

THE FAMILY MAN OF FRECKER'S SADDLES

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ELECTIC HORSEMAN



MARTY MARTEN BENEFIT CLINIC
PHOTOS AND REPORT

THE ROLE OF THE SEAT AND
LEG BY WENDY MURDOCH

FROM REACHING TO
TURNAROUNDS WITH BUCK BRANNAMAN



EST. 2001

1 : selecting what appears to be best in various doctrines, methods, or styles

2 : composed of elements drawn from various sources

1 : a rider or driver of horses; especially, one whose skill is exceptional

2 : a person skilled in caring for or managing horses

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On the Cover: Mindy Bower on Chase at the Uh Oh Ranch, east of Kiowa, Colo.

An Eclectic Mission: *Our mission is to bring "Just What Works" information to a knowledge-hungry public. We will create and present only ideas and techniques that work with and educate humans about the nature of the horse.*

Contributors



Martin Black

Martin Black is a 5th generation Idaho rancher and 4th generation rodeo competitor. He has a lifetime of experience in handling horses, cattle and roping. In his youth there was a strong influence of the California-Spanish style of horsemanship. Learn more at martinblack.net.

Buck Brannaman, a phenomenal cowboy and clinician, has traveled the United States and Australia conducting colt starting, horsemanship, cow working and ranch roping clinics. He has authored the books *Groundwork*, *The Faraway Horses*, and *Believe*, and has produced many educational horsemanship videos.



Buck Brannaman

Bonnie Brindle is a psychotherapist, educator, and NARHA-Registered Instructor in private practice in Boulder County, Colo., and chair of NARHA's Equine Advocacy Committee. She brings Wildlife Imagery Therapies™ to the general public, as well as anxiety and stress management skills to horse owners, therapeutic riding centers, and corporate team-building groups. She can be reached by email at souloffthewild@msn.com.

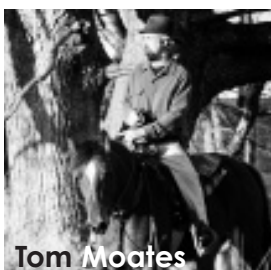
Cheryl Kimball has written several horse books, including *Mindful Horsemanship* and, her latest, *The Complete Horse*. She is working on her next horse book, *How to Get the Most Out of a Horse Clinic*, which will be published by Carriage House Publishing as soon as she ever finishes it.



Bonnie Brindle

Tom Moates chronicles his introduction to horses in his just released book *Discovering Natural Horsemanship, A Beginner's Odyssey*. He lives in southwestern Virginia, on a solar-powered farm, with his wife, Carol, along with three horses and a mule. Learn more at tommoates.com.

Wendy Murdoch has taught riding internationally since 1987. She trained with Linda Tellington-Jones in 1985; she has trained with Sally Swift since 1986, and apprenticed with her in 1992. Her book *Simplify Your Riding* has been such a hit, it's already in its second printing! To learn more, visit her Web site at wendymurdoch.com.



Tom Moates

Doreen Shumpert has had a lifetime of experience in the horse industry—including showing, judging, training and instructing for Western and English events. Shumpert graduated with a technical journalism degree from CSU in 1996, and has served as a managing and associate editor for several equine publications. An accomplished freelance writer, Shumpert received an AQHA Steel Dust Award for excellence in journalism for a story that appeared in *Horse & Rider* magazine. Shumpert lives in Berthoud, Colo., with her husband, Dave, and children, Sean, Megan, Codi, and Bailey.

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The Marty Marten benefit clinic held October 14-15, 2006, at the Last Resort Equestrian Center was an overwhelming success.

"When one of our own goes down it's nice to know that there is a big support group there ready to lend a hand," says Amy LeSatz, clinic organizer and clinician.

Amy, who has been friends with Marty since the 70s, felt the need to hold a fundraiser to help with recent medical expenses. Once the clinic date was set, it happily grew beyond expectations.

There were 44 riders who participated in the two day clinic, over 105 silent auction items and used tack donated, including a filly from the Diamond Double T ranch in Longmont. The cattle were donated by Val and Pat Hall; the BBQ was fully funded by Chris Monfort and Kenny's Steak House with over 75 folks attending that. Live music was provided by Liz LeSatz. The use of the facility was donated in full (down to the port-a-potties!) by Jim and LuAnn Goodyear of Last Resort Equestrian Center. We had around 20 volunteers that helped with the project or in all honesty it wouldn't have gotten done.

In all, over \$35,000 was raised, three times the original goal, and a community came together to help Marty, someone who has given so much of himself over the decades he has been involved with horses.



Rub the Hair Off 'Em

by Martin Black

The way we catch our horses can reflect a lot about our understanding of them and their outlook toward us. If we could only see through their eyes at how they look at us, how they interpret our actions, we might be a lot more considerate of their reactions.

Based on previous experience, genetics and environment, different horses may react differently. They all have their own level of self-preservation. Part of their self-preservation instinct is to be suspicious of man and other predators. This is why when a horse's head comes up and his eye is higher than his withers he is on the alert for the predator. We may need to identify his action for what it is, offer the horse a more non-threatening approach and not trigger his suspicion or fear.

Personally, I don't like to use treats to chum them into being caught or intimidate them by threatening gestures or hitting them over the rump to convince them there is a greater evil. By this I mean they only accept or tolerate us because we

have made the other options more painful or fearful. Although we may need some restrictions or a treat in the introduction in order to get close to them, I would prefer to be able to convince them that they can get a good feeling from my presence by rubbing and scratching them. Most any horse will have dead hair or itchy skin that will feel good to them when we scratch it. Light, gentle petting will not accomplish this on a suspicious horse. A light touch might tickle, scare or annoy the horse whereas a firm rubbing or scratching in the right place will be well received. Like when we want our back scratched and need someone else to help us out. If that is what they associate our approach with next time, they will welcome us and we won't need a treat or have to intimidate them.

Regardless of how we get our hands on them, we can accommodate them by rubbing them where the flies pick on them and they have a hard time defending themselves, like their bellies, under their jaw, their chest or scratching other hard-to-reach places like their mane, withers, windpipe and around their face. All of this can help us to become a useful friend to our horses without the need of a treat or a type of confinement.

This is a large part of why one horse will bond with another. There is no relation to any nutritional, hormonal, or protection of being in the herd, only the good feeling the other horse can offer by scratching the other horse's itchy spots. We can offer our horses this same comfort anytime, anywhere, and we don't need any special equipment to do it.

If the horse learns to relate our presence with getting rubbed and not any discomfort that may go along with getting caught, he can have good thoughts relating to our presence. But if the experience of fumbling a halter around his sensitive muzzle, eyes or ears makes a more lasting impression, he may not look forward to the next experience.

When we rub them with our hands and they lean into our hand, if we stop and step back and leave them when they are wanting more, they will be left with a better impression than if we rub them until they have had enough and leave us when it is their idea. We want to leave them with their idea being that they want more of us.





From Reaching to Turnarounds

with Buck Brannaman

Most of your horses are used to operating like a wheelbarrow; they run their hindquarters around the front as they move. Horses that operate that way are prone to stumble, and if they continually carry that much weight on their front end they will end up lame long before they reach old age. As we work toward fine horsemanship, one portion of what we are developing is teaching our horses to distribute their weight more evenly over all four feet. The following exercise is one of the most fundamental ways to help a horse to engage his hindquarters.

It might seem to be all about the front quarters, when you are teaching a horse to turn around, but what is really happening is your horse is learning to put his hindquarters up underneath himself so he can un-weight his front end and move it more freely. To start with, this exercise will be very difficult because your horse is most likely used to bearing so much weight on his front quarters. By systematically winding your horse down before asking for the front, he will learn to bring his hindquarters forward for support so that the front is able to be directed.

Because we are building a direct connection from the reins to the feet, hand position is extremely important, especially so in this exercise. Before you work at this, you and your horse should be comfortable taking his head around and moving the hindquarters with a bend in his neck. Remember, as you take your horse's head around, there will be a line from your hip to your hand to his ear. This position is important to remember because as you go to move your horse's front quarters, you will need to change your hand position to make it clear to your horse.

When you are ready, you will start by walking a lively 20-25-foot circle. Your inside hand will time up with your horse's inside front foot and reach to set it in and forward (see *The Reaching Exercise*, *EH* #31). Think about there being an imaginary line in front of your saddle horn that runs perpendicular to your horse's spine. In the reaching exercise your hand stays in front of that line because you are setting your horse's leg in and forward around the circle. In this exercise, you are going to systematically bring your hand closer and closer to that line, then finally behind the line, at which time your horse should stop moving forward, "lock down" his hindquarters and reach his front quarters for at least one step. When your hand is in line with your hip bone (not on your hip bone, as that would be telling your horse to move his hindquarters), this is the signal to

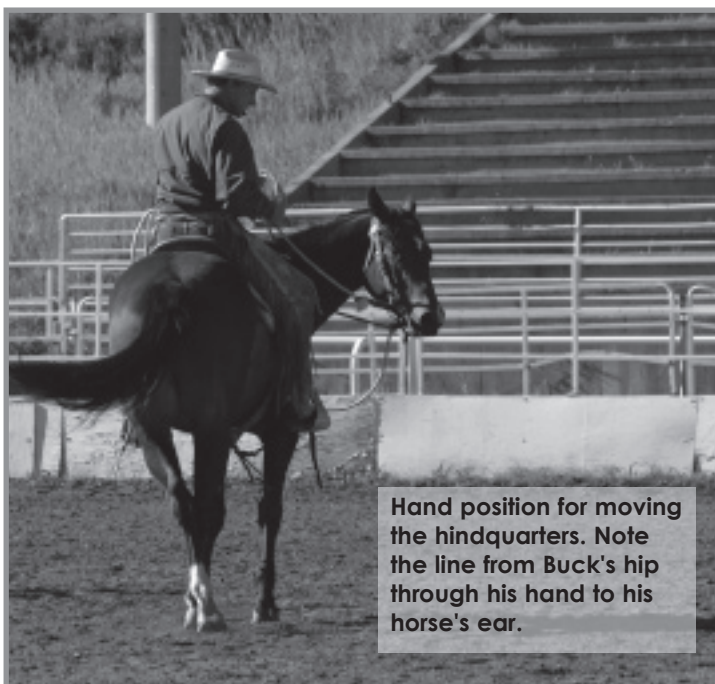
him to stop his forward progress and take the first step of what someday will be a turnaround. Then you would release. Your horse will get relief for shifting his weight to his hindquarters and taking that turnaround step, and soon he will start hurrying to get there. Building on that will develop a proper turnaround. Don't back your horse, but walk forward out of it in the same direction you were walking in before, walk for a little way, then start again.

If your horse is really heavy on the forehand and used to operating that way, he might not follow your hand with his foot when you set it behind the line. Just hold and wait; don't pull too hard. Just keep lifting back behind the line with your rein until he follows that feeling. On a horse like this, when you lift on that final step, lift as if you were lifting an anvil and hold. You aren't making him take the step, but you won't release until he does. If you set your horse behind the line and he doesn't follow with his body, you might need to use your outside leg, a little kick up by the elbow, to send the front across. There you are just reminding him to follow that leading rein no matter where it goes.

