IH

Intelligent Horsemanship

WINTER 2012

Intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk

YOUR ULTIMATE IH FEAST



MEMBERS' CHRISTMAS PRESENT

This year the Intelligent Horsemanship members' DVD brings you three inspirational sections.

TOP MARKS: SHOWING

Top Marks focuses on the adventures of Kelly and her horses. This time it's the turn of her 18hh giant, Harry, to be in the spotlight. Kelly decides she would like to try showing with him. She takes him to a show but comes across an unexpected problem....






MONTY'S UNI LESSON: MOUNTING

Monty shares one of his popular lessons from his online university with us: How to get your horse to come up to the mounting block. Filmed on his ranch in California, he has added a section especially aimed at the English rider. If you love this taster, why not join now at montyroberts.com?






MONTY'S LEGACY

Monty has had a huge impact in the world of horsemanship, helping horses and people too. Watch his compelling story as we bring together that work with footage from polo, racing and showjumping. With interviews with key people in the horse world and ex-soldiers getting help through Join Up, this is Monty's legacy.






Let us know what you think of the DVD. Email editor@ihhq.net

Letter from *Kelly*



Dear Readers

Winter can be the hardest time of year for many horse owners. As with everything in life, matters can be made a little easier with some forward planning. My plan is to have some time out to recharge my batteries so that I can start off feeling fresh for 2013, ready to offer 'the boys' the best programme to meet their needs for the rest of the year, and for their future.

Now Banksy has found himself a smashing new home and Corky and Harry are having a couple of months off in the hill field, George has gone to Sam and Lou Austin to start his rehabilitation programme after his year long break following his kissing spine operation.

Pie is in great shape for an eighteen year old, and Jade and I will keep up with his light hacking. As any of us who are getting older know (and I guess that's all of us) it's important to keep up a regular exercise programme - use it or lose it!

Part of my 'recuperation' involves a trip to Australia, horse related of course, where I'll be meeting up with IHRA Rosie Jones, and we'll be attending the giant horse event known as Equitana Australia for four days. We have also been invited by the Equitation Science founder, Andrew Maclean, to visit him and exchange ideas.

As my good friend and owner of the most successful show sire of all time, Joanna MacInnes, said to me recently, "It doesn't matter how long you've been in this game, you just never stop learning do you?" I think that's a really important message.

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Kelly x

facebook Kelly Marks and Intelligent Horsemanship

Contents

Winter 2012

Page 3	Letter from Kelly
Page 4	The Top and Bottom Line
Page 6	Feeding for Top Line
Page 8	Meet a Member
Page 9	Your Letters
Page 10	Strapped for Time?
Page 12	A Mouth Full of Razor Blades
Page 14	A Dually Saves the Day!
Page 15	IH Course Dates 2013
Page 16	Pass!
Page 18	Mind the Gap!
Page 20	IH News
Page 21	Big Girls, Don't Cry
Page 22	Christmas Bonus!
Page 24	The IH Charity of the Year
Page 27	Charity News
Page 28	Show Time!
Page 30	My World!
Page 31	Elvis Lives!
Page 32	Back to Basics
Page 33	Book Review
Page 34	I Say!
Page 36	Let Failure be a Good Friend, never your Worst Enemy
Page 38	Is it Brain or Pain?
Page 40	Given the Boot!
Page 42	Tiny Tim!
Page 44	Spotlight on IH Recommended Associate - Sam Austin
Page 46	Praise for IH Recommended Associates











Do you have a contribution for Intelligent Horsemanship Magazine? Do phone, email or send your carrier pigeon to the IH office!

Intelligent Horsemanship Office:
Address: Lethornes, Upper Lambourn, Hungerford RG17 8QP
Phone: 01488 71300 Fax: 01488 73783
Email: editor@ihhq.net
Website: www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk

Editor: Sarah Weston

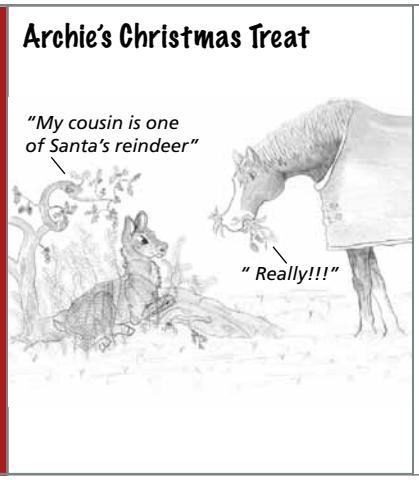
On the cover: Pearly King Wins the Supreme at HOYS.
Photo courtesy of ESPhotography.co.uk

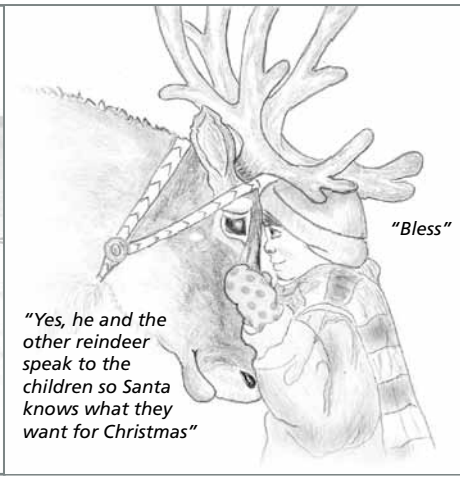
Whilst we endeavour to ensure that all articles in the Intelligent Horsemanship Magazine are compatible with broad IH principles, it should be noted that the views expressed by contributors to the Intelligent Horsemanship Magazine do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor or Kelly Marks.

Archie's Tales

By Sharon

Archie's Christmas Treat







By leading author, Karin Blignault

The Top and Bottom Line

Karin follows the 'hands without legs and legs without hands' philosophy of training, which comes from François Baucher's 'New Method' and the refined softer version of his pupil, Général L'Hotte. She explains, "Over many years of riding I followed many teachers trends and beliefs. I eventually found that my Thoroughbred understood this method far best, as it avoids the confusion of opposing messages given by simultaneous hand and leg use."

Four elements are involved in developing a horse's top line.

1. A small amount of fat.
2. Development of the 'bottom line' muscles for movement.
3. Development of the top line muscles to work as stabilisers.
4. Lateral muscle development.

Fat

The horse's neck consists of almost 99% solid muscle, with the cervical vertebrae running through it. On top of this muscle bulk is the nuchal ligament which holds the horse's head and neck in its natural inverted V shape against gravity. This very large ligament runs from the occipital bone on the skull to the first thoracic vertebra. Neck fat accumulates above this nuchal ligament. Some horses carry a mass of fat here while others struggle to develop that arched look when in a natural stance. Stallions often carry a huge amount of fat above the ligament. The over-development of this fat in any horse can indicate metabolic syndrome.

Usually thin horses don't have a good top line. So, the first step to developing a good top line is to feed your horse correctly.

Development of the bottom line

The horse's back strengthens and develops through flexion exercises. He does not work 'over his back', he works through his bottom line muscles in a flexor frame while his back muscles stretch. This movement, as with all ambulatory movement, starts from the horse's nose and ends at his hind feet - not the other way around.

We want the energy and power to come from the horse's back, but the roundness to come from its natural starting point at the front. Francois Baucher understood this very clearly and said that first you should teach the 'ramener' (yielding of head and neck), then you teach the 'resembler' (engagement of the hindquarters). Pushing the horse forwards into a hard frame hoping that he will yield into a soft round flexor contact gives two conflicting messages causing the horse anxiety. Although the leg aid requests forwards movement horses interpret pressure on the bit as an instruction to stop. This is just like a car if you had your feet on the accelerator and the brake simultaneously. Few riders have success with this technique as is evidenced by the mouth problems exhibited by their horses.

When horses are pushed forwards in their natural, hollow frame, they lose balance and run forwards. You should first establish a soft round flexor frame and then push the horse forwards into this softness. This should be achieved by asking for balancing half halts, causing his hip joints with flex and his weight to move onto his hind legs. Balance, engagement and energy are thereby maintained resulting in superb lightness, manoeuvrability and free forward movement. This round frame strengthens the back through the muscles which hug the underneath of his spine.

The top line muscles in the neck and back are the extensors which hollow the back. In nature, horses usually move in an extensor pattern because it ensures quick flight. When horses work in a hollow frame, their back muscles function as movers; they shorten and tighten and the mobility of the back decreases. This can easily cause muscle strain. Instead, these muscles should function as stabilisers at every stride, allowing the bottom line muscles to do their moving work. Therefore we need to work towards collection with the hind legs well underneath the horse's body.

With correct exercise through their bottom line flexor muscles, their core muscles, horses' backs become mobile. The muscles all around the spinal column work in concert with the limb movements at every stride thereby stabilising the spinal column. They develop strength while maintaining suppleness and creating the soft swinging back.

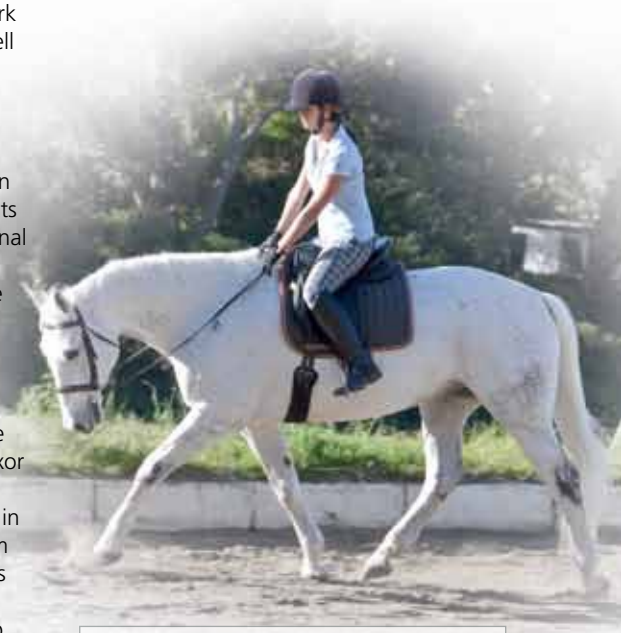
Exercises to develop the bottom line muscles

This is easier said than done because the horse has first of all to be in a round flexor frame in order to exercise his bottom line muscles. You want his neck to drop in front of the withers with roundness from his nose over his back. When the head is vertical and there is a dip in front of the withers, the horse is in flexion at the top of his neck but extension at the base. The muscle tone in the top line muscles over his back will be tight and will prevent the development of his flexion muscles.

