

## Parents Information Meeting - MINIMUS & TETRATHLON

February 20<sup>th</sup> 2023

- **Welcome**
- **Introduction to Minimus and Tetrathlon**
- **2023 Minimus and Tetrathlon**

We are hosting our Fun Minimus/Tetrathlon in Bunclody on 7<sup>th</sup> May

Whatsapp Broadcast only used to communicate info.

Leah Mulhall organising minimus running and swimming

Introduction of open training for xcountry Anna Redmond

### What is Minimus & what age do you have to be & test level?

- Minimus is an U12 triathlon competition. Children must be under 12 on 1st January of the current year, to be eligible to take part in the competition. However, kids over-age can also compete H/C (out of competition) at minimus to have fun and or prepare them for moving on to tetrathlon. Irish Pony Club D+ test standard is recommended for this competition.

### When and where is it held?

- Minimus is a 2-day competition and takes place on the weekend the 17th & 18th of June in Nuenna Farm Equestrian Centre, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny and Thurles swimming pool/Thurles racecourse for running TBC.

### What disciplines are included?

- It consists of three disciplines, swimming, running and riding. Points are awarded to competitors for their performance in each discipline. The overall winner is the competitor with the most points after all three disciplines.
- Children need to train for the minimus championships starting in the Spring and the DC's must sign off children as capable of getting around an 80cm technical cross country course before they can be considered for team selection.

### Minimus Cross Country Preparation 2023 training will commence February 23rd.

This is a preparation for the riding phase of minimus competition starting with arena work, progressing to xc schooling and more advanced practice over the season. This training will cater for both first timers and minimus veterans. Please book on <https://www.itsplainsailing.com/org/chpc>

If you are thinking of minimus, eventing or tetrathlon, this is a really good opportunity to get your training underway

Hunter Trails organised by local Hunts will commence in early March and members are encouraged to try and do as many of these as they can to give the children confidence in a competition setting. Many of these hunter trails now offer pre novice courses which are great to get the kids started. This will help them prepare for the team selection trials and the championships themselves.

### Minimus Training Schedule

23rd February XC training for beginners, Corries House, Bagenalstown, 5.30pm

2nd March XC training for beginners, Kingscross, Clonmore, Co. Wicklow, 5.30pm

4th March, XC training Equipark, Garryhill, 3pm

11th March, Ballintober, New Ross, 3pm

25th March, Forth Mountain, Venue TBC, 3pm

30th March, Coolboy, Venue TBC

Further dates for April and May TBC

- **Vaccines needed to attend all clinics and training 2023**

Below is a list of provisional Fun Minimus, Biathlon & Triathlons

#### Biathlon & Triathlon (without ponies)

- 19th February Co.Clare Pony Club Winter Triathlon - Shannon Pool eircode V14 PH02, Booking now open on <https://www.itsplainsailing.com/org/ccpc>
- 26th February Wexford Biathlon & triathlon, no cross country, New Ross. Booking now open on <https://www.itsplainsailing.com/org/wxpc>
- 5th March, Triathlon: North Kilkenny – no cross country, swimming in Kilkenny city <https://www.itsplainsailing.com/org/nkpc>
- 12th March, Newcastle Lyons, Triathlon/biathlon <https://www.itsplainsailing.com/org/ncl>

#### Fun Minimus

- 7th May Carlow Hunt PC Fun Minimus, Bagenalstown
- 14th May Kildare Hunt PC Fun Minimus - Punchestown
- 21st May Laois Hunt PC Fun Minimus, Stradbally Hall
- 5th June Golden Vale PC Fun Minimus, Thurles

It is highly recommended that the children do as many of these fun minimuses as possible. They are a great way of gaining experience without the pressure of it being a championship. It's also a great way for members to hang out and get to know each other & have fun

#### National Minimus

17th & 18th June Neunna Farm Equestrian Centre, Freshford, Co.Kilkenny

#### National Tetrathlon

19th & 20th August, Killossery Equestrian Centre, Swords, Co.Dublin

Swimming Training - **please contact Leah directly for options 086-0404333**

Running Training will commence at Mulhall's when the evenings get brighter towards

the end of March. Training will take place on Friday evenings from 6pm. Members should be encouraged to practise their running at home or with their local athletic club.