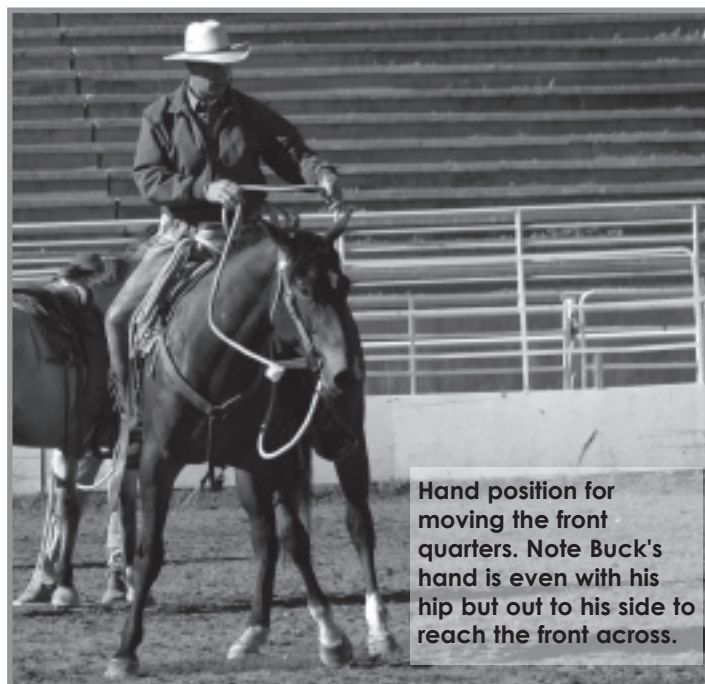
The mistakes that you are likely to make are in your timing, hand position, or weight. Remember, you cannot move a foot when it is on the ground, or on its way to the ground. You can only direct it when it is at the apex of its path. If you try and move the foot when the horse is standing on it, your horse will over-flex and the hindquarters will wash out because that will be what is available for him to move. If you try and direct your horse as his foot is already on its way to the ground, your horse will seem to get worse and worse because you are tripping him. Pretty soon he will tell you he's had it with your bad timing. Your weight will not be static in this exercise. You will let your body be in time with your horse's weight as he reaches. Don't lean in the direction you want your horse's foot to go; that will have the opposite effect you are looking for. Keep all four fingers wrapped around the reins. Holding your reins like you are going to tea and crumpets doesn't mean your horse is light. Don't let your hand creep up by your chest; remember you are asking your horse to follow the feel of your rein and land under your hand. I'm not sure how he would follow your hand up there, or why you would want that.

Remember you are picking your horse's foot up and setting it back, not dragging it across. The exercise should follow this rhythm: reach, drop, reach, drop, reach, drop, hold (until the hindquarters stop and the inside front reaches back under your hand), release and walk forward.

Know Your Imaginary Lines



Hand position for moving the hindquarters. Note the line from Buck's hip through his hand to his horse's ear.



Hand position for moving the front quarters. Note Buck's hand is even with his hip but out to his side to reach the front across.



Walking forward in a circle or reaching the inside foot forward and in, your hand should be in front of the imaginary line that runs in front of the saddle horn and perpendicular to the shoulders. Knowing the difference between this hand position and the one below is key to this exercise.



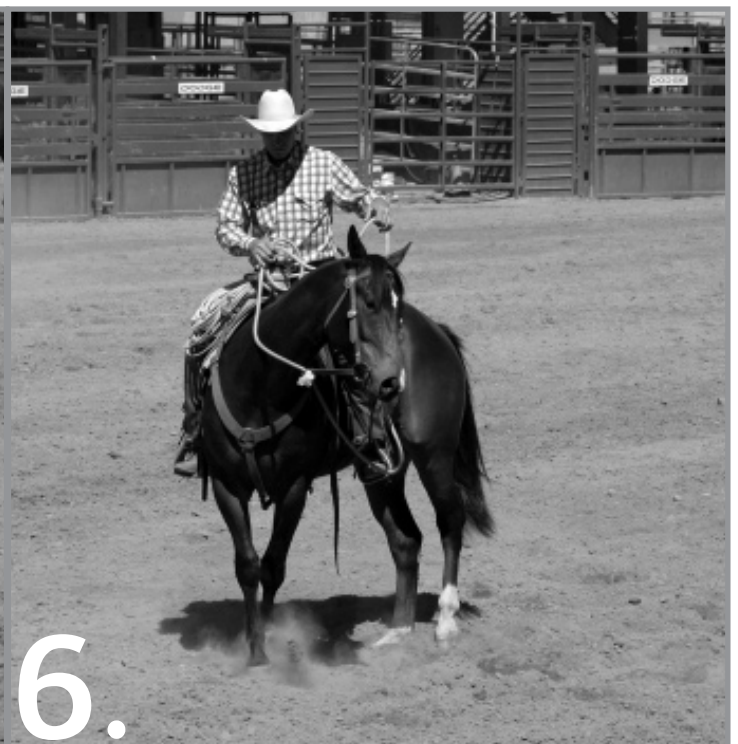
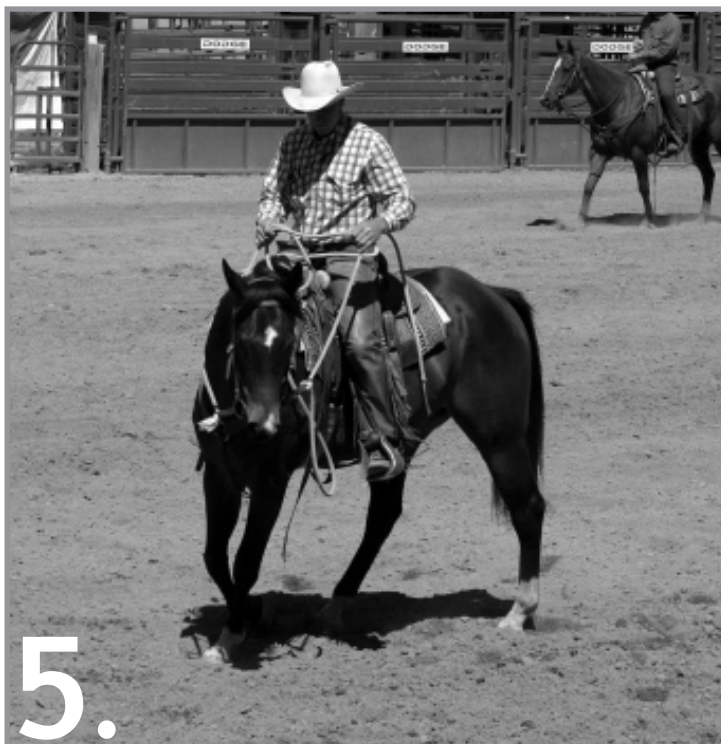
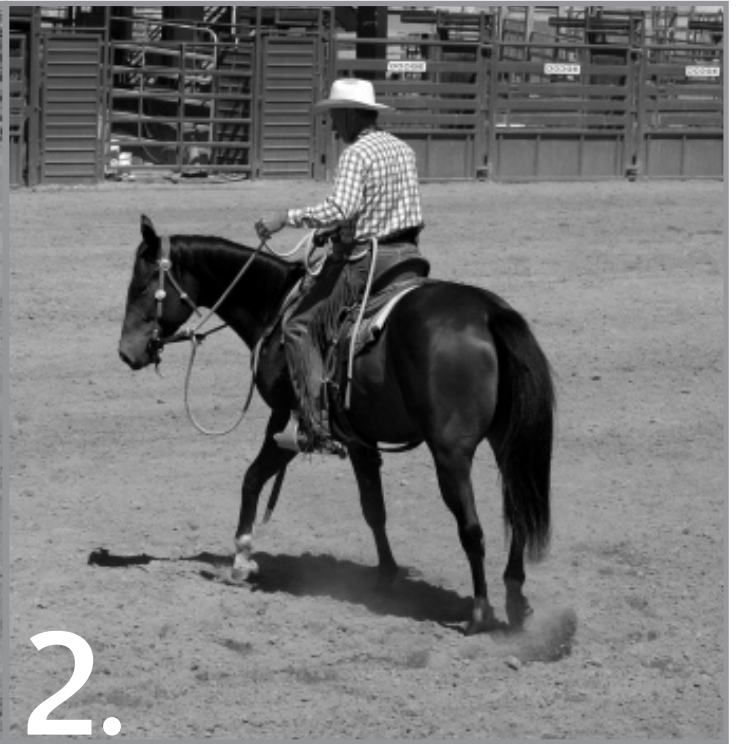
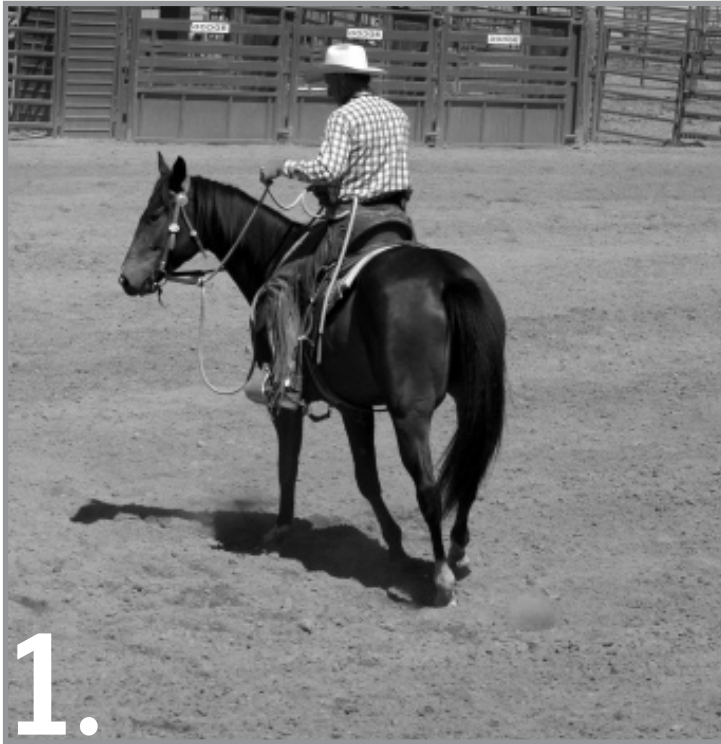
Here you can see Buck's hand has crossed behind this line and now his horse's hindquarters have stopped making forward progress and his left front leg is preparing to reach underneath Buck's left rein as he sets it out and back.

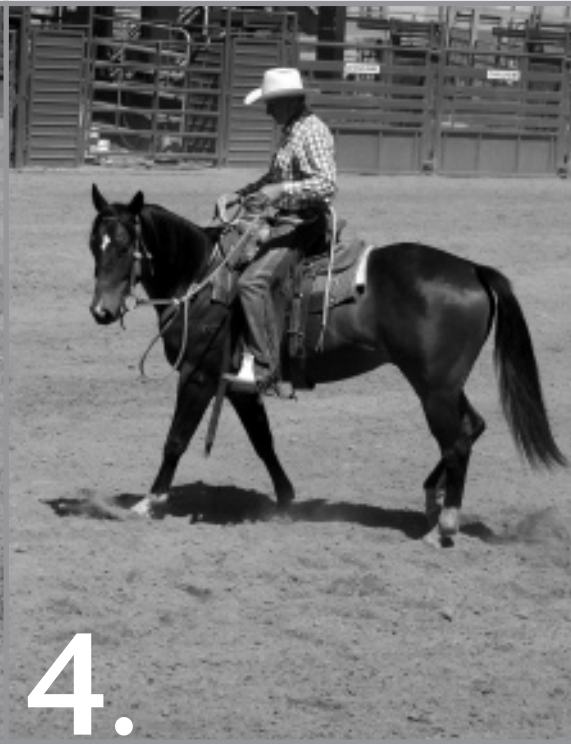


If your hand is in the correct place, you should be able to let the "line" of the inside rein (right) continue on into space and have it intersect the outside (left) hip.



Tools for Refinement





As I walk a circle to the left, I will think about an imaginary line running right in front of my saddle horn, right over the top of my horse's shoulders. I will start this exercise by reaching my horse's inside front foot to the inside of the circle and ahead of that imaginary line. I'll time up with the foot, reaching it as it is weightless, then releasing as it reaches the ground. After each reaching step I will systematically move my hand back toward the line 10 degrees at a time. When my hand crosses the line, I will hold, and his inside front foot will no longer be reaching forward, but reaching back, following my hand. This causes his hindquarters to cease tracking forward around the circle, and to bear more weight as he takes the first step of what will someday be a turnaround. I will help with my outside (right) leg and make sure that my inside (left) leg is back out of the way so that I'm not unintentionally preventing him from reaching his inside front foot back under my hand. For now, once I get that first step I would release. Once you can consistently get one step then you can build. Remember to taper your circle down, smaller and smaller. Don't try to get to the last step too quickly; give his hindquarters time to get into position under himself.