The horse needs to be taught to yield and drop his nose into the round flexor frame. This should be done with light finger pressure, using pressure and release to ensure that he understands it. As the horse yields to finger pressure, it should be released like a hot potato so that he is rewarded immediately. If your pressure and release technique is perfect, he will yield to light bit pressure.

Horses with unspoiled mouths yield immediately but most riders hang on to their horse's mouth without realising it, habituating him to bit pressure. The nerves on the bars of the mouth become damaged so that the horse feels less, at which point some riders start to use an even stronger pressure or bit.

Next, ride your horse in a low round frame. This makes all the flexor bottom line muscles work to bring his hindquarters underneath him. It also works the top line muscles in their stabilising capacity. If you push him forwards too fast it can cause loss of balance and injury. This pushes him onto his forehand causing the top line muscles to take on their role as movers in extension. Balance develops from slow to fast.



Long and low. Horse working through abdominal and hip flexor muscles. Back muscles in their stabilising function.

Do your warm-up work in this frame, giving the horse a break every four minutes or even shorter intervals so that he can stretch his flexor muscles which are not used to this posi-tion. Equine muscles stretch in eight seconds whereas in humans it takes thirty.

Alternating brief spells of short and long strides in walk and trot will strengthen the horse's hindquarters and stabilise his joints. You will find that your horse automatically starts to carry his head and neck higher when his hindquarters strengthen and become more engaged.

Lateral muscle development

Dressage horses often have beautifully developed necks whereas some hacking horses and show jumpers don't. The secret is to get the correct bend where he uses his own inside neck muscles to bend rather than the false bend created when you turn by pulling the reins. Hacking horses don't bend well because they are generally ridden in straight lines. Show jumpers at lower levels often bend to the outside when turning because they turn by taking sideways steps and counter balance themselves in this way.

Circles

These have to be ridden in a true bend, i.e. the horse should bend his own neck and not be pulled with the inside rein. Establish a true bend through give and take rein vibrations, inviting the horse to use his inside neck muscles to bend. Start with large circles and make them smaller as the horse becomes more supple.

Serpentines

Start with three loops and develop this until you can do lots of back tracking loops.

Spiral Exercises

Your horse should be able to spiral into a four metre diameter without his quarters swinging out provided you have a correct inside bend with a soft inside rein. Ride out of the spiral by pushing your horse out with a leg yield or change the bend from this small circle to a twenty metre circle in the other direction.



The true bend in which the horse bends his own neck. Note the complete release of the inside rein and the creases in his skin at the base of his neck.

"The secret is to get the correct bend where he uses his own inside neck muscles to bend..."

For the correct muscle development we first need the round flexor frame, followed by lateral flexion or bend. The round flexor frame eliminates hollowness, places the horse's back in a neutral position and allows smoother and easier lateral flexion.

Bending exercises to develop your horse's top line

These exercises should be carried out with your horse in a long round frame.

FAQs

How do I stop my horse from:

• Leaning on the bit?

Leaning often indicates that the rider is hanging on the reins or that the horse needs to stretch his neck muscles. Use half halts and release the pressure as the horse lightens.

A low head and neck carriage often indicates that the horse is not ready to move in a higher frame. It can also mean defensive behaviour against constant bit pressure from an unyielding contact. Provided your arms are yielding and there is no bit pressure, you can ignore the low head carriage. It will come up as his hindquarters develop and he gains confidence in your arms and hands.

• Going on the forehand?

Young horses often go on the forehand and run in order to maintain balance when they are pushed forwards too fast. Some training systems use this forward pushing to 'force' horses to solve the problem of finding their balance by themselves. This will only work in specialist hands.

• Over-bending?

This is often caused by too strong a contact. The horse is asking to stretch or he is defending himself against unyielding bit pressure. Allow him to stretch and develop a yielding, elastic contact.

Karin Blignault is the author of Successful Schooling - Train Your Horse with Empathy; Stretch Exercises for Your Horse; Equine Biomechanics for Riders and her forthcoming book, Four Steps to Riding Success.

All photos courtesy Karin Blignault

By Nicola Tyler, BSc, Nutrition Director, TopSpec Equine



Photos courtesy of Sarah Weston

Feeding for Top Line

How is top line made?

Other articles in this issue look at how to exercise your horse in the correct way to develop the various muscles that produce what we call 'top line' in a horse. However, that **top line cannot be produced without feeding a horse the nutrients needed** for muscle development.

What is top line made from?

Top line consists largely of muscle, and muscle is made largely from protein. So do we just feed more protein? No.

Protein varies in its quality, and just as a weight lifter trying to build muscle eats good quality protein like steak and eggs, so a horse lacking top line needs to eat good quality protein. Reputable feed manufacturers will only use vegetable protein sources and the best of these is soya.

Soya protein in UK horse feeds is usually sourced from one of two raw materials. The first is often called 'Hi-Pro' soya; that is the protein left after much of the oil has been extracted from the whole soya bean. The second is 'Full-Fat' soya, which is when whole beans are cooked, usually by micronizing, producing a good quality protein and high oil ingredient.

Other sources of protein used in UK horse feeds are of lower quality, the best of these is linseed, which also has other beneficial qualities for horses. Sunflower and field beans are lower still in protein quality but both are used in horse feeds.

What do we mean by 'protein quality'?

Protein is made up of amino acids of which ten are essential for the horse, and about ten are nonessential. By 'essential' we mean a horse cannot make them himself, they have to be provided in his diet. **A good quality protein is rich in essential amino acids;** a poor quality protein contains lower amounts of essential amino acids and more nonessential amino acids.

The essential amino acids most lacking in a horse's base diet (usually forage) compared to his requirements are those which are then needed in the highest amounts in supplementary horse feeds. The three most commonly limited or lacking amino acids in a horse's diet in the UK are lysine, threonine and methionine. The latter is particularly important as a source of natural sulphur, which is a constituent of cartilage, hoof wall (horn), coat, mane and tail.

In my opinion, making horse feed using poorer sources of protein plus synthetic amino acids to try to increase the protein quality is not as effective as using the more expensive option of using higher quality protein.

Therefore when selecting horse feed to produce top line it is important to not only to look at the crude protein level declared on the product, but also to look at the list of ingredients declared on the white label attached to the sack or printed on the sack itself.

By law, this list of ingredients has to be declared in order of the greatest amount included in the product formula, and so can tell you a lot about what you are buying. When looking for good quality protein in a conditioning feed balancer, an effective crude protein level would be in the region of 25%, but it is important that good quality protein sources such as Hi-Pro soya or Full-Fat soya appear high up the ingredient list.

If you are looking for a blend or compound feed that will promote top line effectively, the crude protein level should be in the region of 14 to 16%, and good quality protein sources should appear in the list of ingredients above any poorer quality protein sources used.

Building top line whilst feeding the horse as nature intended

Horses evolved to graze for about sixteen hours a day and their digestive systems are therefore suited to 'little and often' feeding of forage. The best feeding programmes are based on this principle and maximize forage intake whilst minimizing the size and sugar/starch content of hard feeds. There are many benefits, both physical and mental, to feeding ad-lib forage with small, low sugar/starch hard feeds, whilst still meeting the horse's total nutrient requirements.

Top line can be built without stimulating fizzy behaviour or stereotypical behaviour, or encouraging 'tying-up,' colic, loose droppings

or laminitis. This approach to feeding maximises the efficiency of the digestive system and, whilst it will not cure gastric ulcers, it will lessen the risk of them occurring. If you are trying to produce top line on a youngster in order to show him for example, this system will not promote over-topping or developmental orthopaedic disease.

The best way to feed for top line

For at least eight months of the year grass is a good source of forage for horses in the UK, providing high levels of good quality protein in the spring that decline gradually throughout the year. As the horse harvests this feed on a little and often basis and enjoys the mental benefits of being free in his field and socialising with his friends, this is the optimum basis for a feeding regime.

When he is stabled, conserved grass in the form of hay or haylage replaces the fresh grass and provides him with plenty of chewing time. It takes about an hour for a horse to chew one kilogram of hay or haylage, and all the time he is chewing alkaline saliva washes down his oesophagus and into his stomach, lessening the risk of new ulcers and soothing existing ones.If there are no reasons to exclude it from the diet then early cut ryegrass haylage or hay, in that order, will generally have higher protein content than other conserved forages and so will contribute more to top line.

It makes sense to optimise the nutritional utilisation of such forage and the best way of doing this is to base a small hard feed around an appropriate top specification feed balancer. High protein balancers that will promote top line include TopSpec Comprehensive Feed Balancer (25% protein), TopSpec Cool Balancer (23% protein) and D&H Ultimate balancer (25% protein).



Adding alfalfa or grass chop to the feed balancer will make a small contribution to top line. All horses being exercised or worked to produce top line should have access to a salt lick all the time.

Building top line on a good-doer

Good-doers often need to be fed second cut or high fibre hay or haylage to avoid excess condition, and it may need to be limited. Adding sufficient traditional compound feed to meet his micronutrient requirements is likely to result in an overweight horse rather than a 'fit not fat' horse.



