresh clean water is always available.

## **Tying up/Azoturia**

This is when your horse's muscles seize up and begin to destroy themselves. It may be caused through high levels of carbohydrate feeding and too little exercise or excessive exercise in a poorly prepared, unfit horse. Once the horse has seized up it cannot be ridden again for several weeks/ months! It can also happen when you suddenly change your horse's feed/ exercise/ management regimen.

It is important that you use recognised feed manufacturers that grantee their feeds are free from prohibited substances if you intend to compete at FIHB events.

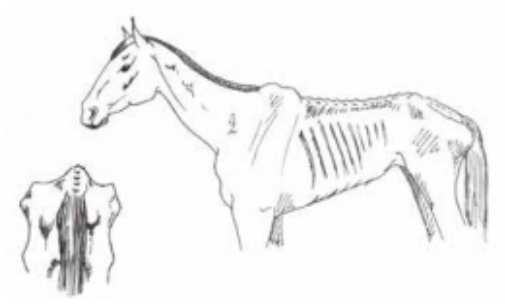
## **Body condition scoring**

Being able to body condition score is a vital skill when assessing a horse's fitness to compete. Please see the chart below for an idea of the ideal condition score.

- 0 = RSPCA
- 1 = RSPCA
- 2 = Not fit for competition.
- 3 = Ideal.
- 4 = Fat and needs to loose weight before strenuous competition.
- 5 = Obese not fit for competition.

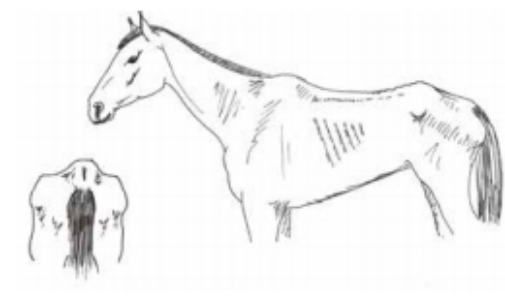
### 0. Emaciated

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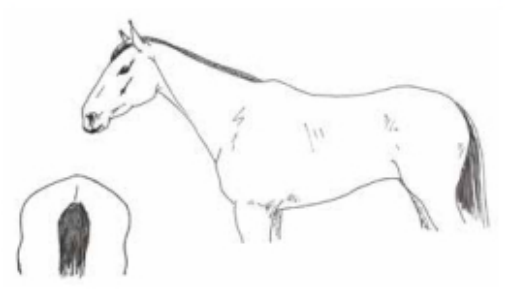
### 1. Poor

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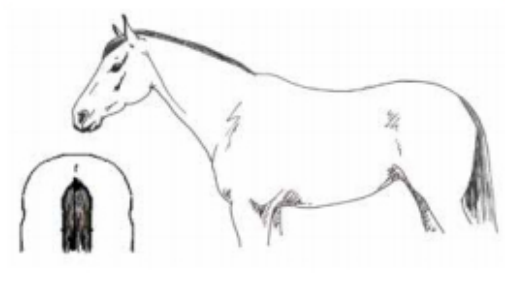
### 2. Moderate

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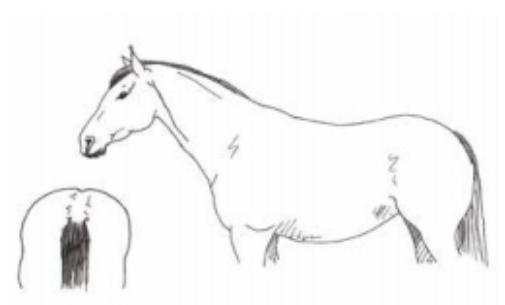
### 3. Good

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### 4. Fat

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### 5. Obese

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