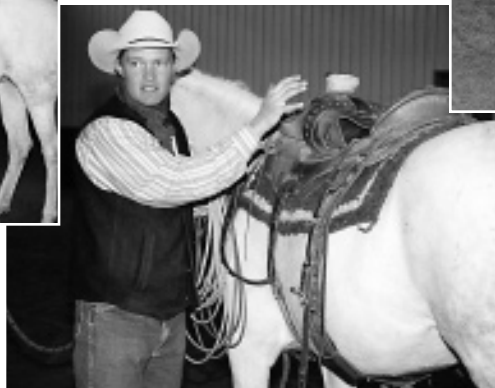


Tomorrow's Horsemen

Katelyn Riley learns to sort.



Introducing a loop from the ground.



McCann discusses saddle fit and the importance of safe, strong, appropriate gear for roping.



Rian James prepares to divide the herd.

Owl Canyon Vaqueros: Ridin' Ropin' and Ranchin'

LuAnn Goodyear promotes a new breed of 4-Hers through introducing Vaquero traditions and natural horsemanship.

by Doreen Shumpert

The Clinic

Nestled inside the protection of LuAnn Goodyear's indoor arena outside of Fort Collins, Colo. during the first cold snap and snow of the year last October, part of the next generation of buckaroos gathered for a daylong clinic on the basics of cattle sorting and ground and ranch roping. Called the Owl Canyon Vaqueros, the 4-H group is led by Goodyear, with her goal being to update age-old 4-H rules for the benefit of kids and horses alike.

The clinic was instructed by Goodyear, who serves as the Larimer County 4-H Horse Program Coordinator, and Tyler McCann, a San Antonio, Texas ranch cowboy with a diverse background ranging from competitive jumping and ranch horse competitions to riding with other horsemanship masters.

Beginning the day, McCann introduced the basic ground roping tech-

niques of how to hold the loop, coil the rope, swing, deliver, and some basic shots to throw at the roping dummies. Some kids had roping backgrounds, but others took their first swing at it—figuring out it wasn't as easy as it looks. Hats hit the ground, and Goodyear and McCann spent some time unraveling figure eights in loops. However, by the end of the day, everybody was getting pretty handy with a rope.

After sore arms were rested and hot chocolate was downed, McCann introduced some basic horsemanship patterns to the kids, explaining certain elements—like a good stop and turnaround—were essential to working cattle. Next, equipment, ropes, and dallying and basic logging were all shown and discussed, with plenty of questions from kids and parents alike.

In the afternoon, the kids were introduced to basic cow work techniques and got to try their hands at holding the herd,

riding through and splitting the herd equally, and the basics of reading and sorting cattle.

Not coincidentally, through it all, they learned the necessity of teamwork through a few escaped cows. They also learned priceless horsemanship concepts by watching a timid horse or two be eased through the herd by following an experienced horse, versus spurring, kicking and trying to force the matter. They also learned you "can't cut 'em off by chasin' 'em"; you have to be up by the shoulder and eye, and slower speeds and angles work the best.

Participants included Dan Rhyan (11), Leandra Pfizenmaier (12), Amy Fisher (14), Rian James (9), Olivia Klinzmann (12), Conner James (12), Cody Moncrief (10), Bailey Neiberger (10), Theresa Fisher (16), Ashley VonRiesen (16), Katelyn Riley (10), Easton Hunter (10), Zach Hooker (10) and Jessica Golden (10).



The kids learn to form a rodead.

Takin' shots at the dummy.



Zach Hooker learns about wrist motion.



Ashley VonRiesen and Amy Fisher work on coiling.



Bailey Neiberger learns to hold a loop.



Drivin' 'em to the barn.

A New Vision for Horse 4-H

Anyone familiar with the horse 4-H programs across the nation is aware that they have been instrumental in keeping Western heritage alive and in training some of the best horsemen and -women in the world.

Goodyear agrees, but she also sees room for change, progression and adaptation of decades-old rules—such as senior-level horses (over age 6) being required to ride in curb bits. According to Goodyear, that rule originated in Texas years ago because if a young horse would work in a curb bit, he would bring more at auction. But she doesn't think the rule should always apply to youngsters learning to ride—such as a 13-year-old beginner on a 15-year-old horse—because that child wouldn't have the advantage of knowing how a snaffle or a direct rein feels.

"Once they do, they could go from there," she said. "Why can't lower-level riders have the option of showing in whatever they're comfortable with and skilled in, with the option of progressing to a bosal or two-rein in levels three and four?" she pointed out, continuing, "particularly when some kids are still riding in harsh curbs or mechanical hackamores and they get into trouble. The parents are yelling, 'One rein! One rein!' and there's no give to the horse."

"I'd like to see the rules apply to a kid's ability, not just primarily focus on the age of the horse," she added. "It goes back to education. Go a little slower, advance a little quicker."

Her involvement with horse 4-H began almost by necessity about five years ago. A 4-H club had asked for permission to

use her arena for their practices. After observing good-hearted parents trying to help their children since the leader didn't show up, Goodyear couldn't resist stepping in to help—especially after she heard one mom say, "Your horse is being really quiet, so don't walk over that log and scare it!"

"I couldn't stand it any longer," she laughed. "So I worked with the kids, and they soon asked me to be their horse leader."

Thus, the Owl Canyon Vaqueros was formed, and Goodyear says she's got her dream job of combining a passion for both kids and horses. Plus, she sees a prime opportunity to introduce families to natural horsemanship.

Her own introduction came around 1993 when she says she was "in way over her head" with a horse, and received a Buck Brannaman video from a friend.

"I said, 'Who is this man, and where is he?'" she recalls. "The first clinic I attended was at the C Lazy U and I rode with Buck. I realized I was still in over my head with that horse, so I made a trade and came home and started working with one of my older Arabs because I felt safe and could learn something."

Since then, she's ridden with top hands like Bryan Neubert, Peter Campbell and Joe Wolter, and she tries to stay as close to that true style of horsemanship as possible.

Now, with the introduction of ranch versatility competition into 4-H, Goodyear sees the perfect opportunity to encourage vaquero traditions of horsemanship, and strives to "make adjustments of the rules to allow for encouragement and education of true horsemanship."

HOU LIHAN HORSE GEAR

Frecker's Saddlery

Reserve Your Saddle for 2007

Now is the time to get a new saddle from Frecker's Saddlery! Kent Frecker, will not be taking on any new customers and Dave Rigby has a two-year wait list, but HHG customers you are in luck... eight saddles will be built for Houlihan Horse Gear this year, reserve yours today! A \$500 non-refundable deposit is required on all saddles. (For more information on Frecker's Saddlery, please see the article starting on page 14.)

Available in February:

- Dave Rigby light-weight half-breed (tooled and rough-out), 15 1/2" seat, with 4" Monel stirrups and all stainless steel fittings. \$4,100

Available in April:

- Kent Frecker Buck Brannaman half-breed (tooled and rough-out) 15 1/2" seat. \$4,300
- Kent Frecker Buck Brannaman rough-out 15 1/2" seat. \$3,850

Five more spaces available, more customized options available on the four saddle styles (listed at right), such as seat size and fender length and more if you order before the reserve date. Please call for more details.

- Dave Rigby - June Delivery - Reserve by March 1
- Kent Frecker - August Delivery - Reserve by May 1
- Kent Frecker - August Delivery - Reserve by May 1
- Dave Rigby - October Delivery - Reserve by July 1
- Dave Rigby - October Delivery - Reserve by July 1



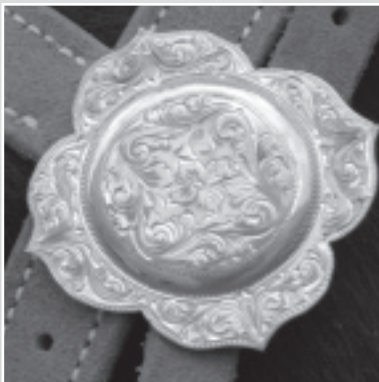
Saddle Styles:

Light-Weight Wade Tree Saddle (28-30 lbs.)

- half-breed (tooled and rough-out) \$4,100
- rough-out \$3,500

Buck Brannaman Wade Tree Saddle (38-40 lbs)

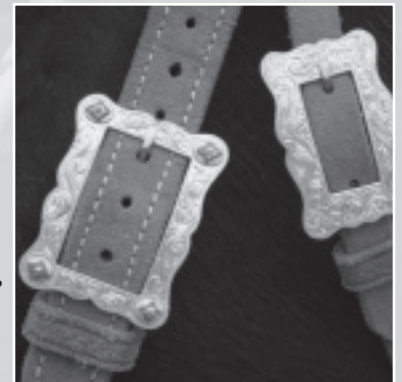
- half-breed (tooled and roughout) \$4,300
- roughout \$3,850



Gary Wiggins

Signature Collection

For those of you who know that looking good is second only to riding good... you just can't go wrong with our signature Gary Wiggins concho and buckle set on a roughout Kent Frecker headstall. Set is engraved sterling silver. Each set includes a pair of square low-dome bridle loop conchos, a pair of 1" square bridle buckles with gold flower rosettes, and a throatlatch buckle. All on a handsome 1" rough-out headstall. **\$775**

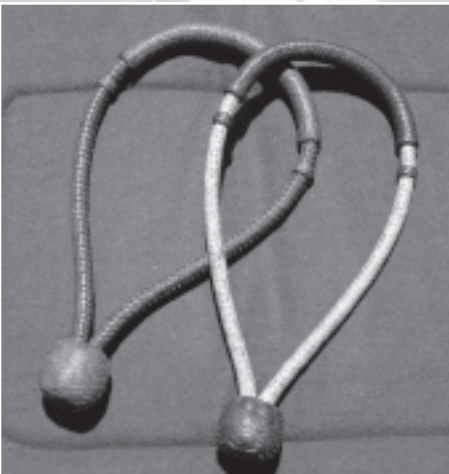
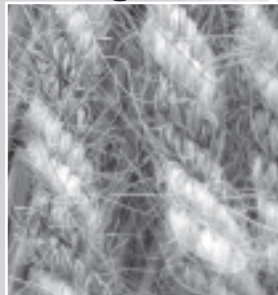


Doug Krause Mecates

Made from mane hair and available in a variety of color combinations. Current inventory is pictured in color at houlihanhorsegear.com or call and we'll describe them to you.

Currently in stock:

- (1) 1/2" 6-strand 24' **\$172**
- (6) 3/8" 4-strand 22' **\$84**



Hal Steele Bosals

Handsome 1/2" bosals, 8-plat with kangaroo leather nosebands and buttons. Choose from rawhide/black or latigo/brown. **\$225**

Double Diamond Halter Co.