Photo courtesy of Patrick Monahan www.photographyfromwales.com

In this situation a feed balancer designed for good-doers provides the horse with the necessary amount of protein plus all the vitamins and minerals he needs to balance his diet, without providing excess calories. This is mainly because of the low amount of feed balancer needed, usually just 500g per day for a 500kg horse, and also because of the low digestible energy (DE - a measure of calorie content) of the feed balancer. A good example is TopSpec Lite Feed Balancer, with a protein level of fifteen percent and a DE of just 9MJ/kg. I am not aware of any other feed balancer with a DE below 10MJ/kg but Bailey's Lo-Cal (16% protein and a DE of 11.7MJ/kg) is an alternative.

Thus a 15.2hh middleweight, 500kg, good-doer might receive 10kgs of late-cut meadow hay per day plus two hard feeds each containing 250g TopSpec Lite Feed Balancer and 1 Stubbs scoop of dampened TopChop Lite. If he works hard enough to sweat he should also receive 1 level tablespoon of salt in each feed to replace the salt he loses in sweat and avoid any drop-off in performance due to dehydration.

Building top line on a horse in light-medium work

Feed balancers suitable for horses in this category include TopSpec Cool Balancer, with a protein level of 23% and a DE of 12MJ/kg and Blue Chip Original with a protein level of 18% (the DE is undeclared).

A horse in light-medium work should be able to receive ad-lib forage, either meadow or ryegrass hay/haylage.

A 15.2hh middleweight, 500kg horse, might receive ad-lib meadow hay or HorseHage 'blue bag' second cut ryegrass haylage. His two hard feeds could each contain 250g TopSpec Cool Balancer plus up to 1kg of TopSpec CoolCondition cubes, fed according to his condition, and 1 Stubbs scoop of dampened TopChop Lite. If he works hard enough to sweat he should also receive 1 level tablespoon of salt in each feed to replace the salt he loses in sweat and avoid any drop-off in performance due to dehydration. TopSpec CoolCondition cubes contain 14.5% protein and have a DE of 12.5MJ/kg so they are designed to encourage muscle formation rather than the laying down of fat.

Building top line on a horse in hard work

A horse in hard work needs his forage to be high quality in order to minimise the quantity of hard feed needed to meet his requirements. Ad-lib ryegrass hay or haylage usually fits the bill.

A 15.2hh middleweight, 500kg horse, should be fed two hard feeds each containing 250g TopSpec Comprehensive Feed Balancer plus up to 1.75kg of TopSpec CoolCondition cubes, fed according to his condition, and ½ Stubbs scoop of dampened TopChop Alfalfa. If he works hard enough to sweat he should also receive up to 1 level dessertspoon (depending on level of TopSpec CoolCondition cubes fed) of salt in each feed to replace the salt he loses in sweat and avoid any drop-off in performance due to dehydration. If the haylage used is very high in protein an alternative to TopSpec CoolCondition cubes is TopSpec Performance Cubes, which have lower protein content at 13%.

The suggestions I have made are generalisations only and to receive a feeding recommendation tailored to the needs of your horse I recommend a telephone call to an experienced nutritionist.

Nicola Tyler, BSc, Nutrition Director, TopSpec Equine Multiple Award Winning Helpline **Tel: 01845 565030**

Meet a member

Ronnie Dobbs

86, from Eversley, Hook, Hampshire

How did you first hear about Intelligent Horsemanship?

Several years ago my daughter, Julie, asked me whether I would like to go to see the Horse Whisperer as a Father's Day present. We went to Witney to watch a demonstration by Kelly and funnily enough it turned out to be at the home of the Brickells, people from whom I had purchased Shire horses many years before. I got really choked up watching Kelly work with the horses and I knew I had found something I had been looking for for years.

Do you have horses?

Although I don't have any horses of my own anymore, I am still involved with them, particularly driving horses. I go out driving with my long time friend, Mark Phillips (not THE Mark Phillips), who is a farrier in Winchester. He has horses that he drives for weddings and funerals and he recently acquired some Russian Orlovs. I have been involved with horses all my life having been brought up in a cottage surrounded by stables in Hammersmith, London. My father was a 1,000% horseman and didn't believe in shouting at horses or knocking them about.

I had many ponies and horses over the years but I have especially fond memories of Nobby, a pony I bought from Southall Market. I was told that he had been jibbing in the cart. As soon as I got him home my father told me to put the collar on him. He studied it for just a moment and then sent me round to the harness makers to ask him to ease it by one inch. It cost very little and it fitted perfectly when it came back. I went out and about all over the place with that pony, making deliveries, and he would show his teeth, count with his feet and come to the whistle. He would also put his head inside the ice cream van!

There were twenty-seven working horses down our turning, all kept in various stables with very little grazing. I was surrounded by them, and when the war came I refused to be evacuated so that I could stay near the horses. Later, when I needed to get a job, I pressed the supervisor at Great Western Railway to let me have a job with the horses. I started off as a van boy, collecting goods from places like Spitalfields, and eventually wheedled my way into driving a single horse and then a pair. Later I was a chain horse boy which meant that I worked at the railway shunting wagons and horses around the yard, as well as attaching a 'chain horse' to pairs in order to give them extra pulling power up the hill to Paddington Station.



Ronnie driving at a family wedding.

I have continued to live and breathe horses all my life. I worked for Rothmans for many years and we kept their driving horses at the Royal Mews. Later I was involved with the King's Troop and the Mounted Police. I have been involved with driving horses of all shapes and sizes from Shires to Gelderlanders and once drove a team of thirteen. My son, Jeff, followed in my footsteps and we spent many happy days driving together.

What involvement have you had with Intelligent Horsemanship?

Ever since that first demonstration I have had a keen interest in Intelligent Horsemanship and have met Kelly and Monty on many occasions. I was delighted to be invited to the last IH garden party where I spent time chatting away to Monty all afternoon. I look forward to my IH Magazine every quarter.



With the Rothman's horses and a delivery brougham. Ronnie front right.

Photos courtesy of Ronnie Dobbs

The Intelligent Horsemanship Magazine would love to find out more about our members! If you would like to be featured here **please email: editor@ihhq.net** for a questionnaire.

Your letters



Star letter



Dear Editor,

Following the article about rescue ponies in the last IH newsletter, I want to tell you about Cheeky, a pony that I took on from World Horse Welfare as a companion for my other pony, Woody. IH was integral to his amazing transformation.

I was told that Cheeky was 'very, very nervous but a good companion', that he had to wear a head-collar all the time, and could not be caught without food. When we met him he behaved perfectly – too perfectly. It was as though every fibre of his being was telling him to run, but he feared the consequences if he stepped out of line.

I scoured all Kelly's books in preparation for his arrival, and used mirroring behaviour to make a connection with him. Watching him gradually relax and hearing the first long, slow exhale when I stroked him was magic – no other word for it! The fear is gone and that's all I ever wanted for him.

He has the most giving and affectionate nature imaginable, and he is the perfect companion to Woody. I have no hesitation in recommending people take on rescued horses and ponies, it does take time and effort but the rewards are well worth it.

I have learnt so much from IH; attending the courses and demonstrations and reading Monty's and Kelly's books meant that I knew what Cheeky needed from me.

All the best
Katharine Leat



A copy of 'Perfect Confidence' by Kelly Marks worth £16.99 goes to the writer of our Star Letter

Dear IH Team,

I'm on a mission with my young sports horse mare, Spirit, to encourage more people to spend time working with the interests and strengths of other people. I had a very hard time all the way through school having autism and learning difficulties. People were very negative, even violent and bullying towards me. I tried to learn traditional horsemanship but suffered from panic and anxiety attacks, and couldn't understand what the instructors were asking of me.

Monty Roberts' methods have helped inspire me to stop becoming like the bullies myself and to stop being violent. I have done my five day foundation course with Kelly and have met Monty twice.

I have begun speaking in public about my experiences and how learning Join Up and Intelligent Horsemanship techniques has helped me. My message with Spirit is that 'Your Interests are Your Strengths'.

Charlie Avent, Gloucestershire

Do you have something you'd like to share with us? If so, you can send your letter to us at:

Lethornes,
Upper Lambourn,
Hungerford RG17 8QP

Email: editor@ihhq.net

Intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk

Dear Kelly,

My mare, Splash, featured in the IH magazine in the Spring 2012. As our work continued I still felt something was holding us back so I spoke to my vet and we agreed to put Splash on Bute for ten days as a test. Once the drugs took effect she was much more relaxed in her movement. A subsequent bone scan revealed that she had kissing spine, and she is currently being treated with corticosteroid injections. Without the articles which appeared in the IH magazine on the subject of kissing spine, and the general IH philosophy of questioning everything and exploring every option, I don't think I would have realised that this might be the problem, and I wouldn't have had the confidence to press my vet for this type of examination.

Three days prior to the nuclear scintigraphy procedure I received a Protocol for Bone Scans from the veterinary hospital. Thanks to IH forethought and techniques I was able to prepare Splash for all of this, including for her having to wear plastic bags on her feet to protect her from her own urine (which is radioactive for forty eight hours). The hospital was very grateful that I took the time to train Splash myself rather than leave it to their nurses.

Jenny Crouch, Hampshire

By Sarah Weston

Strapped for time?



In the winter with limited daylight and limited time, what's the most productive use of a spare half hour with your horse? Depending on how energetic you are feeling and how fit your horse is already, there are lots of things that you can do.

The IH magazine asked the IHRAs plus Equine Cranial Osteopath, Gavin Schofield, for their suggestions.

Low Energy

Teaching Your Horse to Lower his Head

Do you have a signal with your horse that he understands completely which means that he should unconditionally pause, relax, breathe and be still? Can your horse offer some of the weight of his head and neck into your hands or does he hold a level of resistance or tension?

IHRA Linda Ruffle has found head lowering training hugely valuable in her work with a range of different horses. It is important to recognise that we are never 'doing nothing' with our horses when we are around them. When we think there isn't time to do anything meaningful with them they may receive our attitude as dismissive or our haste to complete chores as tension.

Teaching your horse to lower his head on request doesn't require much time, particular facilities, or specialist equipment. Mostly it requires the capacity for us to slow down and truly embrace the idea of relaxation with our horses.