The kids really get behind each other during this challenging run. The spirit of the training lifts everyone, runners and non runners alike and it becomes a fun evening for everyone.

- Shooting Training This will take place in Mulhall's. This year junior and senior boys and girls will use an air pistol. More information on this will follow

- Minimus Weekend Camping ? Can be discussed once we know what numbers we have and what family preferences are.

Volunteers - Parents will be needed to help out in the swimming pool and to mark fences for our own fun minimus. On the xcountry day itself, we need a parent at every fence. We also need parents at the finish with water and sponges helping the children to cool down the ponies appropriately.

#### Team Trials

Minimus - In order to be eligible to compete at the National Minimus Championships 2023, the committee of Carlow Hunt Pony Club requires the competitor to complete a minimum of 2 fun minimus' one of which **must be the Carlow event on 7th May, 2023.**

Carlow Hunt Pony Club will take the final score from the results issued by the host club. If there is a discrepancy in the results achieved at the Fun Minimus Competition it is the duty of the parent/guardian to resolve this before the final results are released.

A record is kept of the scores from all the minimus' and the child's score from CHPC Fun Minimus along with their best score from 2 other Fun Minimus are added together to select teams of 4.

If all team places are not filled Carlow Hunt Pony Club are joined with another club at the discrepancy of the Irish Pony Club to make up teams. The same pony & rider combination must compete at each Fun Minimus Competition. In the event of a pony change the pony rider combination being used for team selection must have completed at least one fun minimus and must be declared for team selection. This must be the pony which is entered at the National Championships.

Note:

The number of Fun Minimus Competitions scores that are used for team selection may change each year depending on the number of competitions being run. The team selection policy will be reviewed following the National Minimus Championships 2022.

Trials are run and scored as per IPC Minimus championships. The score from cross country and the competitors best trial of run/swim is combined to give the riders overall score. Riders will be ranked at the end of the 3/ 4 phases and ordered into teams of 4, or part of a team.

#### Injured pony

The IPC allows a participant entered for the National Minimus Championship to change ponies on production of a vet certificate. If a CHPC member's pony gets injured after the team trials, they can seek to find another suitable pony but they will move down to the final team and as a consequence all team members move up.

#### Do boys and girls compete against each other?

The Minimus Championships is a team competition. It consists of One Overall Competition for teams of four (3 scores count) made up of any combination of boys or girls.

Within the overall competition there are two competitions for the teams made up of all Boys and all Girls.

#### Is there an individual competition?

Yes, all boys and girls on a team are also placed individually. The score they get as part of a team, is also used to make an individual placing. There is an individual boy's competition for ALL the boys taking part and an individual girls competition for ALL the girls taking part. There are also individual placings for the best in swimming and the best in running.

Team rosettes will be awarded from 1 to 20 places.

- The highest scoring team of 4 boys (or 3 boys only – no girl) will be awarded the winning Boys Cup.
- The highest scoring team of 4 girls (or 3 girls - no boy) will be awarded the winning Girls Cup.
- The highest scoring individual boy and individual girl will be awarded Best Boys and Best Girl Cups. Individual placings to 10th place will be awarded.
- Best swim and Best Run for Boys and Girls will be awarded to 4th place.

#### How far do you swim?

You swim for 2 minutes. You get points according to the distance you can swim in this time. You can use whatever style you wish and may change it during the swim. For instance, you can start swimming with the front crawl and then change to backstroke if you wish. You swim in heats and you don't have to be able to dive, you can start in the water.

You score 8 points per metre you swim. For instance, if you swim 125 metres (5 lengths of a 25m pool) in 2 minutes, you will score 1,000.

#### How far do you run?

Boys and girls in the Minimus triathlon run 1,000 metres. The course usually takes advantage of the natural country, with some ups and downs, but not steep hills. Competitors run in numerical order and are dispatched at 1 minute intervals and timed from the moment they leave the start until they cross the finishing line. The faster you run the 1,000 metres, the more points you get. For instance, if you run the distance in 4 minutes, you get 1,000 points (this would be a very fast run). If your time is 5 minutes, you would get 640 points. If your time is 7 minutes, you would get 211 points. (The organisers have a special chart to know how many points are given for each time run).