Parachute Cord Mecate 12-strand

These are the finest braided parachute cord mecates available on the market today. Made from 12 strands of military-style parachute cord braided over a nylon core, the 9/16" square rope fits well in your hand and can be held comfortably along with your lariat. It comes with a gaucho knot on one end and leather popper on the other. This mecate comes in 22' length for use with a snaffle bit. Available in black, white, black/tan, tan/burgundy, black/white/grey, or tan/green/brown. **\$145**

Parachute Cord Mecate 8-strand

This is the same quality mecate as the 12-strand mecates, but in a 1/2" square rope. Braided with 8 strands of military-style parachute cord, it affords strength in a convenient size for smaller hands. This mecate comes in 22' length for use with a snaffle bit and comes with a gaucho knot on one end and a leather popper on the other. Available in black, white, black with tan tracer, black with brown tracer, brown with tan tracer and green/tan with white tracer. **\$130**

Crossover Curb Strap

A perfect curb strap for the snaffle bit, these are cut from 5/6 oz. weight Latigo leather, and feature dyed edges. Attaches to bit with a slit & crossover tie. **\$10**

Nightlatch

This 1" x 22" 9/11 oz. leather strap goes through the saddle gullet hole and around the swell of your saddle. It is used as a hand hold when riding colts. **\$15**

Break-away Honda

Practice your roping safely with a plastic break-away honda. **\$12.50**

Slobber Straps

These slobber straps are straight cut with natural edges. They are made out of skirting leather and measure 1 1/4" wide and 8" long. They feature a molded groove at the fold to hold the bit. **\$20**

Bucket Hanger

The perfect stocking stuffer for all your friends! Assorted colors. **\$8**

Halter and Lead

The Brannaman collection halter is 6mm in diameter with nylon core and a 16-strand nylon cover. The smaller diameter gives the horseman greater control and response. The knot on the end of the tail allows you to slip the halter over the horse's head without untying the halter. Comes paired with a 12' white treeline lead. Available in black, copper, tan, sage green and burgundy. **\$50**



Flags

Get right to work with this high-quality flag. Constructed out of a steel whip antenna, with a custom-grip handle and durable stitched nylon flag in bright colors. **\$58**



Jeremiah Watt Snaffles

The new dealer-authorized imports from JWP are in. These eggbutt snaffles are 5 1/4" wide. Choose stainless steel, or blued with a sweet steel mouth and copper inlay. **\$70**

Hagel's Cowboy Gear

Latigo Bosal Hanger \$24

Chin Strap with Buckle

In colors to match working or classic headstall. **\$13.50**

Slobber Straps Available in colors to match your working or classic headstall. **\$25**

Working Headstall

Available in a variety of leather colors with stainless steel hardware. **\$85**

Classic Headstall with Conchos

A touch of class on a handsome leather headstall. **\$130**



The Family Man of Frecker's Saddles

by Doreen Shumpert

If you've got
your eyes
on one
of Kent
Frecker's
custom

saddles, get in line. For a long time. Try until about 2016 because that's how long he's booked out as far as making you one with his own two talented hands. Pretty impressive for a business previously stationed in the cellar, car trunk, back rooms, and a converted milk barn. These days, it's a successful custom saddlery in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

On right: 7X mixed-flower tooling wade with antique finish with matching martingale. Made by Kent Frecker





Frecker cuts out tree bars with a bandsaw and angle jig. The trees are made from yellow poplar for the bars and cantle, and the fronts are laminated baltic birch for added strength.

It all started for Frecker as a boy living not too far from grandpa's place. Grandpa started horses the old way—by snubbing them to a post, sacking them out, saddling them in the round corral, driving them from the ground, then getting on—all in a short amount of time.

"It wasn't much like Buck [Brannaman] does it," he laughed. "Those horses would go crazy snubbed to that post and rear when grandpa sacked them out," Frecker recalled. "But I would ride my bike over there and get on my Shetland pony and watch him."

Fast forward to high school. After graduation, Frecker got a job at Smith and Edwards [western store] in Ogden, Utah, and became a jack-of-all-trades.

"I made headstalls, strap goods, and saddle bags. Then I became manager of the western department and did everything from order greeting cards to shaping hats all day," he said.

He also became interested in the saddle shop there, and started hanging out with the saddle maker and slowly collecting some tools of the trade—both literally and mentally. Combining those with a little confidence, Frecker started his own little leather shop in the cellar of his house. Little did he know that tiny space in the cellar would give rise to something huge.

"About four years later, we moved up the canyon a little further to Huntsville," he continued. "It was more rural with lots



After carving, shaping and treating all the parts, the saddle is draped in rawhide which is ultimately trimmed and stitched to the saddle.



The trees are then shellacked to protect the rawhide from moisture, and ready to be made into saddles.

"It was pretty tough at first," he recalled. "I didn't make a lot the first couple of years and we almost sold everything we had. Then I got a call to manage a tack department at a store in Idaho Falls, where I could set up my shop in the back of the store."

Three years later, that fell through, too, when the store was sold. But where the family was currently living, there was an old milk barn out back. Not for long; it became Frecker's next saddle shop.

"I would make a saddle, and just hope to sell it," he said. "I got to the point I had three of them made and no leather left. They didn't sell. So I loaded them in the car, drove them around

of horse people, and they wanted saddle and tack repair."

By this time (1989), Frecker was already toying with striking out on his own anyway. He was still with Smith and Edwards, but leaving his growing family, including three kids and one on the way, for a weekly life on the road as a salesman wasn't remotely what the devoted family man wanted.

"The main reason I got out of there was to be with my family," he said. "When the kids were little, we had a deal. When they got home from school, they had to come out to the saddle shop and tell me one new thing they learned in school that day. Then they would get to pick a treat out of the treat bowl," he shared. "They would come to dad's shop first thing and they looked forward to it and that was so rewarding for me. I like being a dad and family man, and it's really special being a grandpa," Frecker proudly added.

However, every cloud has a silver lining they say, and the underlying advantage of the travel for Smith and Edwards was the opportunity to meet, talk with and observe some of the best saddle makers in the business. But it didn't hold a candle to missing the wife and kids, so Frecker decided to go it alone.

Profiles in Craftsmanship



to stores from Boise to Twin Falls and up to Montana. I ended up selling all three and coming back with 50 orders.”

Just like that, things exploded. Frecker was making saddles wholesale. But soon, he started getting better clients and retail buyers. And one day, who should wander into the shop but noted saddle maker and cowboy artisan Dale Harwood. He liked Frecker’s work, and wanted him to help make saddles that Ray and Carolyn Hunt could sell at their clinics. It was a golden opportunity, and Frecker was soon under the tutelage of Harwood who wanted to be positive each saddle Frecker built was just like those that he (Harwood) produced.

“Dale went over every saddle I made with a fine-toothed comb,” Frecker laughed. “He would even measure the stitching distances. He provided the material, approved each one, then Carolyn would sell them. That worked well until Ray had his lung operation and they weren’t on the road,” Frecker explained. “But Buck Brannaman had heard about me and wanted to do something similar. I made Buck a saddle, and from there it’s been good. Mary [Brannaman] has sold a lot of them, and we keep slots on the waiting list open for them each year.”

“It’s been good” is an understatement. Clients include Buck, Mary and Reata Brannaman; Curt and Tammy Pate; Ray and Carolyn Hunt; Shayne Jackson; Roland Moore; movie star Tom Selleck; and many repeat customers each year.

But with so many well-made custom saddles on the market, what’s the attraction?

Frecker believes there are two main things that set his saddles apart—his handmade trees and the unique ground seats stemming from them.

“I got into making my own trees through Dale Harwood as well,” Frecker said. “I was getting trees from a man named Lennis Arave, then Dale wanted Lennis to make trees for him too. So Lennis went to Dale’s and learned to make trees just like Dale’s. But pretty soon Lennis couldn’t keep up, so he taught me,” he explained. “I’ve built them for about seven years now, and I can build them exactly how I want them with consistent quality.”

The consistency is a key element in the ground seats—and ultimately the uniqueness—of Frecker’s saddles.

“We give them lots of thought and riding, and one of the first comments we usually hear from a buyer is how balanced and close contact the seat is, and how they feel more in control of their horse,” he explained. “How the ground seat turns out

and rides has to do with the design of the tree. I don’t do a ground seat like anybody else—not even Dale Harwood.”

Frecker said he gets the most pride and satisfaction from customers that tell him they love their saddles. He finds that kind of feeling hard to explain, similar to the joy of riding a rig you made yourself. He gets to do that as he attends as many of Buck’s clinics as possible, and as he starts a few quarter horse colts a year for himself, a few Fox Trotters for his father-in-law, and a few mules. He finds the differences between the equines perhaps as intriguing as saddle making.

“A horse reacts out of respect and learns to stay out of your space,” he said. “But a mule has to have more trust and love for



Frecker’s intricate attention to detail, displayed in custom tooling on the cantle.

you or he just won’t respond. You can’t make mistakes; if you do, you’re done,” he continued. “They don’t forgive like a horse, and they are sure more accurate kickers,” he laughed.

Meanwhile, back at the shop, Frecker can’t take any new customers, but the good news is he’s got some promising apprentices. One of those, David Rigby, already has a two-year waiting list. The other, Steven Genetti, is currently working side by side with Frecker and is “starting to produce a good saddle.” Those will be on the Web site when possible, but Genetti isn’t taking custom orders yet. Your best bet to get your hands on a Frecker saddle is through Houlihan Horse Gear www.HoulihanHorseGear.com.

For more information on Frecker’s Saddles, please visit freckerssaddlery.com call 208-538-7393, or e-mail saddles@freckerssaddlery.com.



THE ROLE OF THE SEAT AND LEG

—OR HOW I GET MY HORSE TO GO FORWARD

by Wendy Murdoch

Recently I have come across a number of students who think that the seat is all that is required to make their horse go forward. This is an admirable goal and can be seen with a finished horse, one that has had years of consistent training, muscle fitness and conditioning and a clear and consistent trainer. However, the majority of riders wishing to achieve this fail to recognize what goes into creating a horse trained to the seat.

Many of these riders have read, heard or been told that the horse should go forward from the seat only and that no leg is required. Most of them are on horses that are hollow-backed, high-headed and not going forward to begin with, which will

make the goal of going forward from the seat alone almost impossible to achieve. Using only seat aids on a hollow backed horse is like sitting on a chair with your feet off the floor. All your weight is driving into your horse's back, which will inhibit his ability to use it correctly and can often make him sore. Therefore, I would like to dispel some myths about the use of the rider's leg and seat and hopefully set riders straight on a course of achieving the goal of a light responsive horse that requires a minimum of aids to go forward.

FREE FORWARD MOVEMENT

First I want to explain the idea of going forward. Simply moving

is not necessarily going forward.

Many a horse will move if the rider massages his back with a pumping action of the seat. Often, however, this type of movement and forward movement are not the same thing. Susan Harris, in *The United States Pony Club Manual of Horsemanship Intermediate Horsemanship C Level*, gives a good clear description of free forward movement. (By the way, the USPC Manuals are an excellent source of good, easy-to-understand information about the rider's aids and overall horsemanship.) "In free forward movement he [the horse] is willing to move forward easily from a light leg aid, and he uses his body well when he moves. A pony that lacks free forward movement might act lazy, stubborn, or reluctant to move; or he may move with short, 'sticky' strides." Ms. Harris continues to describe a horse in free forward movement as "not fast but long even strides, using his hindquarters, back and muscles freely with each stride. It also means that he wants to go forward and to do what you ask but is calm and relaxed about it."



Notice how solid Fran's leg is on the horse. She has contact throughout the inside of her entire calf and part of her thigh. She is very well balanced over her legs, and both horse and rider are going "forward." If Fran needs to use her legs to give an aid to her horse they are right where she needs them, no adjustments necessary. This will result in well-timed, accurate aids when charging down to a big cross-country fence.



Maybe a good way for you to relate to free forward movement is to think about the last time you went out for a walk or easy run. At first it might have been really hard to get motivated to get off the couch and leave your favorite TV program. But you finally get your shoes on and head out the door. The first half mile or so you are still thinking about the TV program you are missing, all the things you need to get done that evening and maybe even the problems at work, home or school that are nagging you. In other words, you are not focused on the job at hand —walking.

Then after about 10 minutes or so you begin to find that your arms are starting to swing easily, your stride lengthens and your breathing finds a rhythm. A little later on you are moving quite easily, with very little effort and you are beginning to enjoy the walk. After about 15 minutes you are thinking how great it is to get outside, the fresh air, the scenery, the ease of your stride and you have completely forgotten about the issues that plagued you at the beginning. You are now in free forward movement!

Your body has warmed up and the muscles are getting oxygen because you are working at a pace that is easy yet striding out well. You might even find you spontaneously want to jog or run for a little bit. You are now "on the aids." Your body is responding well to your wishes. You could run for a bit, drop back to the walk, keeping that big swinging stride and then run

a bit again. The only limitation now is your fitness level, which might demand you do more walking than running. Over time, however, this will change, and jogging more frequently will also become easy.