Furthermore, this trained behaviour can offer practical benefits when putting on the head-collar or the bridle, or help to address phobias. It has the proven physiological and psychological benefits of reducing adrenalin in moments of anxiety, and it can help prepare your horse so that he gains greater benefit from physical therapies. It may even highlight where such therapeutic intervention may be needed if the horse clearly struggles to lower his head and to relax.

Head lowering on request can also create one of those special moments that remind us that the partnership with our horse should be pleasurable for both partners.

Linda explains how to go about it:

1. Assess your own frame of mind – asking your horse to relax in the face of tension from yourself is an unreasonable ask, so make sure you are fully relaxed first. (Clue – you won't be able to do this unless you are breathing properly!);

2. On your out breath, offer firm but elastic downward pressure on the lead rope. Remember that your horse's initial response is likely to be 'into-pressure' and result in a tensing of the neck and an upward movement of the head – this is NOT a lack of cooperation, just a reflex. Don't fight your horse, stay calm and continue with the downward pressure;

3. Be prepared to lower your own body to help the horse understand what you are asking for. It can be a huge challenge for a horse to dip their head below your eye line in the early stages;

4. On the least relaxation of his neck and poll, along with the slightest dip of the head, release the pressure on the lead rein and praise your horse in a calm and measured fashion (rather than a loud vigorous pat!), before asking for a little more.

5. Repeat this for a short while each time you are with your horse until you feel that he understands that a light downward touch on the lead rope means he should drop his head to below your eye level.

6. If your horse finds direct downward pressure difficult try asking smoothly at a different angle, slight flexion of the head and neck may help.

Once this is established, you are ready to move on to more advanced applications:

1. Are you able to get the same response through gentle hand pressure on the poll, TMJ, and jaw line?

2. Can you begin to associate the physical signal with a voice command? (Not imperative but can be a lovely 'shorthand')

3. Does your horse still 'hear' and respond to your signal in a place or activity usually experienced as stressful? If not, can you re-teach it in that place?

4. Will your horse rest his head in your arms and allow you to flex his neck for him? If not, what might be getting in the way - trust, confidence or physicality?

Grooming and Strapping

Cranial Osteopath, Gavin Schofield, recommends grooming as a way to stimulate the circulatory and lymphatic systems of the horse. This is due to the grooming action and the fact that the horse will often relax generally during the process, but there is another much more important knock-on effect. Increased attention to grooming routine provides the horse with more human contact and this helps to build a deeper bond between horse and human. It can also be really beneficial to the horse's welfare. For instance, even a small cut which may have penetrated deeply and could cause a very serious joint infection will be spotted, as would subtle changes in the limbs which could be the start of a tendon, ligament or joint problem.



...this trained behaviour can offer practical benefits...

Strapping, an old fashioned technique still seen in some yards, is effectively a form of percussive massage which can stimulate local circulation and lymphatic return to a small degree. However, Gavin explains, "it will not directly build muscle - only correctly stimulating the muscles to actively contract through correct work will do this. The use of strapping for its subtle stimulatory effect on local circulatory systems and other possible subtle effects on a horse in rehabilitation may occasionally have a place, but only in experienced hands or under careful guidance as the stimulus can quite easily cross the line into irritation leading to unhelpful tissue inflammation."

Massage

Correct massage, though, is a great use of that spare half hour. IHRA and Chartered Veterinary Physiotherapist, Sue Palmer suggests that a short session can be used to address one specific area providing that it is repeated on both sides of the horse. See page 33 for a review of her new book, Horse Massage for Horse Owners.

Perfect Manners Exercises

IHRA Suzanne Marshall reminds us that the exercises that Kelly writes about in her book, Perfect Manners, are really good for creating suppleness in the horse. These include the L shape poles and lateral work where the horse yields his shoulders or his hindquarters.

Medium Energy

Walking Out!

IHRAs Bridget Hughes, Joanna O'Neill, Sarah Weston and Lynn Dixon are all fans of taking your horse out for a walk.



Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston



Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston

Warming up and cooling down are critically important...

Walking a horse out can be so beneficial. For the owner it is a great assessment tool because they can see how the horse is moving, how well he is coping with new and novel obstacles that he meets, and being away from other horses. It also gives an opportunity to put into practice the groundwork that has been learned at home. Ensuring that the horse walks at your side, moves forwards, backwards, and sideways, as directed, is always really valuable for establishing leadership.

Going for a walk with your horse should be like going for a walk with your best friend - enjoyable for both of you, and certainly not hard work once you've trained him to lead nicely. Try introducing 'counted stops' into your walks – thinking, one, two, three, four, stop – to see if your horse stops when your body stops rather than you having to pull him to a halt. While you are out you can negotiate ditches, puddles and logs, meet a bit of traffic, and animals of all kinds.

It's a good idea to extend a horse's comfort zone little by little, and it helps to create circular walks that are like the petals on a flower. If you have no circular routes, take care not to turn back at the same place on the walk every time, or the horse may start to suggest that you turn back even earlier.

If you don't mind your horses grazing in hand, it can be useful to observe which grasses and woody materials your horse chooses to eat.

High Energy

Interval Training

If you have time to tack up and ride, IHRA Sam Austin suggested a short session of interval training at walk and trot to build up your horse's fitness. This involves a timed period of exertion followed by a timed period of recovery. Warming up and cooling down are critically important so start with ten minutes of warm up in walk. This can be followed by two minutes of trotting, then two minutes of walking with two more series of two minutes at trot, then walk, before a ten minute cool down at walk.

Sam also recommends a fast walk or a slow trot up a steep hill to improve your horse's general fitness and muscle tone.

If you haven't got time to tack up then try acrobatic long lining. This incorporates trotting poles, raised trotting poles, and even cantering poles for the ambitious, which makes your horse work far harder than just long lining on the flat. Long lining is also another great way for you to assess how your horse is moving.

All these ideas should help put an end to the frustration of not having enough time to ride during the winter months. Even if you don't have time for a long hack, there should now be plenty to keep you busy and benefit your horse at the same time.

By Sam Austin, IHRA and Dental Technician



Photo courtesy of Russell Sach

A mouth full of razor blades

Although sharp points are the most common dental problem in horses, they are often overlooked and can cause big problems!

Basic facts about horses' teeth

Horses' teeth have adapted to cope with the coarse, abrasive diet eaten in their natural habitat of extensive prairie and plain. Equine cheek teeth (premolars and molars) are ridged so that they can break down vegetation easily. They continue to erupt throughout the greater part of the horse's life in order to replace tooth that has been ground away. This is not the same as constantly growing, like a hoof or fingernail, but more akin to a limited amount of reserve tooth being pushed out from the skull - more like a propelling pencil lead.

> *"Horses' teeth have adapted to cope with the coarse, abrasive diet..."*

The horse's upper cheek teeth are significantly wider than the lower cheek teeth, and the left and right rows of teeth (arcades) are significantly further apart than their lower counterparts. The result is that the outer edges of the upper teeth and the inner edges of the lower teeth are not worn away as much as the rest of the tooth through chewing.

It is important to note that the teeth are adapted to allow horses to survive well in their natural habitat – which is quite different to the way most horses are kept in this country.

What is a sharp point?

The edges of the chewing surface of both upper and lower teeth are lined with hard enamel which encases folds of more enamel, dentine and cementum. Dentine and cementum are softer dental materials, hence they are worn away more easily, leaving the enamel ridges which allow the horse to chew so effectively.

A horse in a natural environment makes large side to side actions when chewing a coarse stemmy diet. In most cases, horses no longer have such a diet and thus the outer edges are utilised far less. They can easily become overgrown and sharpened by the more limited chewing action.

A sharp point is a pointed, enamel protrusion usually found on the outside of the upper and inside of the lower teeth. These can be so sharp that an incautious dental technician can easily cut their finger just by running it over the top of one!



Sharp points. *Photo courtesy of Sam Austin*

So why are they a problem?

If you have ever bitten your cheek when chewing food, you will know that it hurts a lot, and the resulting injury makes the cheek swell so that you are likely to bite it again. A horse chews for more than fourteen hours a day, which is fourteen times more than a human. This means that horses are far more likely to bite into themselves with teeth that may have become razor sharp. Needless to say, it can cause an immense amount of damage to the cheeks and the tongue.

This damage may be made far worse, and much more likely, through the use of tight nosebands, bits, and even bitless bridles and Duallys, because they push the cheeks into the teeth.

“This damage may be made far worse, and much more likely, through the use of tight nosebands...”

Teeth set further back in the mouth may also cause damage because the large cheek muscle (the masseter) pushes the inner cheek tissue (the buccal mucosa) into the teeth as well.

Sharp points can cause so much damage to the cheeks that they wear a hole in the cheek tissue. This very easily becomes infected, sore and swollen. Horses will often pack food into their cheeks to keep them away from their teeth. This is called ‘holding a quid’, and it gives the appearance of a large, hard swelling on the side of the face that may disappear and reappear periodically.



Laceration due to enamel points.
Photo courtesy of Sam Austin

As you can imagine, these points will cause chronic pain. Affected horses can appear depressed, become aggressive, or be just generally grumpy. When ridden, behaviour that may be attributed to bit, noseband or cheek piece pressure, could actually be associated with the presence of sharp points. It is essential that they are eliminated as a factor when looking for the cause of any ridden problem.

That sounds nasty - how do I stop it being a problem!?

For centuries people have known that sharp points in a horse’s mouth are a problem. Rasping them off is a fairly routine procedure, and since horses’ teeth are insensitive, it is perfectly humane.

Your Equine Dental Technician or vet should remove all upper and lower points on the teeth and remove the ridges on the sides of the teeth that would eventually grow down to become sharp points. This is called ‘prophylactic floating’ and prevents the sharp points being a problem in the near future. It needs to be repeated on a regular basis.