#### What sort of riding is it?

The riding in the Minimus Championships is cross-country riding over solid fences. There may also be ditches, banks and drops. However, it is scored very differently from other cross country riding competitions such as horse trials or hunter trials.

The course will also include a gate and a slip-rail. The rider must open the gate, go through it, and then close it, **WHILST MOUNTED ON THEIR PONY**. At a Slip Rail, the rider dismounts, opens the rail, goes through, closes the rail and remounts. You are given 60 seconds to negotiate each of these. If you take longer or need assistance, you will be given penalties. Drop down/ Granny stirrups are allowed.

#### How high are the fences?

The fences are

Max height:- 0.80m,

Spread only:- 1.50m,

Height and spread:- 0.70 at highest point, 1.00m at base

### Summary (only) of Minimus Rules.

\*\*\* Please refer to detailed Tetrathlon and Minimus Rules on IPC Website \*\*\*

#### Important things to note are:

If you FALL off you get 150 penalties and 50 penalties for each jump afterwards not attempted

If you get ANY OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE you are ELIMINATED

If you leave out a fence or obstacle you are ELIMINATED

Only SIBLINGS may share a pony.

#### How is it scored?

If you have a clear round in the time allowed you score 1400 points. However points are deducted from this if you have problems on the course. You should read the information on Positive Scoring on this webpage. The following is a summary of some of the penalties.

First refusal, run out or circle at obstacle - 60 penalties

Second refusal, run out or circle of horse at obstacle 90 penalties

Third refusal, run out or circle of horse at obstacle 100 penalties

Therefore, if you have 3 refusals at one fence, you get 250 penalties, but can continue on.

Horse resisting rider anywhere on the course for 60 secs. 200 penalties

Failure to negotiate a hazard in 60 secs. (see rule 25). 200 Penalties

Every completed second in excess of time allowed 2 Penalties

#### Gate and Slip Rail:

- Failure to open and pass through the gate mounted within 60 secs ( see rule 22) 200 penalties
- Failure to shut gate mounted, within the 60 secs allowed, when it is otherwise correctly negotiated. 50 penalties
- Failure to dismount, take down and pass through the slip rail dismounted within 60 secs. 200 penalties
- Failure to replace slip rail dismounted, when it is correctly negotiated. 50 penalties
- Failure to attempt to complete negotiation of gate or slip rail (including shutting / replacing) for 60 secs. 250 penalties
- Receiving assistance to re-mount after the slip rail 80 penalties
- Jumping the gate or slip rail. 80 penalties
- Rider must go back and negotiate properly or is eliminated)

#### Elimination:

- A rider will be eliminated in the following circumstances:
- Omission of obstacle or flag (If this is rectified before the next fence is jumped there is no elimination).
- Jumping an obstacle in wrong order or backwards
- Re-taking an obstacle already jumped (except part of a combination)
- Going around an obstacle without attempting to jump it three times
- Continuing the course without a hat
- 3 refusals at 4 fences or at 3 fences plus failure at gate or slip rail
- Failure to cross the start line within 60 secs.

- Failure to attempt to pass through a hazard for 60 secs
- For misbehaviour
- Receiving outside assistance
- For going wrong side of flag (if this is corrected before the next fence is jumped there is no elimination)
- Inspecting the course before it is officially opened and or tampering with fences or flags on the course.
- Riding a horse on, over or near any part of the course except when competing.
- Jumping a fence which is not on the course on which the flags are crossed.
- If a rider has one fall he is eliminated.

Note:

After three refusals, or after failure to negotiate the gate, slip rail or hazard (within 60 secs.), a competitor will be told by the fence judge to go round and pass on to the next obstacle.

At each obstacle an escape route must be provided to allow competitors to go round as described above.

If a competitor is unable to mount after the slip rail he may receive assistance to do so but will incur 80 penalties.