When your horse is reluctant, stubborn or lazy, it is like you sitting on the couch wanting to watch your TV program instead of going for a walk. Sometimes you have to give yourself a "kick in the rear" to get you out the door. This is also true of the lazy horses. As long as there is no pain causing the laziness or reluctant attitude, such as a poorly fitting saddle, it may be necessary to use stronger aids (a quick sharp kick, a rapid tapping of the leg or even a quick flick of the whip) to get the horse's attention that you mean business. However, if your seat or your hands are blocking the horse from moving forward, they will inhibit the desired result and the horse will have a reason to complain about your disagreeable aids.

If the horse is happy to march onward, the number of aids required to maintain free forward movement can be minimized. This is just like when you were warmed up on your walk and you felt like breaking into a bit of a jog. It is easy to move if the entire body is well prepared, warmed up and the horse is happily engaged in the process of going forward.

What are the aids for forward movement?

A search through the literature will tell you that the aids can be

SIDE TO SIDE, OR FORWARD AND BACK?

I often have riders tell me that they want to "move with the horse," "follow the horse's movement" or "not interfere with the horse's movements." I tell them that I would rather direct the horse's movements and then follow when the horse is going my way.

What do I mean by direct the horse's movements? Have you ever had a really good dance partner? I know this analogy has been used ad nauseam but it really does apply! A good lead dancer can make me look like a million bucks on the dance floor. I took two years of private ballroom dance lessons to learn how to follow (not take over) and feel what it was like to have a good lead. It was amazing! I felt supported, directed, guided, relaxed, and secure. When I had a bad dance partner I felt uncomfortable, I wanted to leave the dance floor or have the dance end quickly and definitely did not feel confident in my partner. Many times the poor leader would throw me around or not recognize how sensitive I was to his signals!

The analogy of the good dance partner is the same when riding. I want my horse to feel supported, guided, and

relaxed because he knows he can trust where I am guiding him through my aids. Also I want to help the poor moving horse learn how to use himself more efficiently. To do this I have to control the movements in my seat, as it has huge impact on the horse's ability to use his back correctly. The most efficient and least damaging posture for the horse is to carry the weight of the rider with the back and withers raised. Further, while the rider needs to receive all the movements from the horse (not stiffen or become rigid), she needs to filter out that which is a productive movement from that which is not productive.

Many riders get caught up in the idea that they want to follow the horse's pelvis or hind feet. The more they follow the better or more fluid their movements meld with the horse. I prefer that riders sense and feel where the hind feet are i.e.: feel the up and down, side to side and forward back directions that the horse moves but not get caught up in it. In other words, you are not sitting on the horse's pelvis. You are sitting on the horse's back and the function of the back is to transmit the power of the hindquarters through the back moving the entire horse forward. If you get caught up in the side-to-side movement of the horse's pelvis and hind legs you will not assist the back in transmitting the push forward to the head. Instead you will encourage a side-to-side swing of

categorized by their function. Whether it is Western or English, different books describe slightly different categories, but they pretty much boil down to this:

- The forward aids are the leg (primarily the lower leg), whip and spur.
- The restraining aids are the reins, to tell the horse to slow down or stop.
- Turning and/or bending aids are weight aids, when combined with leg and rein.

So where is a seat aid in this description and what has it got to do with asking the horse to go forward? The seat aid is rarely described as a separate aid in the literature and yet it seems we hear so much about it. If you listen to Arthur Kottas, former 1st Chief Rider of the The Spanish Riding School, he always talks about “the seat, the weight, the rein and the leg aids.” Clearly the seat has something to do with how well the horse responds to our aids; the question is how.

I have spent many years studying and wondering about the importance and effect of the seat. In my teaching I talk about how the “seat sets direction, the legs are the accelerator and the rein limits the forward.” How much and when these different aids are used depends on the horse you are riding and whether it is an impulsive horse that needs to be held back or a lazy

horse that needs to be encouraged to go forward. While there are times when the aids are used together for a combined effect, the action of the individual aids remains clear.

SEAT SETS THE DIRECTION

I think of the rider's seat as the key to the direction the horse moves, forward, backwards, or laterally. In addition the seat holds the key to achieving the tempo (speed) and length of stride (long or short) I want the horse to take. How? I do this by regulating the movement of my pelvis and torso, my seat.

When a rider is sitting in a solid position (see my book *Simplify Your Riding* or my DVD *Simplify Your Riding – Ride like a Natural Part 1*) the pelvis is aligned with the rider's back. The rider cannot be pushed or pulled out of position. The seat bones are pointing downward and ever so slightly forward (rather than backwards). In addition the pelvis is level. It is critical to say that the level pelvis, which, while difficult to feel and maintain, is essential to good function of the seat aids.

If you sit with one seat bone lower than the other you will pivot around one seat bone or continually drop off to one side of the horse. This will inhibit the ability of your pelvis to move in a forward direction with the horse. Sensing and feeling when your pelvis is level is worth the effort if your goal is to have your horse move forward from your seat alone. Without a level seat

the horse's rib cage, which will prevent the horse from lifting the back and stabilizing the spine to propel himself forward in free forward movement. Think of it as having a great engine but no transmission to deliver the power to the front end.

To test this, find a friend. Have them get on their hands and knees. With your friends back dropped, gently apply pressure with your two hands on either side of their spine just behind the shoulder blades. Notice how this puts her on the forehand. Ask her how this downward pressure feels.

Now have the person on all fours lift and slightly round her back. Again, at the same time, apply pressure on each side of the spine with your two hands. Notice how much stronger the back is. You will be able to apply a lot more pressure with no ill effects.

Now with equal pressure on both of your hands, move your hands simultaneously forward and back. Go gently with small movements. Notice that the person on the ground will move forward and back. You might even be able to cause them to take a step forward.

Next begin to apply pressure downward alternating side to side between your two hands so that your friend's rib cage begins to swing. Can the person on the floor move forward or are they thrown sideways? Most likely they will sway side

to side. You may be able to get them to start crawling forward but the movement will be lumbering, heavy and down and they will not willingly lift their back.

When you keep your hands level and even moving forward simultaneously, your friend will move forward following the direction of your “seat” (your hands). This forward direction will allow the horse to lift the back rather than drop it, making it easier for the horse to carry your weight. You will be a lighter, kinder dance partner as a result.

Finally, you are not sitting on the horse's hindquarters. While you may sense and feel the side-to-side movement, you want the back to act like the transmission in your car and deliver the power to the front end. Therefore, you want to receive the push from each hind leg and direct it forward with your seat. There are two ways the horse can make space to advance the hind leg forward. One is swinging the rib cage side-to-side; the other is lifting the back. While many horses generate a lot of side to side swing in their ribcage when they walk, it would be better to diminish this movement and encourage the forward direction instead. A forward movement of the seat will help the horse lift the back rather than drop it. Remember you want not only to encourage movement but good movement so that your partner will enjoy your lead.

you will have to resort to wiggling or pumping with your seat to get your horse to go. While he might move, it will be almost impossible for him to move freely forward as described above.

Using the seat to set the direction for the horse is a very small movement! If I can see it emphasized, then the rider is probably doing too much because the horse did not respond. In other words, when the horse is listening to the seat the slightest indication will be received and obeyed. But if I see the rider pushing, pumping, or massaging the saddle, then it is clear to me that she needs to decrease the movement in her seat (as it hasn't worked or I wouldn't see it!) and use her leg to get the horse to respond. Hence the legs are the accelerator.

LEGS ARE THE ACCELERATOR

Generally, my rule of thumb is if I can see the seat aid, it hasn't been obeyed. If a horse is "on the aids," which means he is moving freely forward and listening, then he will respond to small indications from the rider. The immediate response is what makes the aids seem invisible – just like turning on a light switch. If the light goes on, you don't keep trying to flip the switch up over and over. But if the light is burned out or you have lost electricity to your house, you might flip the switch several times "just to make sure."

If I see the rider trying too hard with her seat (no response from flipping the switch the first time), it is time to put the power back to the light switch so it can work. Powering the switch is the job of the legs, more specifically the lower legs. How strongly you use your leg, the way you use your leg, and the location depends on you and your horse. Every rider and horse is slightly different. However, the bottom line, to quote Mr. Kottas again, is "use what you need, no more, no less."

When the legs are used as the accelerator, I am referring to both legs used at the same time. How strongly and in what way is dependent upon your horse. At first, this may take some experimentation to figure out. Some horses respond to a light hug, others to taps. Horses that have become dead to the leg will need convincing that they should move forward. A sharp quick kick might be in order. Those horses that have really lost sensitivity to the leg will require a skilled application of the whip behind the leg. How much or how little cannot be written about in an article. This is something you have to experiment with and judge for yourself given the horse you are on and the response you receive from your request.

Only you can determine how much or how little leg you need. I often see riders using too much leg on a sensitive horse. The riders give a sharp quick leg aid and the horse startles instead of moves off quietly. Other riders don't use enough on a dull or lazy horse. How strongly and the manner in which you use your leg aids can change not only from day to day but quite quickly within a single ride. In fact, if you have used your aids effectively, you will discover that you need less and less as your

horse becomes increasing sensitive to your leg aids.

If you are riding a dull, heavy school horse that has been nagged daily and become dull to the leg, your leg along the whip might be needed to get the horse to pay attention. A word of caution here: When using your whip or rope, especially on a horse that is not responsive, make sure you give the horse sufficient rein so that you are sending only one clear signal – go!

Pulling on the rope or rein at the same time as using your leg, whip, spur or rope would be like stepping on your car's brake and accelerator at the same time. You could wind up spinning the wheels. At the least you could confuse your horse, at the most he might strongly object to your poor riding and let you eat some dirt!

If you are concerned about your balance or worried about hitting your horse in the mouth (or nose with a rope halter), then grab a piece of mane or a neck strap to make sure you aren't punishing him for doing what you ask. I prefer a long dressage whip to a short bat or rope. The reason being that I can make a moderate leg signal followed by a quick accurate movement with my whip. It takes a great amount of skill to swing your rope without shifting your body weight and time it within 3 seconds after you have used your legs. More than 3 seconds and the horse will not associate the leg with the rope or whip; therefore, timing and accuracy are critical.

By now I can hear readers thinking – "I wouldn't use a whip!" "I don't want to hit my horse!" "I don't want to kick my horse to make him go!" Well, the bottom line is if you don't establish a boundary in the beginning, you will always be trying to find ways around the issue.

I am not talking about beating your horse with a stick. There is a difference between a well-timed, quick tap with a whip and a lashing. Worse is the person who won't put any kind of assertion behind the whip. Then the whip or rope becomes just another nagging attempt to coerce the horse instead of setting a definite boundary. Clear, objective boundaries are important for horses, dogs and children. They allow the individual to know where they stand and take away the anxiety produced by ambiguous or mixed signals.

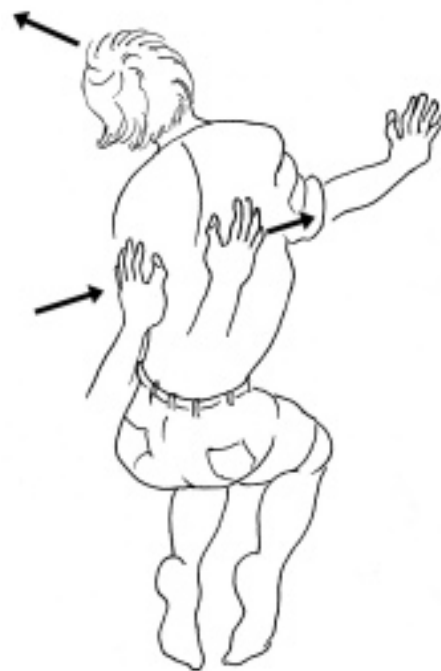
If you have ever trained a puppy, you will know that if you don't establish your boundaries in the beginning, you might not wind up sleeping in your own bed in a few months. However, once established, it takes little to maintain and provides certain comfort to everyone involved. Most often the whip is needed because someone has dulled the horse to the aids by unconsciously banging on his sides with her legs. As a result, the reschooling necessary requires reestablishing the meaning of the leg aids.