The last two upper teeth are harder to reach and therefore require specialist equipment to get to them as well as the skill to deal with them in such a tight area. It would be easy for the EDT or vet to simply avoid dealing with them, particularly as the horse may dislike treatment in this area more than any other. However it is really important for this area to be treated, even in unridden horses, because of the action of masseter muscle pushing the cheek into the teeth when biting down. You need to have an EDT or vet that you trust to do a good job, and tell you if further work is required especially as it’s not an area you will be able to check yourself.

When you are looking for an EDT or vet to treat your horse’s teeth, it’s a good idea to use one that has been recommended by someone knowledgeable that you know and trust totally, or refer to the British Equine Veterinary Association list which is available on their website.

What else do I need to look out for?

Another common issue is caused by the teeth becoming overgrown in particular places. This happens especially where teeth do not meet each other properly, for example when the upper molars overshoot the lower molars. As a result they will not be ground down and will form a sharp overgrowth or ‘hook’ which can become so long it grows into the opposite jaw causing incredible pain.

Also wolf teeth are something that should be looked for – they are small teeth that lie just behind the area of the bit. Because they are so small they are easily damaged and can cause pain through the action of the bit. Larger ones may not cause a problem and they are usually fine in a bitless horse. However, the dentist will usually suggest removal prior to bitting or if they are causing a specific problem.

How would I know if my horse is uncomfortable?

There are lots of tell-tale signs associated with dental or oral pain. They include difficulty swallowing, not wanting to eat and weight loss, or odd behaviour when eating such as eating very slowly, or chewing and then dropping food.

Many ridden behaviours such as headshaking, resistance, rearing, jaw crossing and other behaviours that occur in association with bit pressure, may be signs. Also look out for resistance when having the bridle or head-collar put on. Swellings on the side of the face may be an indication that the horse is packing food into his cheeks.

How often should I have my horse’s teeth checked?

Horses should have their teeth checked every six months to one year; there are very few that will not be developing some sharp edges after an eighteen month period of non-treatment. Younger horses tend to be far more prone to developing sharp points since their teeth grow faster and contain more enamel.

A full check-up must involve the application of a full-mouth speculum (gag) which holds the mouth open so that the back teeth can be checked properly, this only causes the horse stress in very rare cases or with bad handling.

The dental procedure is not a painful one unless teeth need to be removed, in which case sedation and analgesia is required. There is a degree of discomfort associated with dentistry, much like when we have to hold our mouth open for a prolonged period for our own dentist and cannot swallow. With good handling and a patient Dental Technician your horse’s behaviour should improve over treatments as the horse becomes accustomed to the fact it is not really painful or frightening.

It helps if you can train your horse so that he is well mannered, not bargey or inclined to throw his head around. You can teach your horse to accept some restriction of movement of his head by standing facing forwards with his head over your shoulder and your hands over the nose (where a cavesson noseband would fit). Use pressure and release to teach them to keep their head still.

Sam Austin is a Recommended Associate based in Henley-on-Thames and covers South and Central Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and North Hampshire. He is also an Equine Dental Technician. He can be contacted on: **07909 968742** or by email at: **austinequine@hotmail.com.**
Website: **www.austinequine.co.uk**

By Jackie Lloyd, IH Member

A Dually Saves the Day!



Photo courtesy of Rex Photography

Three years ago I bought a two year old, purebred Arabian called Khalifa hoping to compete in endurance. I was passionate about bringing up my youngster using IH methods and I had completed several of the Intelligent Horsemanship courses; I wanted IH to be embedded in my practice rather than something I had to stop and think about. I used the Dually from the day Khalifa arrived – in the field, in the stable, to teach him to load happily in the trailer, and for all his groundwork handling.

"it was marvellous to be able to sit on him for the first time. "

Last year Khalifa was lightly backed as a four year old by Paddy Gracey IHRA, based in Wigan, Lancashire. Khalifa spent a few weeks at Paddy's yard in order to do some work in the round pen, with the saddle, bridle, long lines and poles. I was thrilled to be able to complete a Join Up with Khalifa and it was marvellous to be able to sit on him for the first time. Everything was carried out with confidence and calmness.

Much of what I had learnt on the courses was now applied to prepare him for his ridden work. I worked using the long lines to teach him direction and willingness, and with the poles for accuracy. My relationship with my horse had always been one of co-operation and partnership, and now I could build on these solid foundations to produce a happy riding combination.

This was no overnight miracle! Khalifa was sharp, needing time and sensitive handling. Intelligent Horsemanship techniques worked perfectly for him. We offered him incremental learning, space to think, to process and to understand, along with opportunities to make his own choices.

"My young, green, five year old Arabian horse was as happy, confident and willing as an advanced endurance horse."

Paddy also gave Khalifa plenty of experience with traffic and once we returned home again, he came with me when I rode out on our busy country lane. Khalifa coped with the traffic admirably. I have always loved endurance and currently have an advanced endurance mare, Zim Nazka. We recently completed a 120 kilometre endurance ride and we consistently achieve Grade 1 in our competitive rides. Nazka was Lancashire Champion in 2011 and this year was invited to join the Endurance Great Britain World Class Start and Potential Development Squad. Khalifa has quite a lot to live up to!

After turning him away for the winter of 2011, I planned to give him a gentle introduction to endurance towards the end of this competitive season. In the Spring I brought Khalifa back into work to build his confidence and to increase his level of fitness. Then, in June I took him to Lincolnshire for a week of non-competitive endurance riding. This was quite a baptism of fire for him. He was corralled alongside over one hundred horses and he behaved impeccably!

He was ridden on four days, starting with a short ride of 15 kilometres, followed by a 34 kilometres, a 12 kilometres and a further 32 kilometres. Every day he was given full metabolic checks by the official vets at the beginning and end of each ride. This included having his heart rate taken, gut sounds checked, dehydration checks and trot ups. I was very proud of him!

I took him to a second event at Barbury Castle. This was to be a big test as there would be around four hundred competitors, including FEI riders and their horses, lots of vets, trailers, tents, wagons, crew cars and general activity.

Khalifa spent a relaxing night in his corral and in the morning I began to get ready. I groomed him and began to tack up and then just as I thought everything was going superbly, his bridle broke! The spare, which was always kept in the trailer for emergencies, was now too small. There was nothing else for it, I had to withdraw. Then in a flash of inspiration I thought of my trusty Dually!

I promptly clipped the reins to the rings on his Dually and rode around the 20 kilometre route effortlessly! Khalifa walked, trotted and cantered in a lovely, controlled and confident manner, without a bit. He was faced with horses passing him at speed. He cantered along open fields and tracks, always coming back to hand without question. My young, green, five year old Arabian horse was as happy, confident and willing as an advanced endurance horse. The Dually and Intelligent Horsemanship had saved the day! Monty and Kelly would have been proud.

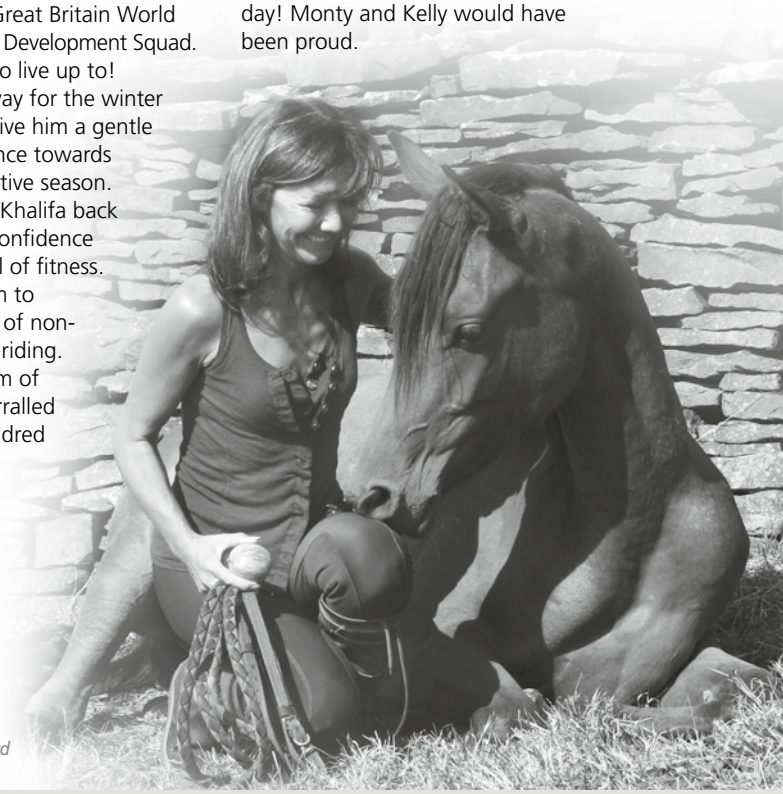


Photo courtesy of Jackie Lloyd

Intelligent Horsemanship Course Dates 2013

Come and have the experience of a lifetime with our expert tuition in the art and science of equine behaviour. It will change the way you view your relationships not only with horses but also the people around you.

Please telephone the office to confirm availability on courses before sending in your application: 01488 71300. Numbers are limited on all courses.

Late spaces do sometimes become available. Please email us on brenda@ihhq.net or ring 01488 71300 if you would like to go on our waiting list.

Perfect Manners Two Day Course with Kelly Marks £325
April 13th -14th

Horse Psychology with Kelly Marks £170
January 26th - 27th
January 28th - 29th

Five Day Foundation Course with Kelly Marks £575
March 11th -15th
March 18th - 22nd

Stud Practice/Handling the Young Foal with Ian Vandenberghe £170 (£85/day)
April 22nd - 23rd
May 18th - 19th

Feeding for Good Behaviour and Health / Maintaining Your Horse's Physical Health for Life with Ian Vandenberghe £170 (£85/day)
January 22nd - 23rd

Intermediate Course: Leading and Loading the Less Easy Horse with Kelly Marks £250
May 25th - 26th

Intermediate Course: Handling the Untouched Horse with Ian Vandenberghe £250
January 24th - 25th

Stage 2 Examination and Assessment Week £575
April

Helpers are always welcome on the Five Day Foundation and Perfect Manners Courses. In return for helping out you can observe much of the course. It's an ideal low-cost way of learning about IH techniques and refreshing your memory. Please ring on 01488 71300 between 9am and 4 pm weekdays for more information

For intermediate courses it is necessary to have completed the Five Day Foundation course first. We need suitable horses for the Leading and Loading the Less Easy Horse course for students to work with, so if you think you have one please email info@ihhq.net – you are then welcome to attend the course with your horse free of charge.

