

Hunt Seat Equitation Challenge

Hunter judge and trainer Patrick Rodes gives advice on this hunt seat equitation challenge.

Q. I used to do well in my hunt seat equitation classes, but my new horse has a really bouncy trot. It's fine when I post, but I have trouble holding my position during sitting trot. If I slow my horse down so I can sit quietly, I get lapped by other competitors. Do you have any tips on how to camouflage the way my horse's gait affects my position?

A. Some horses naturally have smoother gaits than others. The sitting trot can be very difficult on some horses. Not knowing how old and how well trained your horse is, I would work on getting him as trained as possible. Work on lots of transitions from walk to trot (sitting and rising) and to the canter (collected and forward). The more collected and balanced you can get him the better off you will be.

I would not be concerned if people are passing you by. If they are lapping you they are going too fast. One thing that may help is to stay on the inside track of the ring. Then it will appear that you are moving at the same speed as others. Also, in flat classes, show off the things you do well, such as the canter or posting trot, and be more discreet when doing the sitting trot.

Learn more about Hunter expert Patrick Rodes >>

Further Reading
Sitting Trot in Style