Ms. Harris has an excellent description of schooling your horse to light forward leg aids on page 15 of the C-Level Pony Club Manual mentioned earlier. I will not repeat it here, as she has done such an excellent job of describing schooling the

With equal pressure on both hands, move both hands forward simultaneously. Go easy! See how little pressure you need to move your "horse" forward slightly.



When pressure is applied alternately left and right (right hand sending the rib cage of your "horse" to the left then left hand sending the rib cage of your "horse" right, you will get a swinging action in the rib cage. The "horse's" head will generally move in the opposite direction of the rib cage. In other words, using alternate pressure of your seat left and right will cause the horse to swing the rib cage side to side, which causes a "waddling" effect resulting in a decrease of forward motion.



horse to the rider's leg. The process includes definite (not harsh) correction when the horse doesn't respond and praise when the horse does respond, along with timing, which is the key to all good training.

Waking up your horse to the leg requires good coordination and timing. Remember the goal is to have the horse responsive to a light signal. Constant nagging with your leg will only make the horse more dull and unresponsive. This is also true when using the whip, stick or rope. Some people use spurs, but I prefer to use the whip on a dull horse because using the spur can cause the rider to turn the heel in and block the seat's ability to go forward with the horse when he offers to move.

INGREDIENTS FOR A LIGHT, RESPONSIVE HORSE

So how do we arrive at achieving a horse that goes forward from the seat only?

1. Your horse has to willingly have free forward movement in order for him to respond to a seat aid only.
2. The leg aids ensure the horse moves freely forward using both legs simultaneously in the manner and intensity that works best for your horse.
3. If your horse does not respond to light leg pressure or taps, you may need to make him more responsive to the legs by schooling him to the leg aids (see C-Level Manual USPC, page 16). Please note: if the horse becomes worse instead of better, look for pain issues such as a poorly fitting saddle, a sore back or

a very crooked rider, which may be inhibiting the horse's ability to respond appropriately.

4. Lengthen through your spine in preparation to asking the horse to move forward. This will slightly lighten your seat and make a space for your horse's back to come up underneath you.

5. Apply your leg aid as you direct your seat forward (not sideways) for the horse to move forward.

6. Maintain consistency with the manner in which you ask the horse to move.

7. As your horse becomes more responsive to the aids, he will require fewer leg aids. Make sure you are listening to how much or how little you need each time you ask your horse to go forward. Promptness is essential.

8. If your horse is not listening, go back to step 1. How long it takes to move through this process depends on fitness, health, pain, comfort, consistency and attentiveness of the rider. Some days will be better than others. However, overall you should see continued improvement in your horse's response to your aids if you stay objective and be honest with yourself.

Remember the seat directs the forward movement but doesn't create it! The legs create the forward, which is received by the seat to be directed where you want the horse to go. If your horse is listening, then the leg aids become less and less until it is simply lengthening through your spine and directing your seat. And remember, you can make yourself (and your horse) crazy with this stuff if you get too intense. Give yourself a break and enjoy a trail ride every now and then so that your riding remains something you and your horse enjoy.



Trotting Circles

by Tom Moates

I had managed to log quite a bit of saddle time on my mare, Sokeri, lately. The rides were good. Tacking was going smoothly. I was able to mount these days from the ground, fence, or tailgate without issues. And, while we as a team still no doubt lacked finesse, we had traveled miles of fences together checking for trouble, and gotten through quite a few obstacles in this mountainous farm land of the Blue Ridge without wrecks or major hassles. I even got her willingly stepping up onto a big stone flight of steps at the front of our house, a feat obviously way more exciting to me than my wife, Carol—who told me so (something about horses not belonging on porches...I forget exactly how she put it). Since then, I've decided stepping up onto stumps in the woods is an all around better idea—and we even had this trick down to a fine art by this point.

Getting from the seriously awkward situation of being a rank beginner, to that of a horseman who can at least begin to work through some problems on his own, was where I found myself then. A kind of horsemanship adolescence. I might call it: being just a tiny bit beyond “knowing just enough to be completely dangerous” with the Better Way with horses. Or, at that point where I can keep track of more than just one single thing at a time when riding. Or, better yet, at the point where I can reach into the horsemanship toolbox, pull out some bit of learned information, commingle it with some experience, and actually work through something with my horse in an original way once in a while.

On this particular day, I saddled Soke (she gets called “So-kay,” for short) for a ride in the afternoon. It was a fairly decent fall day. I never need a reason to ride. I love to just saddle up and see where we get to in our relationship on any given day. It seems, however, to help us both when I do have some kind of purpose in mind when we set out. The night before, we had endured 4 inches of rain and stiff winds, so I figured we had better check on a few fences as we traveled, so I had a focus in mind.

The tailgate was down on the truck, so I hopped up there. She came along beside it, and I slid easily over into the saddle. Once settled in, with my feet in the stirrups, I picked up the reins and initiated stepping off at a walk.

I planned on staying at an energetic walk; she had other plans and began to trot.

A day earlier, a seed had been planted in my brain which sprouted at that instant. I've done a fairly decent job of pestering clinician Harry Whitney in the past year, and there are more times than I can count now where his teaching has gotten through to me. It has happened both on the spot in his presence, and on time-delay where something he said or did pops into my head at just the right moment much later. This time was no exception, although his words came to me in an unusual way, via the

Internet. I was looking on his website (www.harrywhitney.com) to check on some writing of mine getting posted there, when I came across a clinic report from 2001 by Beth Anne Doblado. It drew my attention for some unknown reason. I opened it and my eyes scrolled right on down to one particular quote she had of Harry's: “When riding, at any step you should be able to ask hind end to step under and front end to step over and walk out in a circle, all 4 feet moving equally.”

At the time, I registered the idea simply wondering if I could do it. Now, on Soke—me walking in the saddle, and her trotting beneath it—the idea of just going into a circle came to mind, initiated from the memory of that quote. I steered her right.

As I said earlier, I've gotten beyond the point where I can only keep one single thing at a time straight in my head with my horse. This is one of those multi-tasking instances. I had about nine thoughts going at once, and really the whole deal just happened as a real knee-jerk reflex instantaneously. The nine thoughts went like this (try to read them all at once while riding for the proper effect):

- the little booger is taking off on her own, • does she do this much, • well, actually yes, idiot, she does, • right, true...usually I haul back on the reins and block her forward motion forcing her to slow down, don't I, • guess that must not really work too well since I'm looking for a walk still, three years later, and she's still trotting, • hey, I read that thing Harry said last night, let's just try to turn and circle, • you think trotting a tight circle will throw you off and break your neck, • I doubt it, I'm hanging in this saddle no matter what, • hey, guess what...if we go into a circle every time she trots when I want us to walk, maybe....

Before I got that last one fully formed, she was tired of trotting that little circle I'd sent us into, and came down to a walk.

I released the turn and let her go straight. She walked about five strides then broke into that trot again.

I bent her over into a circle, to the left this time, kept her there for about one and a half revolutions, at which point she brought herself back to a walk and I let us move on straight at that exact instant.

We went through the same walk-a-few-strides-then-go-to-trotting thing again. Then, on the fourth trotting circle trip, she was getting upset. As we went into the circle she threw her head around, then lowered it, and I could feel in her body we were really close to going to the rodeo. I could tell she was aggravated about these circles which were messing with her plans, but before expending the effort it takes to buck, she tried slowing to the walk. Voila, she got to go straight.

That seemed to be the point at which everything changed. She quite suddenly settled into the rhythm of the walk I was look-

ing for, but seemed content about it. Harry is always asking, “How does the horse feel about what is going on?” When she was wanting to break into a trot, she was searching for a way to alleviate some worry going on inside of her. She was not completely okay with our situation, and was seeking to trot away from it to find a better feeling spot in herself.

All the years of our work together, and I still could not just slip onto my horse and walk without her expressing this trouble inside her. Her determination to trot wasn’t bad enough that I couldn’t make her straighten up and fly right at the walk if I wanted to—that is what I had been doing. But, that obviously never solved the problem. Now, quite suddenly, I had a horse that felt very different as we walked on. And this was only ten minutes into the ride.

The difference in this new approach I took, looking at it closely after the fact, I realize is based in what I had gleaned from Harry’s teaching in several instances. It has to do with truly giving a horse choices. Before, when I insisted Soke walk, not trot, by hauling back on the reins, I was forcing the issue. Even by timing releases on the reins perfectly to the desired transition, this particular horse felt no choice in the matter. She was bothered and let me know it by wanting to move her feet faster. By blocking those feet with the bit, sometimes even stopping her completely, and even backing her up at times, I was taking a bothered horse wanting to flee and doing the worst thing possible—blocking her feet, and trapping her in a slow pace or a stop. She could not diffuse her anxiety because in her mind (“from the horse’s point of view,” as Harry says), she had no choice in the matter, and I, the evil wrongdoer who just didn’t appreciate her opinion, was trapping her in this miserable situation.

In the new trotting circles situation, I realized we could have a conversation about this wanting to take off deal in a completely different way. The circles were my input. The beauty of this new deal was that I in no way blocked her forward motion. When turning her, I was very careful to use only the absolute minimum pressure necessary for the turn, keeping as slack a rein as possible. I in no way regulated her speed, which remained completely her choice. I only steered our direction.

It seemed to me now that Sokeri had never really cared where we were headed anyway. Moving her feet fast, wherever we went, was her deal. In this new situation, she could trot all she wanted to, it just had to be in a circle. Apparently, trotting a circle isn’t really all that great for the horse because it took very few of them for her to decide she’d rather walk. I was never sure this would work out right; indeed it was so spur-of-the-moment, there was no time for preconceived notions at all. But, when it worked out the right way so quickly, I became consistent in my role of insisting trot/circle or walk/straight line, so she clearly saw these new options as the rule. The difference from the previous way I dealt with it, was that to her, I was presenting her with real options.

The rest of the ride went on for about an hour and a half (complete with stepping her front feet onto stumps, not steps, for fun). In that entire time, I circled her for choosing to trot away from me again only twice, and with quick positive results and no resentment. It was truly awesome.

There are only a very few instances where I remember a conversation with a horse going so quickly for me. I’m not going to tell you I’m convinced this will work in any situation, with any

horse, or that it will even work with Sokeri always in the future, even though it has at this point made a profound change. The important aspect of this example is in that underlying general approach which I have picked up from being around Harry: asking, “How does a horse feel about things?” If we start there when addressing any horse problem, then we are at the beginning of seeing how to truly make things better for a horse, and thereby not “correct” a problem, but dissolve it all together.

I finally saw my mare’s need to move her feet as essential to her inner emotional well-being. I could block that till the end of time with those reins and she would never feel better about it, even if I got the walk I was looking for. But, since I’m not looking for a walk, but rather looking for a horse happy to walk along with me, that first answer wasn’t an answer at all.

Only by presenting her real choices, and letting her know she can choose to move her feet however she needs to, can get her okay with that. It is presenting things in a way that she decides about them on some level that works for her. She needed to say to herself, “Well, guess I’ll walk, since there’s no need to expend all this energy trotting in a circle,” instead of, “Oh no...danger, fear, must trot, must trot, stop blocking me by pulling on my mouth...must trot, get that bit out of the way!” With Soke, only when she had that choice available finally, did she come to a better place inside herself. Then, the walk seemed like no-big-deal. The underlying basis for her change truly seems to be just that simple.

The phrase, “make the right thing easy and the wrong thing hard” gets tossed around quite a bit. I always wince when I hear the second part of that because I think humans are really quick to gloss over the “easy” part and go right to the “making the wrong thing hard” part. We are really good at that, and the extreme version of it is called punishment, which has no place in horse/human relationships. But, the example here fits that full statement, but in a particular way.

The right thing easy is simply release for doing what I wanted in the first place, a straight brisk walk. The wrong thing hard is the more difficult, dreaded trotted circle. But here, notice that the wrong thing hard is actually far better for Soke than that other alternative I was giving her—blocking forward motion, period.

Obviously I can’t have my horse just calling the shots all over the place, so I can’t let her just choose whatever speed she wants whenever, especially if it intensifies her fear and flight instincts. It must be changed. But, like with a horse in a round pen, here we worked through something while those feet were moving so she got to a place where she no longer needed to trot.