Class Act

Ian Vandenberghe's courses on feeding and nutrition, and the horse as an athlete, have been re-titled to reflect the exact focus and value of the courses. Feeding for Good Behaviour and Health, and Maintaining Your Horse's Physical Health for Life, will still be available in a modular format, enabling you to attend one or both of them over a weekend.

Horse Psychology Projects – important information

Students getting ready to start their Stage Two Horse Psychology Project as part of their preparation for taking the Examination and Assessment Week should note that from the end of March 2013, IHRA Rosie Jones will be responsible for advising them on the content and methodology. Rosie can be contacted on: **07872 589514** or at **rosiejoneshorses@yahoo.co.uk**



Photo courtesy of Dominic Clulow



Photo courtesy of Leanne Roger

Courses Run by IH Recommended Associates

TWO DAY PRACTICAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COURSE

with Jim Goddard, Rosie Jones and Sandra Williams

April 27th and 28th 2013 NEW VENUE - Mayfield, Sussex.

£250 IH Members/£280 Non IH Members

For more info and an application form please contact Sandra at **sandra@hearinghorses.com** or visit **www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk**

Calling all Foundation Course students
NEW learning opportunities just for you

GROUNDHOG DAY

with Linda Ruffle and Ian Vandenberghe

Refresh, re-visit, revise and refine your foundation course learning.

Available as a single day refresher or a more intensive two day course, this will suit anyone wishing to progress with their horsemanship, whether purely for their own interest or looking towards the Monty Roberts Preliminary Certificate of Horsemanship.

February 11th and/or 12th February 28th and/or March 1st

See the IH website for a booking form or contact Linda on **insight.equus@btinternet.com**

GROUNDHOG RIDERS

with Julia Fisher and Linda Ruffle

"So much more than a riding lesson"

Small group clinics exploring the little details that make big differences in the saddle.

"If I hadn't seen the photographic evidence I would not have believed that I could have achieved this much progress in just one day… I now have a solid platform to build upon and go forward from." K.G., Oxon

"Incredible attention to detail and insightful coaching. Confirmation that there is always more to learn." Kelly Marks, Lambourn

February 13th and March 2nd

Enquiries and bookings please email Linda on **insight.equus@btinternet.com**

PERFECT CONFIDENCE COURSES

with Julia Fisher, Dido Fisher and Linda Ruffle

Could this be the time for you to take your next step toward a more confident future with your horse? Previous participants would encourage you:

"Don't think about it – just do it! You won't look back and it's such an inspirational and moving experience."

"You'll learn things at a deep level and discover things about your inner resources that you never knew".

April 6th and 7th May 4th and 5th

For enquiries and bookings email Julia at **perfectconfidenceinfo@gmail.com** or call **07950 965099**

By Kelly Brotherhood

Pass!

"The Stage Two week is a unique experience; hard work but extremely rewarding."



With the next Stage Two examination and practical assessment week scheduled to take place in April, 2013, and the dark nights and Christmas holidays ahead, what better time to get down to serious revision and to get on with your IH Project?

The Stage Two week is a unique experience; hard work but extremely rewarding. The week consists of examinations in all the key subjects covered by the course, an assessment of Join Up and a project presentation. Candidates also need to submit homework set for them.

We talked to four students, Kelly Brotherhood, Jenny Crouch, Jenny Major and Lucy Morgans, who were all awarded the Preliminary Certificate last year, to find out the tactics they employed to prepare for their exams.

Photo courtesy of Edward Major

Together they offer the following advice:

Re-take the courses – If you go again as a helper it's free and you will be amazed at the amount of information that you didn't take in the first time round. Don't forget to take notes as not all of the information is included in the course notes.

Attend some of the intermediate and optional IH Courses

For example:

Starting the Young Horse Course – this course consolidates everything you have learnt so far and gives you the opportunity to put the first saddle on a young horse. It is great revision for the practical assessment and nothing beats working with a genuine starter to really make you think about how and why we take so many safety precautions.

The Practical Skills Development Course – this course gives you the opportunity to address real life challenges faced by Recommended Associates. Within small groups you will make a plan for a specific horse and then carry it out. It is ideal for developing your problem-solving skills and puts all of your IH knowledge into practice.

Homework – complete your homework as soon it arrives so that you can concentrate on your revision. The questions may seem straightforward but they take time to research to answer properly.

Project presentation – Prepare your project presentation as soon as your project is complete and while it is still fresh in your mind. Also, make a list of the equipment you need to use to make your presentation (projector, laptop, handouts, prompts, copies of your final report, etc.) Keep a copy of your presentation on a USB stick just in case something goes wrong, and test everything well in advance!

Find an exam buddy – in the lead up to the exam week you will have lots of questions, and possibly doubts about your knowledge or understanding, or you may just need to talk to someone who is going through the same process as yourself. You can share good ideas, test each other's knowledge, offer each other support, and it's always nice to know you're not alone! To find a buddy, you can ask the IH office to share your contact details with other people who are booked onto the examination week.



Photo call! *Photo courtesy of Lucy Morgans*

Back to school - top tips for revision

"Most people enjoy reading about horses more than any other subject they have ever studied before!"

Avoid last minute cramming. With two or three exams each day, you will not have enough time to cram at the last minute and you could mentally drain yourself before you've even set foot in the classroom. It has taken a lot of time and effort to get this far – so give yourself the time you need to prepare and do yourself proud.

Create a revision plan and pencil in specific slots of time when you will revise certain subjects. Be disciplined and stick to it, but don't revise for more than forty-five to sixty minutes at a time before having a well-earned break. Latent learning works with people too!



Lucy preparing a horse for loading for one of her case studies. *Photo courtesy of Lucy Morgans*

Create questions from your notes. Read through your revision notes and form questions from each section of the information. This enables you to read and understand the information in order to form the question which your mind will then automatically try to answer. Even better, if you write the question and answer down, you will absorb the information all over again and you can give it to your partner, friend or family to enable them to test you.

"I went as far as making a recording of a lot of my revision notes," recalls Jenny C, *"I could listen to it just before I went to bed and hope that it would sink in overnight!"*

Think about scenarios - and how you might resolve them. The IHDG and other horse forums are useful sources for inspiration for this. Write your solutions down in a concise manner as if you were telling the examiner how you might approach the problem.

Rehearse the diagrams too – some of these are included in the exam. Photocopy the image once, blank out the labels, and then make several copies of that. You can make a 'pack' of all the diagrams and go through them labelling each one whenever you have time available for revision – you will be amazed how you improve. You can also practice on a live horse and really get to know the locations of the ligaments and tendons, etc.

Tired of reading notes?

Go through the book list – the books on the reading list are invaluable especially on subjects such as nutrition and performance. It's worth reading all of Kelly's books again as well as 'From My Hands to Yours' by Monty. Reading around subjects is always useful but don't panic, most of the information you need is in your notes and already in your head!

Teach others – even if it's only your non-horsey friend! By explaining to someone else you will continue to learn, and they are bound to have some interesting questions which can test your knowledge too.

Watch videos – Monty's University is an excellent learning tool for the exams and beyond. Kelly Marks' Horsemanship Essentials and Top Marks DVDs are more light hearted but full of useful information. Also, don't forget to watch your own Join Up videos!

Volunteer – whether on the courses, at the demos, or with a Recommended Associate; the more you are around IH and like-minded people the more you will learn and absorb. Remember that your local Recommended Associate is not obliged to help you and may charge for his or her time or use of their equipment.



Jenny C and Jenny M working together at HorseWorld *Photo courtesy of Jo Monck and HorseWorld*

The Stage Two Week

It helps to remember that the examination and assessment week aims at finding out what you know about horses and how to assess and address their behaviour. There are no hidden traps and the questions are all relevant and realistic. The practical assessments are examined by an IHRA who is fully aware of how it feels to be under examination pressure and you will be given an opportunity to repeat your Join Up if appropriate, taking into account the feedback that you receive about your first attempt.

Where next?

Not everyone who takes the examination and assessment week aspires to become an IHRA although many do; they do it for their own satisfaction and the benefit of their own horses. Once the results are received, those that have passed will be able to begin their case studies and further practical experience before being considered as to their suitability to be a Recommended Associate.



L-shaped poles with Kelly Brotherhood *Photo courtesy of Kelly Brotherhood*

Acknowledgements

The successful students all acknowledged the immense help and support they received from all sorts of people while they were preparing for their exams.

"It's so valuable to have the support of your friends and family when you commit yourself to the exams," says Jenny C, "my horses and many other responsibilities were put on hold while I did my revision, and my husband did all the cooking for the family. The best way you can repay this is to make the very best of your revision time."

Both Jennys received considerable help from Sarah Weston, Lucy received a lot of support from Lynn Chapman, and Kelly spent time with Garry Bosworth. "We were also fortunate to spend half a day with Gitte Monahan at Hartsop Farm on the day before the exams began, and this really helped to settle us," says Lucy. "It helped to remind us of what the examiner would be looking for," adds Jenny M.

"This was one of the most fantastic yet nerve racking weeks of my life,"Lucy recalls," made even more special because Monty visited on one of the days."

"The exam week was brilliant and thanks to all the careful preparation before hand, I really enjoyed it." Jenny C.

Want to become an IHRA?