#### Scoring

1,400 marks are awarded for a clear round within the Time Allowed. Teams with either 3 or 4 competitors will receive a bonus of 100 points if all team members achieve 1,400 points in the cross country phase i.e. a clear round. These bonus points will be added to the team result only. No bonus points will be added to an individual's score on the team.

#### Option Fences

At Minimus, competitors will have the option of jumping an option fence at difficult fences. Should a competitor decide to take the option, a 70 point penalty will occur. A competitor may jump the option after unsuccessfully attempting the main obstacle. Should a competitor first try the main fence, have a refusal and then go on to jump the option, the penalty incurred will be 110 points (60 for the refusal and 70 for the option. Three refusals at either the option or main obstacle will incur the 250 point penalty and the competitor will be asked to move on to the next fence.

Make sure & keep an eye on the calendar of events on <http://www.carlowponyclub.com> for upcoming training & events.

## **CHPC XC TRAINING : MINIMUS/TETRATHLON**

**XC TRAINING** Aim: To equip rider and pony/horse combinations with the skills, experience and resilience to tackle the tests set by modern XC course building.

Open to all members of D+ standard (8yrs) who are jumping 70cms plus

Covers Minimus, Tetrathlon, Hunter Trials and Eventing. Children do not need to be aiming at competition to come schooling.

Good XC riding is such a thrill. Good training minimises risk and maximises the fun.

### MINIMUS

Minimus XC is built to be more challenging than either HTs or Eventing for this age group. At the Championships they will use the full height and width allowance on most fences. They will use a lot of bending lines to fences and make the approach to fences difficult. There will be lots of combination fences and usually at least 2 water complexes. The fences tend to be colourful and well dressed, with unusual decoration. Past examples-plastic sheep, giant spiders, floating Irish Wolfhound!

During their XC round competitors also have to negotiate opening and closing a gate while mounted, within a set time and dismounting to open a slip rail then leading their pony through it, closing it and remounting-also within a set time-to continue on their way XC .

There will be lower scoring "O" options at the most technical and challenging fences. These are smaller, more straightforward fences which riders can take if the direct route is too much for them (at this stage) or if they have been having trouble on course. If a rider has three refusals at a fence/option they will be told to move onto the next fence, they will not be eliminated but will lose points. This does mean that (unlike other XC disciplines) competitors can still go on to complete the course albeit losing points and time. For more precise info on the overall number of refusals allowed please familiarise yourself with this year's rulebook available as a download from IPC website.

Our way of meeting the challenges of Minimus XC is to start early and train, train, train over every kind of fence we can imagine. We get kids and ponies training over as wide a variety of fences as we can, in a variety of venues, terrain, ground conditions and weather.

XC prep this year will start with 2 arena-based trainings(lights) with Sandra Quinn on evenings of Thurs Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> and Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> March. These are not compulsory for children who are hunting or have already competed at Minimus, but they are a great start for the fitness of the ponies and the focus is on control before we go out on the open XC courses. They also give Sandra a sense of who is ready to do what.

Don't worry if your kids aren't up to jumping 80cms at the moment, they come on so much through Minimus training. The main issue is that the pony is capable of jumping 80cms and we get plenty of practice in.

From March 4<sup>th</sup> at Equipark, we then move to appropriate and progressively more challenging XC venues to build rider and pony skills, experience and fitness. There is a provisional calendar of training and competition dates in your packs. Please always check on the calendar on the home page of CHPC website for the most up to date information.

You do not have to get to every training, but especially for 1<sup>st</sup> time kids, or those with new ponies we recommend you get to as many as you can. A list of XC schooling venues and contact numbers is in your pack. If you miss a training or have a problem at a competition at that venue, it's a good idea to book in and have a little school on your own. All CHPC General Rallies before the Minimus Champs will have Minimus training groups and will be used as part of XC training.

## COACHES

Jimmy Dermody is CHPC's Chief Instructor. He gets to approve each competitor for Minimus XC. He is also the King of the Course Walk, and is excellent at having kids set out on a route that is right for them. Hope to book him for the Championships and for one or two of the later trainings so that he has a sense of where the kids are at.