I’m happy to meet her half way and get to a nice walk by trotting a few circles. When I stopped blocking her feet and let her make the choice about them, even though I substituted circles for stops, the consistency in the approach let her know that at any time she felt the need to trot, she is perfectly welcomed to...in a circle.

The clincher here, I believe, is that Sokeri knows she has the option open to her to trot anytime now, and I won’t stop her—that was simply not the case before. Before, I kept telling her, “no... absolutely not,” which is quite different from, “fine, trot, we’ll just go over here and do it till your finished.” Suddenly, it diffused that anxiety in her. Just having the choice meant that much to her, which has meant every bit as much to me too.



Are We Feeding Our Horses' Fears? Part 2

by Bonnie Brindle

In Part 1 of “Are We Feeding Our Horses’ Fears?” we examined roots and symptoms of generalized, traumatic, and situational/phobic anxiety. The focus was centered on how our connections with horses are affected by what we bring to the relationship with them. If the rider or handler experiences fear and anxiety in the presence of horses, horses pick up on it and may become frightened or aggressive. Recently, I heard a highly respected clinician remind students, “A 1200 pound scared rabbit is not who you want to have in charge!”

Learning to identify the causes of and manage our own stressors is key to a safe, enjoyable relationship with horses. Here in Part 2, I offer tips and strategies for the handler and rider to decrease stress and increase enjoyment.

The first step to reducing your anxiety in equine relationships is to refuse to play the “Blame Game” – Don’t blame your horse, yourself, or your instructor. If your experience is not satisfying, work to identify and remedy all the issues keeping you from a positive equine relationship. Break this down into manageable pieces. Are you and your horse suited to each other? (A qualified professional could help you make an assessment.) Is your discomfort in handling or riding your horse creating a problem? What type of relationship do you have with your instructor/trainer? Do you feel safe discussing all of your feelings about riding? Are you supported and encouraged to do what you feel comfortable doing? This level of honesty requires us to take an unflinching, and gentle, look at ourselves.

AT HOME

Take your time after a trauma or scare to heal completely before making a new approach. Acknowledge your grief in the loss of your previous comfort level with horses, and begin steps toward healing. Know that today’s feelings need not be tomorrow’s!

Learn to Breathe! - Breathing practice: The power of breath in riding and managing any stressful situation cannot be over-emphasized. Notice your reactions in times of stress or worry. Do you tend toward chest-breathing – contracting the shoulders and taking in shallow breaths? Do you limit your intake of breath when you’re nervous? Or do you breathe in and hold your breath when tense? All of these habits are common among us, and they do nothing to settle nervousness. In order for breath to help calm us, we must allow it to flow deeply and smoothly. The diaphragm, a band of muscle below the lungs, stretches downward expanding the lower ribs with our deep inhalation. It contracts upward with complete exhalation. Notice a baby, if you have the opportunity. Babies breathe diaphragmatically, because they have not yet learned to brace their breath against fear and stress and vanity! Theirs is what grounding breath looks like.

Evaluate your nutrition— Fuel your body calmly: How do

you fuel your body before working with your horse? Do you start your day with a steaming cup of strong coffee? Might you grab a Coke when you’re thirsty? Gnaw on a Snickers bar as a “power” snack? If you’re a person who is sensitive to the effects of stimulants and sugar, you may do well to avoid them before working with your horse. Stimulants such as caffeine can precipitate anxiety by increasing your heart rate and irritating muscle fibers, which causes tension and raises your blood pressure. Sugar has a similar effect on the body, creating a wave of high energy that leaves a void in its wake when the immediately available sugar is used up. This drop in energy can cause some of us to feel shaky and irritable, which doesn’t inspire equine confidence! As with all aspects of our physical lives, good nutrition allows for better performance. And, drinking lots of water cleanses and relaxes the cells of the body.

Visualize your goals— See yourself enjoying success: Take time in quiet moments to picture yourself grooming, ground-working or riding your horse – whatever activity you find challenging now. In taking your visualization backwards, you can help yourself move toward success. When you have a mental picture of an end result (sitting on my horse at the mounting block), visually wind the tape back to what happens just before the positive result (putting my foot in the stirrup), and then back up another step (checking the girth again), and another (putting the saddle on my horse’s back), until you can start at the beginning of your approach to a new behavior (lifting the saddle from its rack) and “play the video” backwards and forwards, watching and memorizing your path to a successful outcome.

Speak kindly to yourself— Re-program your thought patterns: In my work with clients within and outside of the equine realm, thought re-patterning is a crucial piece of the puzzle. “I just have to get over this!” “Why can’t I just relax?” Thoughts like these perpetuate anxiety. It’s easy to lose patience with ourselves about something that feels like “nonsense.” An anxious person may know there is no real reason to be afraid, but is powerless to control the fear. Instead of chastising yourself, replace negative thoughts with affirmations, “All I need to do is keep breathing; it calms me.” Or “It’s OK to feel afraid, I just have to find what I’m comfortable with and begin there.”

AT THE BARN

Centering meditation - Focus and ground yourself: As prey animals who survive in herds, horses are keenly attuned to the reactions of others. If one grazing horse raises its head in alarm, the rest of the group goes on immediate alert. In the human/horse herd of two, the horse may respond with the same jumpiness when the human is fearful. Taking time to center and focus ourselves before we approach horses can go a long way in preventing problems.

Since humans tend to rely on verbal communication and miss much of what is spoken in the physical, we may overlook true intentions of others. Horses can teach us to “see” what is being communicated; body language is everything to them. In order to get in touch, spending a few moments to become calm and centered before approaching horses can help.

With closed or lowered eyes, deepen the breath, and “scan” the body for tightness and tension – constricted chest, sweaty palms, churning stomach, braced jaw – breathe “into” these places, imagining them expanding and releasing tension with each breath. When you’ve checked in with your entire body, take time for a few long stretches and thoughts of gratitude. You’ll be amazed at how much more grounded you’ll feel in connecting with your horse! Your clear intention, displayed through your relaxed, purposeful body language, can inspire confidence in your horse.

Learn to speak Equus – Communicate like a horse: Increase your safety by learning how horses communicate with each other. This is critical to managing anxiety. The more we understand about how horses view each other and us (funny-looking herd mates) the clearer our roles and responsibilities will become. A working knowledge of the linear equine hierarchy and the subtleties of horse perception will prevent misunderstandings between you and your horse! Books, videos, and hands-on clinic offerings are available to everyone from several reputable Natural Horsemanship professionals. Their advice on how to use intention and focus to communicate with horses is invaluable.

Display your affection confidently - Let your horse see leadership: When approaching your horse to give affection, reach out and scratch the withers as another, dominant, horse would do. Wither scratching is an affectionate gesture between horses, but is initiated and terminated by a dominant horse. Your horse will enjoy this comforting touch and will receive the message that you’re a benevolent leader with his best interests in mind.

Though the scope of this article does not include an overview of ground handling, leading and releasing your horse are common occurrences that can set up a respectful or dangerous relationship. Lead your horse with some slack in the lead rope under his chin rather than hanging or pulling on his halter. Doing so can lead to dullness or bracing. In addition, when turning your horse out, stand quietly with an arm over his neck, keeping his full attention on you. When you release him, be the one to move away, instead of allowing him to decide how and when to leave. These simple exercises can affect your horse’s attitude toward your leadership immeasurably.

Approach and Retreat - Slowly expand your comfort zone: Just like a good trainer will put incremental pressure on a horse and allow for immediate release when the horse responds appropriately, you can train yourself to manage your fears. If everything about catching, grooming, and saddling your horse is just fine - until you reach for the bridle - practice again and again the ritual leading up to that place where anxiety sets in. Then stop and put your horse away. Little by little, a continuous repetition of the ritual will put you in position to encourage yourself just a bit more. It is inevitable that you’ll get bored doing exactly the same thing each time, and you’ll begin to allow yourself small challenges when you’re ready.

IN THE SADDLE

Choose a good instructor – One you can trust: Discuss your

instructor’s philosophy. Explain your fears and be sure this individual is supportive of you. Follow your own agenda. Don’t be pushed to the point of fear, or ridiculed into “getting back on your horse.” Getting back on immediately after a fall puts a potentially nervous and shaken rider on a stressed horse. That combination is likely to lead to further problems. And, above all, when the time is right, be sure you’re getting back on because it’s important to you, not to someone else.

Check your tack thoroughly – It could make or break your ride: Cinches and saddle pads are the points of contact on your horse’s body. Look for pinching and folds in materials, weeds or twigs that can poke the skin, and check that leather and buckles are in good shape. (That goes for the bridle, too. And check that the bit lies over your horse’s tongue!) Be sure your horse has been well groomed, so that you’ll find any injuries or blemishes that could cause him discomfort.

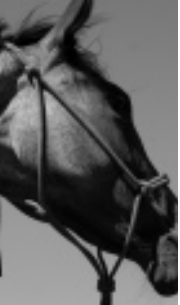
Choose your friends wisely! - Ride with support: Ride with folks who have safety in mind. If you needed to stop and review groundwork with your horse during a ride, would your friends encourage you to take all the time you need? Or might they become impatient? When everyone in a group has similar goals and respects each other’s needs, riding is safer and more enjoyable. Talk with your friends about your journey and celebrate your small steps to success!

Ride with your aids - Not with your ego!: When we’re able to manage our emotions, our horses can manage theirs more efficiently, too. Remain at the walk, or walk/trot, or walk/trot/canter on the flat only – whatever your comfort level is – until your fear is diminished. Then, and only then, choose the next level at which to aim and begin moving toward that, one step at a time. No one is timing you, and a specific agenda is not required. Work on regaining one skill at a time, holding your ground when just shy of becoming anxious, and stay there until you’re comfortable enough to move on.

The language of the seat – Breathing with your horse’s movement: Clarifying your true intentions in the saddle will go a long way to keeping you both stress-free. Avoid the “perch and pull” – this can occur when a nervous rider asks for halt. The hands shorten contact on the reins, while the seat comes forward instead of deepening. Leaning forward will communicate a request for momentum to your horse. Conversely, letting your breath out fully as you sink your seat into the saddle will aid your horse’s downward transition.

Counting breaths with number of strides will help the rider remain focused and calm. Depending on the horse’s stride and rider’s breath control, inhaling and exhaling fully in a 2- or 3-stride pattern at the walk, trot, and canter can settle nerves. For example, at the trot, you may inhale and count 1-2-3 beats or strides, then let your breath out in the same 1-2-3 flow with the next three strides. Try patterning your breath and see how much easier it is to stay focused!

As you progress toward increasing your confidence with horses, be gentle with yourself. Acknowledge where you are – inventory your strengths and struggles. Know and allow yourself to accept that where you are right now is absolutely fine while you embark on the path to your best horse handler and rider self. Above all, ride a good horse that matches your abilities and temperament well. Your physical safety is #1.



Rope Halters in the Real World

by Cheryl Kimball

Horses are not my profession. Unlike the horse trainer or the person who gives riding lessons, most of whom need to take on clients from the entire horse world within their market range, horses-as-hobby means that I direct most of my horse-related interactions. Which ultimately means that for the past fifteen years, most of my horse-related interactions have been with people who share my basic horsemanship philosophy. Until lately.

A few things have come up that have had me out in what I think of as “the real world.” And I thought, after getting positive feedback from a piece I wrote a couple years ago called “Riding Out of the Fold,” it might be interesting, and sometimes entertaining, to relate them over the next few months in *Eclectic Horseman*. This summer presented a perfect example of what happens when you find yourself thrown in the midst of people who have never heard of the horsemen and women that pass for household names to you.

I am wrapping up a two-year veterinary technician program. This has provided plentiful opportunities for “real world” experiences. In order to finish, I need to do two “clinicals”—working in an animal hospital putting into practice the things I am learning in classes. For my first clinical, I chose a horse hospital. It was a great experience and I enjoyed the people I worked with who were kind enough to put up with my “student” status in the midst of their busy days.