For a complete description of how to go about it, visit the Intelligent Horsemanship website www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk Candidates for the examination week must have completed all of the relevant courses and attendance is by invitation.

By IHRA Liz Pitman

Mind the gap!

A worried horse can be a dangerous horse. A worried horse in a confined situation can be a very dangerous horse. Nowhere is this more true than when you have a horse that is afraid of gaps and thresholds such as doorways and gateways. When confronting the object of his fear, his choices include refusing to have anything to do with it, running backwards or blasting forwards through it regardless of where you happen to be at the time; the narrower the gap, the worse the fear, and the greater the risk of you being squashed.

Sometimes it is possible to avoid the problem. You might decide to leave your horse out full time or you could leave him to come through the gap on his own and hope that he doesn't hurt himself. Neither represents a long term solution and at some point you are likely to have to walk him through a gap when you don't have the opportunity to train him, if he is injured for example.

It helps to recognise where it probably started. In the wild it is not logical for a horse to walk straight through a gap at a slow speed. Predators, being economical creatures, tend to lie in wait at pinch points like this. Horses prefer to cautiously meander up to narrow gaps to assess the level of danger there, and once they reach the gap itself, to rush through. Furthermore, horses that are scared of gaps have often caught themselves at the hind quarters, particularly the hip, as they have gone through one in the past. Sometimes this may have been caused by a handler turning them too early as they have gone through a gate. Others may have rushed out of confined spaces such as a stable or trailer and banged themselves as they went out. Horses that have touched electric fencing when going through a gap may become particularly difficult to handle.

"Retraining a horse that is afraid of gaps isn't usually a long process..."

Once a fear of a specific gap is established it can soon escalate to include any gap. It can also spread to include larger ones such as field gates. However it manifests itself, it's useful to bear in mind that what your horse is most likely afraid of is hurting his quarters again rather than simply an instinctive fear of narrowness. It's a gap that has hurt him before and a gap that could hurt him again - it's real. It can even become a self-fulfilling prophecy as the horse is more likely to catch himself again if he rushes to get through or runs backwards to avoid doing so.

For stabled horses, this fearful gap is waiting for them twice a day. To compound the problem, you also know that every morning and evening there is the risk that your horse will flatten you. Turning out and bringing in times become increasingly stressful as you feed off one another's fear.

It doesn't have to be like this. Retraining a horse that is afraid of gaps isn't usually a long process, although it isn't for the faint-hearted, and you may want to ask your local IHRA to help, especially if you have become so worried that you are unable to support your horse in the relaxed manner he needs.

There is plenty of work you can do to make sure your horse is set up to succeed during the session with the RA. Even before anyone tackles a gap, you can gain precise



Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston

"A worried horse can be a dangerous horse."

control of your horse's feet, and you should be able to ask him to stop, stand still, and back up without question. The L-shape exercise is very useful for this.

As well as being able to do these exercises in the school, working near, but not in, gateways and doorways can help get your horse used to the idea that, even with that threat looming close, he can still relax and give control to you just the same as he did in the school.

The exact approach to tackling the fear of gaps will depend on precisely what your horse is frightened of, and the facilities that you have available. Ideally you want to start working in an area with good footing, plenty of space, and a wide gap that can be narrowed down as you progress. A field gateway, provided the ground is not rutted or muddy, can be a great place to start. Alternatively, a pair of jump wings in a school can work well, or anywhere that you can start to work in a gap that is as wide as possible to make the task as un-intimidating and safe as possible for you and your horse.

It is then all down to our good friend, pressure and release. The very existence of the gap is the pressure, moving away from the gap (in either direction) is the release. The amount of psychological pressure upon the horse will depend on the sort of gap, how narrow it is, and where the horse is in relation to it. Remember that it's probably his quarters that he's worried about rather than his head, so standing with his head in the gap may not worry him too much but he isn't going to risk his beautiful bottom!

A horse's behaviour will often indicate to you which bit he's particularly worried about. Many horses change their reactions as their bodies go through the gap, and his ears will lock on to the gate with intense concentration as he reaches the part of his body that he is really concerned about.



Photo courtesy of David Vatcher

Gateways to success!

Always walk through doorways slowly and carefully, being aware of the full length of the horse before you ask him to turn, to ensure that there are no further knocks. But that's good practice anyway, isn't it?

You need to work incrementally, asking the horse to walk through the gap step by step, later stopping in the middle of it, before making the gap narrower and narrower as he learns to accept it and to relax. In this way you can gradually help him to understand that he is in fact safe and that it doesn't hurt.

It is important to ask him to stand still for a moment in the gap to give him time to realise where he is and to assess how it feels. By helping him relax and encouraging him to lower his head, he can learn that he is okay.



Photo courtesy of Liz Pitman

The process doesn't quite end there. There is one more step that I believe is vital for your horse to feel truly happy with gaps, and that's to introduce the sense of touch. After all, it's not a doorway that didn't touch him that hurt him, it's one that did.

Clearly this has to be handled incredibly sensitively and thoughtfully. Having taught your horse to relax in a gap, the last thing you want to do is suddenly bang him on the hip with the door, reinforcing all the negative memories he has of gaps. It can be useful to enlist the help of another person who should stand safely to one side of the horse, near to but not in the gap itself. Here they can start to stroke the horse's quarters using a deep flat touch. By this stage the horse should be able to cope with this easily, but be attentive to any signs that he can't.

If the horse is happy with this, then you can move on to asking the horse to stand with his head in the gap, while experiencing the touch on his bottom and then having his bottom in the gap, with the feeling of someone touching him. At this point your horse may very well sigh as he realises he's fine.

It's always a good idea to carry out the same exercise from start to finish in different places, including any gateways and doors you can find around the yard, and in trailers providing you have also taught him to load. After that it's a question of plenty of practice and being vigilant about how you negotiate gaps.

Liz Pitman is a 'hands off' IHRA, available to give advice to IH members. Please contact her on: **0772 9629022** or by email: **lizpitman@btinternet.com**

Kelly Marks Perfect Partners BHS Trec Winter Series

New Intermediate Class for Kelly Marks Perfect Partners BHS Winter Series 2012/2013

The Kelly Marks Perfect Partners BHS Winter series is an ideal introduction for anyone wishing to experience this friendly sport. If you are training your young or inexperienced horse or pony this is a great training exercise with many benefits including great prizes to be won!

Following on from a successful season of last year's Kelly Marks "Perfect Partners" BHS TREC Winter Series, the BHS is delighted to announce that the series will be running again this winter, and that Kelly Marks will once again be sponsoring the competition.

The competition focuses on two of the three phases of BHS TREC, Control of Paces (CoP) and is an ideal introduction for anyone who wishes to come and give BHS TREC a go! Competitions are held from October to March at suitable facilities around the country.

Classes will consist of the following:

- **Newcomers** - riders must not have completed in more that one full BHS TEEC competition or have won a Winter Series Open or Newcomers Class.
- **NEW Intermediate** - riders must not have completed one full BHS TREC competition at level 3 or 4 and not have won more than 3 Intermediate Classes or 1 Open Class prior to October 2012.
- **Open** - open to all competitors.

Don't hibernate this winter – join in the fun!

If you are interested in organising a Kelly Marks Winter Series Competition, Please contact the Competitions Office: competitions@bhs.org.uk or call: 02476 840591

Baby, Baby

Congratulations to Sue Palmer, IHRA and Chartered Veterinary Physiotherapist, and her photographer husband Simon, on their baby son, Philip, who was born on 17th September, weighing in at 9lbs and 6 ounces. Rumour has it that he is already a member of IH kids.





Indian Rose

IHRA Rosie Jones continues her 'world' tour and has just completed the Indian leg of her journey. Catch up with her minute-by-minute blog and see her fantastic photos at rosiejoneshorses.wordpress.com

Browning off Bronwen

The editor is really sorry for the omission of contact details for Bronwen Packham IHRA, whose Spotlight appeared in the last magazine. Bronwen is based in Bridgwater, and covers Somerset, Avon, Devon and Cornwall. She can be contacted on 07963 503429 or bronwen@equineharmony.co.uk. Her website is www.equineharmony.co.uk.



What a Scoundrel!

IH member, Joanna MacInnes was also under the spotlight at this year's Horse of the Year Show when her outstanding stallion, Kilvington Scoundrel, was awarded the Kellythorpes Leading Sire of the Year Award. His progeny have achieved great success in HOYS qualifiers, raising him to the top of the league table. They include The Philanderer and this year's Supreme winner, Pearly King.



Demo-Makers!

Volunteers are needed at all of the demonstrations on Monty's tour next year. Let Brenda in the office know on 01488 71300 if you would like to help. All demo-makers get into the demonstration for free and are involved in the preparations for the big event.

Big Girls, Don't Cry

Kelly is delighted to announce that she has asked Fuller Fillies' designer, Suzanne Wild, to help out with the IH range of clothing – so next year we will be offering completely new yard and riding wear designed exclusively for Intelligent Horsemanship.



Suzanne Wild tells us more about Fuller Fillies, but also keep an eye on the IH Facebook page and the magazine for further details.

During the seven years we have been in existence we have got to know our customers very well; the more 'street-cred' we get, the more young XLovelies we attract, but in the main our customers are mums. Maybe they chauffeur their pony-club mad daughters around and would love to ride if only they could find riding clothes to fit them…

So ladies, allow me to introduce you to ` Fuller Fillies!

For those of you who don't know (where have you been…?), Fuller Fillies designs and manufactures horse-riding wear exclusively for the 'plus-sized lady rider'. We start at a UK 16, a REAL 16, and go up to a generous size 24.

I came back to riding as a thirty-nine year old after a twenty-five year break. I expected it might hurt but I didn't expect to struggle so much to find jodhpurs that I could get past my knees! I recall sitting at Bishop Burton watching a Monty Roberts' demo and glancing around the crowd – a rough count told me about forty percent of those ladies were plus-sized, many wearing menswear with sleeves way too long and totally unflattering. I saw the same thing time and time again at local shows and horse sales – everywhere I saw horses I also saw beautiful big, bumptious girls hiding in ugly, ill-fitting clothing.

