

PBCH PACKING CLINIC OUTLINE

SAT, Oct 10th - Dalton City Hall

Topic: Horse Packing Clinic

Title: The Zen of Horse Packing

Overview: Many trail riders love the idea of packing their camping gear onto a horse for an epic trip into the backcountry. Then they're dazed with the mysteries of the diamond hitch, overcome with tales of remarkable wrecks, and been told that packing is a dark art that takes a lifetime to master. Don't believe it.

Basic packing skills are easy to learn. Years of mastery of the art, though a worthy goal, isn't necessary for a safe, enjoyable trip up the trail to your backcountry camp.

Join me as we discuss what you need to know to make your dreams a reality.

Clinic Outline:

- AM - class room
- PM – hands on

AM Session:

Discussion

PM Session:

Hands on packing skills practice with equipment

1 - Beginning

Fully loaded pack saddle with hard boxes – double diamond hitch

This is how we pack now – Works very well for what we do at this point. We didn't start this way. Our packing style has evolved and is continuing to evolve.

Overnight to over a week

WA – MT - OR

Pasayten – Bob Marshall – Eagle Caps – Norse Peak - etc

2 – What we take

Regardless of how you carry your camp we all need more or less similar camp equipment for the basic essentials of food, water, and shelter. Let's take this rig apart and talk about all of the items we carry and why we carry them.

Rock bags – keep in pommel bag

1st aid kit – Know how to use – Talk with Vet abt prescription meds

Manti tarp – cover saddles – rain cover – makes load more solid

Highline kit – first thing needed

Hard boxes – makes packing easy

Inside boxes - Each box is labeled with list of contents and weight

Tent - Ground pads - sleeping bags - tarp

Water filter - collapsible bucket

Human food – equine food – nose bags - Bear barrel - bear regs are real and growing

Stove kit

Manure fork

Shovel

Hygiene kit

Chairs

Horse grooming tools

3 - Types of pack saddles

This is a modified decker pack saddle

Other Types of pack saddles include:

Decker vs Sawbuck

Sawbuck Pros vs cons

Decker Pros vs cons

Best of both – Modified decker

Importance of tree fit – adjustable vs rasping

Cinches – single vs double - Shape of belly

Tips on tying cinches – tie low

Pads – pad hobbles – dog collar stay

Rigging – leather vs synthetic

Importance of rigging fit

4 - Is your animal ready to pack?

We didn't have pack saddles when we started packing. We used saddle panniers that went over a riding saddle.

Saddle panniers – good first – inexpensive option - just make sure they'll work with a pack saddle for when you want to progress.

It's not “just a pack mule”

Ride and pony or walk and lead?

How well does it lead?

Ground work

Practice at home

The education of Minning and Cocoa

Ropes and tarps

Being ponied

Empty panniers

Noisy light panniers

Weighted panniers

Backyard Trip

Once you and your animal are ready for a pack trip take one in the back pasture before you go further afield.

Have your first “yard sale” in the back yard not 20 miles into the wilderness.

2nd Half – hands on – tying loads

Demonstrate 2 methods of tying double diamond – Traditional – Ringed double

ERRATA – Points to go Over

Saddles & Equipment

- Types of pack saddles
 - Decker vs Sawbuck
 - Sawbuck Pros vs cons
 - Decker Pros vs cons
 - Best of both – Modified decker
- Importance of tree fit – adjustable vs rasping

Cinches – single vs double - Shape of belly

- Tips on tying cinches

Pads – pad hobbles

Load Planning

- Weight and volume balance

Hauling Cargo

- Panniers make things simple – hang and go
- Saddle panniers – good first – just make sure they'll work with a pack saddle.
- Soft pannier bags - inexpensive
- Bear boxes vs Hard pannier boxes – bear regs are real and growing
- Manty loads – very versatile
- Top pack
- Use of manty to cover load

PACKING CLINIC - EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Iron Mules

- Demonstration saddles Sawbuck , modified Decker – No rigging other than cinch
- Cinch - keep saddle on steel mule
- Bear Boxes – shipping / storage /
- Saddle pannier – example of soft panniers
- Manty tarp
- Top pack
- Rope / lashing - demonstrate traditional rigging vs simplicity of hanging bags

Basic packing skills are easy to learn. Years of mastery of the art, though a worthy goal, isn't necessary for a safe, enjoyable trip up the trail to your backcountry camp.