One day after having been working a couple weeks, I arrived and walked through the barn looking at the latest cases, and noticed a rope halter hanging on a stall door. Nose chains (my topic for next issue) were the method-of-choice for most of the clients I had encountered thus far—and something that I knew little about. But rope halters, now here was something I could relate to.

And what I found somewhat amusing was that I was the only person in the building who knew how to properly tie a rope halter; after being in the learning mode for just about everything, it was nice to come across something I was competent at.

One morning a week there was a staff meeting. It involved a rotating schedule of someone providing breakfast (I got along well with this food-oriented group) and someone giving a presentation. Students were not exempt. A couple of the doctors asked if I would give a presentation on my writing, especially as it regards horses.

Thinking I was going to bore these poor people to death, I washed all of my rope halters (when did I collect so many??) and brought them along. My intent was to do a little interlude of a rope-halter-tying lesson. I envisioned a little craft class of rope-halter-tying enthusiasts. They didn't exactly warm up to the idea. First, they don't encounter them very often. The whole nine weeks I was there I saw a grand total of two—maybe three if I think hard—rope halters.

Ultimately, I have, like I suspect many of you have, simply become more comfortable with the piece of equipment known

as a rope halter. It is just a halter. But also I have learned, in this instance and many time prior to that, rope halters have a negative connotation to people who have never learned horsemanship in the environment where they prevail. I have heard things like:

- A person at a clinic once calling rope halters “voodoo halters.” Why voodoo, I'm not sure, but it probably has something to do with the notion that the knots on the halter are tied in places that have some magical powers on pressure points. Double Diamond owner Pete Melnicker assured me many years ago when I interviewed him for an article on rope halters for a regional magazine that the only reason the knots are where they are is to make a piece of rope into a halter.

- “You can't cross tie with a rope halter.” Well, you probably can. But the tough answer to this is that ever since I was first introduced to the rope halter at a Buck Brannaman clinic over fifteen years ago, after practically dislocating both shoulders when trying to ride my horse with a web halter, I have not used a nose chain or cross ties. Ever. It doesn't even cross my mind. And I admit, I can't explain that to people who don't have much use for rope halters. It's not the tool known as the rope halter that got me there, of course; it would take a whole explanation of fifteen years and attendance at perhaps as many as 100 horse clinics and the long journey to better my horsemanship skills to explain why I don't find a use for nose chains or cross ties.

- “Rope halters put too much pressure on the horse.” The rope across the horse's poll, nose, and even the jaw, if the horse pulls back, certainly exerts more pressure than the flat pieces of a web or leather halter—basic physics at work here. Operative phrase: “if the horse pulls back.” Hopefully after a couple educational sessions, the horse won't pull back. Does the extra pressure come in handy to help them learn not to pull back? I think it does. Better to snap a nose chain across the sensitive cartilage of the horse's nose? I personally think not. That's the topic for next time: nose chains. They were my horse life years ago, the elimination of them was the key to my revised horse world, and they remain a pet peeve of mine. Don't get me started...

I'll leave you with a piece of advice if you have to leave your horse at most horse hospitals: Lead it into the hospital with a rope halter if you want but leave a leather halter or a web halter with a breakaway leather crown piece. First, the staff will know how to deal with it. But also, it's easier to wrap tape on the halter and leave messages for the hospital staff like “Don't use a nose chain on this horse.”

Calendar of Events

Full listings on www.eclectic-horseman.com.

Arkansas

2/16-18 Ray Hunt Clinic, Clarksville, 870-389-6328

California

4/27-29 The Californios Ranch Roping and Stock Horse Contest, Red Bluff, 530-896-9566

thecalifornios.com

5/2-5 Martin Black Clinic, Cottonwood 530-347-0212

Florida

3/17-18 Ray Hunt Clinic, Madison, 850-929-2178

Tennessee

3/24-26 Ray Hunt Clinic, Lebanon 615-383-5308

Texas

1/22-25 Ray Hunt Clinic, Gainesville 940-768-2367

2/26-28 Ray Hunt Clinic, Gainesville 940-768-2367

Letters to the Editor

Hi, I received the latest issue in the mail yesterday. I 'bout squealed with delight when I saw on the cover there was an article about Riding The Hills! Having recently moved from Florida (where I lived for the first 48 years of my life) to East TN where the terms "gently sloping" and "steep" took on a whole new meaning, I found I needed to learn about riding on something besides FLAT SANDY soil. It took some time for my horses to become acclimated to the hills on my property. And then it took ME time to feel ok about riding up and down on the back of my 10 yr old T-bred. As I make new friends I realize some of the trails around here will involve steeper

grades than I am use to. It was so timely to see and read about what works best for the horse and rider. Being a visual learner, I loved the format of the article. Also I was pleased as punch to read Tom Moates article, as Harry Whitney was my very first introduction to the "Better Way" and it is nice to hear Tom's thoughts. I greatly enjoyed his book and recommend it to everyone. Thank you for the great magazine! Sincerely, *Kathy Baker Follow Your Bliss Farm Midway, TN via email*

Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed Bryan's article in the new issue. It was a classic!! Thanks *Julie Kennedy via email*

Classified Ads

Mares and geldings for sale. 5yo Appy gelding-dun, 8yo TB gelding-gray, 1yo Paint gelding-dun overo, 6yo Paint mare-tri color, 9yo AQHA mare-palomino, 5yo AQHA mare-chestnut. All horses started with NH. Great all round horses. Hackamore and snaffle horses. Cows, ranch roping, trail or show. See www.rockingtranchqtrhorses.com for more information. VA

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Classified Ad Rates: For subscribers only, \$24 for 50 words. Ads will be run for one issue. Payment is due in advance. Call for deadline 303-449-3537.

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wintersranch.com 805-640-0956

JB Cattle Co. Brandie & Jeremy Dunn
661-332-7249 jbcattleco.com

Colorado

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Joe & Kim Andrews 970-613-0121
mountainmagicranch.com

Diamond Double T Ranch
diamonddoubletranch.com
303-915-6444 jjointon@msn.com

Last Resort Equestrian Center
LuAnn and Jim Goodyear
970-568-7682 luannresort@aol.com

Kathleen Sullivan Horsemanship
970-946-9681
kathleensullivanhorsemanship.com

Florida

Ken Newman Horses QED 407-617-3473
kennewmanllc@yahoo.com

Michigan

Dressage Horizons — Kathy Malone
810-629-7267 manguard@aol.com

Missouri

JKC Ranch Kevin Christy 816-260-8751
kevin@jkcranch.com jkcranch.com

Nebraska

Wehrmann Quarter Horses
Scott Wehrmann 402-456-7505

Nevada

Jack Young Clinics
775-625-3133
jnyoung@hotmail.com

Tim Westfall—Low Stress Stockmanship
775-340-4040 rubymountaingiglers.com

New Mexico

Riggins Quarter Horses
Bill and Laurie Riggins 505-472-5864
rigginsquarterhorses.com

Largo Canyon School
Patricia Barlow-Irick
www.largocanyon.com
505-568-9131 pbi@largocanyon.com

North Carolina

Bill Scott 828-369-9762
tranch@dnet.net

Texas

JS Ranch and Studio—
Colt starting & Fine Art Jim Staples
903-564-5888 jimstaples.com

Virginia

John Sanford
Rocking T Ranch 540-672-2986
rocking-t-ranch@earthlink.net

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 - ◆ 8 Rope Styles
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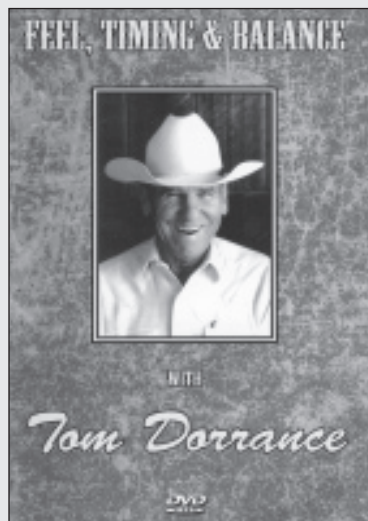
Feel, Timing & Balance

with Tom Dorrance \$59.95

The contents of this DVD present the work of Tom Dorrance, an extraordinarily gifted horseman. His unique approach was founded on the belief that the human needs to think more and do less—to feel what the horse is feeling and operate from where the horse is.

This DVD is not a “How To” instructional guide; it is about trying to understand the essence of Tom Dorrance’s work. How to apply his approach to horses in a way that will help the viewer work toward the “True Unity and Willing Communication between Horse and Human: at any level.

Important Viewer Note: Because certain segments of this DVD were recorded under crowd conditions at actual clinics, the sound and picture quality is impaired in a few places for short periods of time. However, these sections have purposefully been kept in this DVD because of their importance to continuity and content.



Books

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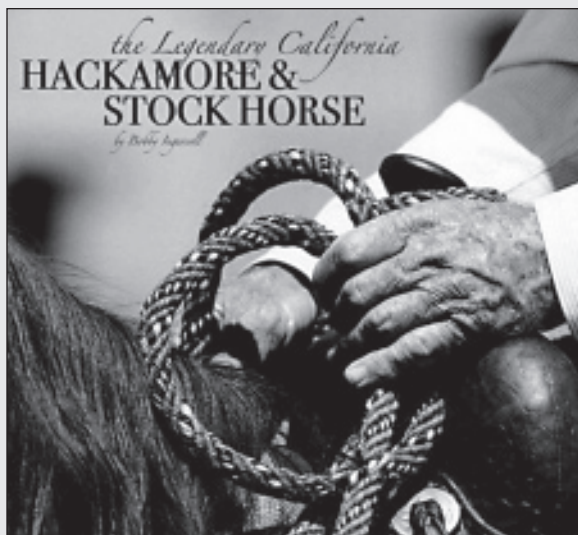
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**The Legendary California
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by Bobby Ingersoll \$50.00

This is a fascinating book about the history of the California stock horse and the hackamore style of horse training. Bobby's depth of experience and knowledge results in a volume that will delight and educate readers. It is complete with practical horse training tips, intricate drawings by Jim Paul and diagrams as well as beautiful photographs. (hardcover, 204 pages.)

The Remuda \$18.95

In a remote Nevada cow camp, they jingle in the remuda. There's a chill in the air, and steam rises up off the horses' backs. The jigger boss's rope whistles through the air, expertly landing on target. A buckaroo picks up a horse, halters and leads him to the corral. It's a ritual that seems almost choreographed, but to a buckaroo, it's just part of another day, an outgrowth of a tradition that goes back 300 years, to the original Californio Vaqueros. This is the story of how it began in Alta California, moved into the Great Basin country of Nevada and Oregon, and shaped one of the world's greatest horse cultures. In *The Remuda*, you'll get a firsthand look at what this buckaroo life is all about, even get a front row seat at the Jordan Valley Big Loop Rodeo, where they rope wild horses with a twenty-foot loop. And when the buckaroos come down California's Tejon Ranch for an old-fashioned roping contest, you'll get a vivid reminder of where it all began.

DVD running time 90 minutes.

Tapadero \$18.95

With their slick-fork saddles and silver spade bits, the Californio Vaqueros still trail cattle through the golden California hills. Meet the men and women who work the ranches and carry the tradition forward—stalwarts like Ernie Morris, the descendants of expert horsemen Bill and Tom Dorrance, and the young folks who are reviving the vaquero traditions. From the hackamore, to the two-rein, to straight up in the bridle, see how they make a horse as fluid as silk. Learn their secrets to braiding the rawhide reata and throwing the figure eight.

DVD running time 82 minutes.

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What Were They Thinking?



"We were so impressed by how the horse community came together to help one of our own. We had so many people tell us how Marty had touched their lives in such a positive way over the years. How lucky we all are to have such a wonderful extended family!"

Steve and Amy LeSatz conducted the Benefit Clinic for Marty Marten on October 14-15, 2006 at the Last Resort Equestrian Center in Fort Collins, Colo. See page 4 for details about the event and more photos.

Eclectic Horseman Communications
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