We are very lucky to have Sandra Quinn, Pam Walshe and Debbie Flavin as our core group of dedicated instructors. All of them have been involved in specific training for Minimus and Tetrathlon for us for many years and know exactly



what is required. Any additional instructors are carefully selected for their XC and age group coaching skills.

Once kids have been to a few trainings we will have a good sense of what training they need through the Spring and can advise parents if needed. 1<sup>st</sup> year Minimus or kids with new ponies will probably need to get in as many “flying hours” as they can to gain vital experience. Last Year Minimus and Tetrathlon riders may need to target more specific venues or trainings to refine their skills or iron out problems while preserving pony/horse soundness.

## TRAINING GROUPS

Maximum of 8 riders per group-often fewer depending on need. Children in their last year of Minimus (11/12 year olds) go in one group, Children in their first year of Minimus are grouped together, and a third group covers the middle ground. We will keep this format unless numbers mean we have to change. We try to keep the same trainer for each group most of the time. This gives the kids consistency and the trainer gets to know the strengths and weaknesses of each child and pony, so they are able to help them on the best way to tackle a combination or a water fence, or when to chose an option fence or be encouraged to go the direct line. This also gives you, as parents, a point of contact for advice if things are going wrong.

## PREPARATION COMPETITIONS

HUNTER TRIALS: HT's are fantastic preparation for kids. Most events run a Pre Novice or Pony class which is an equivalent height. For their first couple of hunter trials it is a great idea to do “Pairs” with a more confident child, and then to go around that track in the individual class. Hunter Trials run by Hunts may require you to have your own 3<sup>rd</sup> party indemnity insurance for each equine and to sign a waiver.

FUN MINIMUSES: ARE OF HUGE IMPORTANCE to preparation. They run on Sundays from the end of April to the start of June. CHPC team selection requires that you do 2 of these, one of them must be our own Fun Minimus on 7<sup>th</sup> May. Some kids and families thrive on them, they are long days with early starts, so trying to do too many can be a recipe for burnout. We recommend you pick and

choose. Tetrathletes may choose to use those that have Tet classes as part of their prep.

Instructors have asked that we remind families that for ponies to stay sound and happy to jump throughout the Summer the number of activities (especially jumping and especially if we have hard ground) that kids and ponies do must allow for rest periods too!

## COMPETITION SPECIFIC TRAINING

GATE AND SLIPRAIL: very important to train so that kids are confident. We will try to have both at trainings and rallies to let them perfect their technique. Please also practice at home getting on and off unaided, and opening and closing gates to fields. Without enough practice kids can really panic if this goes wrong and lose their focus on the rest of the course. A drop down/ granny stirrup is allowed if reaching the stirrup is difficult, again, kids need time to practice with this. The Club has one that can be borrowed.

TECHNICAL FENCES: Certain types of fence, the approach to them, or their positioning relative to other fences require specific riding skills. They need planning, conviction, agility and quick responses from the rider and balance, quick reactions and good footwork from a pony that has to be “listening” to its rider. Our XC training as it progresses will include building these skills out on course and if needed, we will set up specific (arena if needed) sessions to work on them.

TROUBLESHOOTING COMPETITION DAY SKILLS: we will also cover

Warming up in a busy warm up area then leaving it to go to the start, then going away from other ponies from the start box to the first fence alone. This is much more likely to go well if pony and rider have done a simulation or two and have had help with a strategy for any problems.

We will also simulate what to do and how to successfully represent if the rider has a refusal or had a run out. Panicky, unthought out reactions cause many totally unnecessary eliminations, or for Minimus/Tet unnecessary loss of points and worse, a spiralling loss of confidence.

Likewise simulating shouting “course” or “Not presenting” is vital for the polite and inexperienced to have the conviction to avoid getting their round messed up by other riders who are having difficulty in front of them.

## PARENTS’ TRAINING!

If you are new to all of this don’t panic! Committee members, Instructors, experienced Minimus/Tet parents and kids will all help you. You are not expected to know everything. Turning up to XC trainings also helps prepare you!

## WE ASK THAT YOU

Arrive with time to tack up and be ready to go by the start time. It may help with a fresh pony to tack up at home and travel them tacked up.

Ensure all riders have HELMETS AND BACK PROTECTORS which comply with current safety rules.

