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Many of us have our horses schedules relax during the cold months, making maintaining physical fitness and reaching goals a challenge. During this time it is

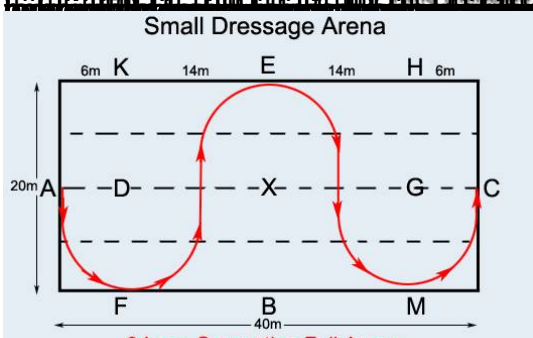
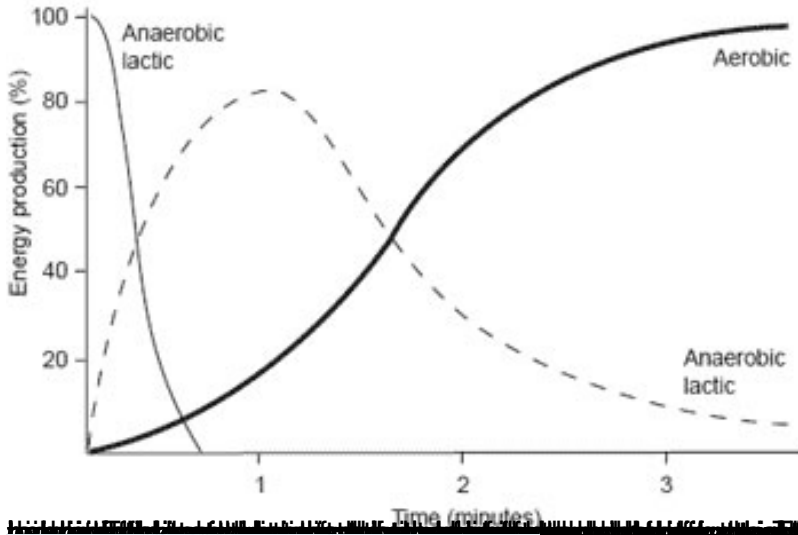


important to remember the key facts in maintaining and gaining condition without causing injury or sickness. Starting a fitness program after an extended holiday needs to be done with a few things in mind.

The basics of a conditioning program should be centered around your goals as a rider and be specific to your horse. There are many factors to remember when designing your program and many professionals available that can help you with this. The extent of your training specifics should alter with your horse's age, sex, breed, discipline, competition schedule, terrain and weather conditions.

It becomes especially important in the colder months that our program is catered to the weather. Including a proper structure to work for each day allows your horse to remain healthy. Regardless of the type of exercise that will be performed, the daily workout starts with a warm up, progresses to schooling or conditioning exercises, and ends with an active warm down followed by a cooling out period. The warm up is an important part of every exercise session; it is the gradual increase of exercise that facilitates the body from rest to work. An effective warm up will decrease the chance of injury and help enhance performance whilst delaying the onset of fatigue due to the increase of oxygen delivery to the muscles. This results in less lactic acid production during the workout.

# Conditioning in Cold Weather



Work the horses slow to increase progressively exercises should be leading to the specific type of