Have rider(s) suitably dressed for weather, and with non-slip gloves if they normally wear them or if it is cold. A lightweight waterproof jacket that fits comfortably either under or over a back protector is a good plan.

Have ponies’ feet (whether shod or unshod) in condition to safely be ridden and jump. If ponies are shod it is worth having your farrier put in stud holes at their next shoeing, so that studs can be put in to help ponies grip when turning or taking off to jump on grass.

Make sure kids are fed and hydrated, especially for evening session.

As the competition season gets underway it becomes really important that parents familiarise themselves with the scoring and penalties system for Minimus/Tet. Above all else so that you can help your children but also for when we are called upon to mark fences, or to watch our competitors at fences to be clear about what happened if there is a fence judging discrepancy.

At every event and training help is needed from erecting the slip rail and gate to literally standing with your arms out to stop overenthusiastic ponies in the early weeks. The younger riders need the most help and the instructor can only be in

one location on course at a time. Having said that, it is also important to not get in the way of the instructor and leave them to get on with the job.

## CONCLUSION

Minimus/ Tet XC schooling is special because of the way the kids come on and “grow”. It genuinely does give them something that they take away into whatever equestrian discipline they choose, and even other sports and other areas of their lives.

## CHPC LIST OF XC TRAINING VENUES

**Equipark** R21TN93: Sian Carson Ball 087616 8537. Please book online.

Enclosed, all weather, 60cms-1m, water complex

**Ballintober** Equestrian Nr New Ross: Luke Grace 0876821117

Semi enclosed track, some all weather, 75cms-1.10m, water complex

**Coolboy** Y14DA09: Mairead O'Hara 0879285188

Track, some all weather, 75cms-1.10m, 2 water crossings

**Frankfort Stud** M11, Frankfort: Will Kearney 0861604802

Seasonal, only open for schooling around events. Open course on grass, slightly hilly, fences very visible. Water fence

**The Field EC** R14X652 book online. Small membership fee required.

Track, all weather, lots of fences 75cms-1m, 2+ water complexes, drains, banks. Avoid peak times as can be very busy.

**Kelly's Cross Country Course** Y34EH01: Tricia 0979175619

Track in woodland, some all weather, 75cms-90cm, water complex, improved warm up area

**Blue Gate Stud** Sheeptown, Kilmanagh, Kilkenny: Louise Lyons 0834045859

Seasonal, large field on grass, 75-90cms, water complex, some combinations

**Fenlon's Curracruit** Bagenalstown, Carlow: Martin Fenlon 0872317756

Seasonal, open, hilly. 75-1m Drains, banks, water crossing but no water complex.

**Forth Mountain** Y35YP57: 0876211073

Seasonal, mix of track and field, footing can be cut up. 80cms-1.10m. Water complex. Good 90cms plus for Open/Senior HT practice

**Wexford EC** Y35T635: 0863902309

All weather large arena, 80cms-1m, Good water complex and combination of fences. Best suited to 90cms and above for technical training

**Devil's Glen Equestrian** A67AX76 : 0868034291/ 0862658048 Danny Miley

Mix of open grass, track and woodland, 75cms -1.10m lots of banks, water complex and combinations. Beautiful!

**Greenogue Equestrian** Rathcreeden Co Dublin: Book online. 0838120301

Allweather derby arena, 70cms-1m, banks, coffins, water complex. Good for technical training for upper levels

**Ballinamona EC** Kilbarry, Waterford: 0872417107/ 0876847752

Open, undulating, Eventing Ireland grass course 80cms-1.10m.

**ONLY AVAILABLE THROUGH CHPC RALLIES/ or VENUE'S UNAFF. COMPETITIONS**

**Lisgarvan** Ballon, Carlow

Open fields, grass, Eventing Ireland Course, 80cms-1.10m

**Blackstairs**

Only available after EI ODE.

Open fields, hilly, Eventing Ireland Course, 90cms and above only.

**Bunclody, Newtonbarry House**

CHPC only. Mix of flat grassland and steep woodland. 70cms-1m. Water.

Venue for CHPC Fun Minimus and Redmills Eventing Qualifier 2023