Luckily for me, and hopefully you, I happened to have studied fashion design in the 80s, and that included pattern cutting and tailoring; as I was a good size 20 AND rode a horse, I was ideally placed to make a difference – and Fuller Fillies was born.

We have gone on to win awards for our clothing and boots – yes, it is true, we make boots that will accommodate a twenty inch calf width without assuming you are 6' 6" tall! No illusions here ladies, all of our models are size 18 or bigger and Hannah in our photographs is only 5'3" too (like me – she is a Weeble.)

As you read this, our brand new 'direct to consumer' website will have gone live so that you can buy online in confidence – and with our new Loyalty Club you can earn yourself a discount of up to ten percent by being a customer!

You don't have to believe a word I tell you – visit our Facebook page and read what other XLovelies have to say: www.facebook.com/fullerfillies or go straight to our website www.fuller-fillies.co.uk

We look forward to seeing you there!





Christmas Bonus!

Enter our fabulous Christmas competition and win some great prizes.

For a chance to win just answer as many questions as you want and email your answers to the **editor@ihhq.net** by January 25th, 2013. The lucky winners will be notified by email.

WIN a Two Day IH Horse Psychology Course

with our very own Kelly Marks - value £170

Question 1.
What is the term used to describe the phenomena where a horse appears to have difficulty learning something new on one day but seems to have got it the next day without having any more training?



WIN a Voucher for £80 for a Neue Schule Bit

The lucky winner will be advised on the choice of bit.

Question 2.
If you were using a loose ring bit that measured 5 ½", what size would you look to use if you wanted to change to a fixed cheek?



WIN a Horse Massage Book and DVD Package

Signed by the author Sue Palmer

Question 3.
Sue is a Chartered Veterinary Physiotherapist and member of ACPAT. What does ACPAT stand for?



WIN a Red Horse Winter Survival Kit

A great prize for the winter months!

Includes: Sole Paint (paint on anti-thrush hoof dressing), HoneyHeal (for field injuries and mud fever), Stronghorn (to toughen up soggy winter soles!) and Glucosamine and MSM (to help with those aches and pains that the cold, damp weather can bring).



Question 6.
What painful foot condition can commonly be caused by insulin resistance?

WIN A Woof-Bed for your Favourite Dog

Question 4.
When Freddy was a young pup he ate something he shouldn't have... was it -
A) A loaf of bread?
B) A packet of butter?
C) A tray of eggs?

You'll need to look at the Woof-Bed website to find the answer!
www.woofbed.co.uk



WIN a Bag of TopSpec Feed Balancer

Worth £39.95

Question 7.
What major nutrient promotes muscle development?

TopSpec®



WIN A Voucher for £25 for Fuller Fillies

Treat yourself to a great range of designer clothing

Question 5.
What is the size range of Fuller Fillies' clothing?



WIN a Copy of Cayman Star

Signed by the author Elizabeth Brown

Question 8
Name the three Cayman islands



By IHRA, Sarah Weston



The IH Charity of the Year

The sign on the wall at Shy Lowen proclaims that it is a sanctuary for horses and ponies but in truth it is a sanctuary for humans too. There's a group of teenagers here that are finding a peacefulness which is rare in modern living, especially close to an inner city. They have their arms around the horses while the sanctuary has its arms around them. Some might call these young adults 'under-privileged', but you would never know that whilst working alongside them because they appear to have everything they need while they are here. You should certainly not feel sorry for them. These are bright, street-wise kids who know more about horses and how to train them gently than many of the rest of us. Never underestimate them.

Initially Bernadette, the founder of Shy Lowen, had no intention of involving other people in her dream of a safe place for rescued horses. However, when the results of her daily efforts to improve the land she had begged from the council were being vandalised every night and most people would have given up in despair, she decided to accost the perpetrators and ask them why they were doing it. "Because you have horses and must be rich", they replied, although they actually seemed to be motivated by the excitement of being chased by the police. "Why don't you ask what we are doing here?" she retorted and when they asked, she told them. "Why don't you ask if you can help?", she added, and they did. She accepted their help and she accepted them - the key to the success of this might be that she was brought up here herself and knows how things are.

Since then, a series of Open Days and word of mouth has brought in more and more young volunteers from the local community. There is an 'open door' policy so that everyone is welcome and there are no limits on the numbers. Knowing that Bernadette works non-stop all day and all evening, I thought the best thing I could do was to go and see Shy Lowen for myself. From the moment I walked through the gates it felt like I was being embraced. My colleague Liz and I were greeted by about a dozen eager teenagers keen to tell us about the horses and ponies and they talked non-stop about how they were progressing. Their own problems, if they had any, were irrelevant here; they were too busy to think about them.



First lesson, don't let the volunteers loose with your camera!

I was fascinated by how it all worked. Somewhere between chaos and control there is real sanctuary here and somehow Bernadette and husband Eric, Kellie and the other adult volunteers have achieved an amazing balance. They have established a work ethic in this team of young people at the same time as allowing them the freedom to work at their own pace, in their own way, and with a great deal of autonomy. Just like the training that is done with the horses, it seems that the few rules that exist make it easy to do the right thing and make unwanted behaviour quite redundant.



No one is afraid of hard work
Photo courtesy of Liz Pitman



A special hug for Nico from volunteer Sian. *Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston*

There are also bigger messages about human issues of self-worth, self-esteem, ego, consent and tolerance. The way they treat the horses is reflected in the way people are expected to treat each other. The biggest message of all is that violence is never the answer.

It was my privilege to be with these young people not the other way round and the horses are privileged to have them too. Once established, each volunteer is able to form a one to one relationship with a particular horse that they feel a special connection to. Many of them will choose a horse that they know is going to be a long term project, but their overriding aim is to prepare that horse for a loan home.

I met Sian and Elise, both fourteen years old, delightful, polite young women who have taken on two of the most traumatised ponies at the yard. Sian explained to me how working with Cash, an eight year old wild Carneddau stallion, had taught her to be patient in her own life. Diagnosed with life-long Crohn's Disease, she was frustrated whenever she had to endure medical tests or wait for the results. Elise, who has chosen to work with Beauty, an eleven year old Welsh cob, found it hard to put into words how it made her feel being with the ponies. Suffice it to say that she has come to Shy Lowen every single day, after school, every weekend and Bank and school holidays, since she started four years ago, missing only two days for family events! Beauty has come from a riding school where it is suspected that she was forced to accept tack when she is even terrified of ropes. Elise has started to gain the trust of this sensitive and flighty mare and is now able to touch her and put her head-collar on quietly.

Eric explains that the volunteers work hard from nine to six with half an hour for lunch and there is always plenty to do. The horses are on limited grazing so they need their hay topped up at regular intervals and several feeds. Many are being physically rehabilitated so need special attention paid to their diet. However, as well as topping up the water and mucking out the stables, the young adults fill in every other moment with making sure that the mental welfare of the horses is looked after just as much if not more. Intelligent Horsemanship techniques are used throughout and it is captivating to listen to Jasmine, an even younger volunteer, explaining how to prepare a pony for being sat on for re-starting.

I don't think I have ever met a bunch of such tenacious, independent, articulate, co-operative teenagers all aching to spend every day with horses. They are fiercely protective towards them too. Tyler, then thirteen, stopped everyone in their tracks when the vet suggested ear twitching a pony to keep him still for an injection. "That's not what we do here," she said, reminding everyone of what the charity stood for. Vicky was adamant that Toby, the pony she looks after should be cuddled, after all, he may be re-homed to someone

Continued ⇨



Elise with her chosen pony, Beauty.
Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston

The IH Charity of the Year

who does it, and he needs to be able to cope with it. We also had quite a debate about whether horses understand English.

Frankly, some of the facilities at Shy Lowen are ramshackle and certainly not smart, but the horses know that they are safe. A lot of thought has gone into the stables so that they can be doubled in size to allow horses and ponies that get on to live together. This has been the making of Toby who shares a stable with Marny and is gently put in his place. The amazing thing is that when you start to look at what happens here, the background drops away and it is the ethos that shines through.

I doubt that Bernadette or the kids would ever want to be somewhere that was posh and clinical, but if ever a charity needed a Secret Millionnaire or half of someone's big lottery win, this one does. Just imagine how many more horses and humans they could help then. In the meantime, every five or ten pounds that you can give would be greatly appreciated and spent on something important.

"If ever a charity needed a Secret Millionnaire or half of someone's big lottery win, this one does."



Jasmine on board Merry.
Photo courtesy of Liz Pitman



Pony experiences raise a little money for the charity.
Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston

Cheques can be made payable to: 'Intelligent Horsemanship Charity Appeal' and post to the IH Charity Organiser at High Clere, Tudwick Road, Tiptree, Essex CO5 0SA

www.justgiving.com/intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk

If you live close to Shy Lowen (Liverpool) then perhaps you could buy an extra bag of feed while you're at the merchants and drop it in.

Shy Lowen also has a Facebook page where you can keep up to date with the horses, ponies and humans!



Photo courtesy of Liz Pitman

Charity news

Busy Lizzie

Horse charities like Shy Lowen are bursting at the seams with horses needing care, and are in need of ever more financial support. At the same time people are feeling the pinch too.

In October, the IHDG held its first auction week. With generous donations from many people, there were lots of goodies up for grabs, including RA time, books and dvds, tack, art and jewellery. In total over £550 was raised. We hope to repeat it, but bigger and better, next year.

The New Year will see the start of a new fundraising initiative - a Sponsored Goal. Each person can choose their own goal - horsey or not - the only stipulation is that it has to be something hard enough for people to sponsor you but at the same time remain achievable.

We want as many people to take part as possible, so please come and join the Sponsored Goals Group on the IHDG which will be formed in January 2013. We hope to reach as many goals as we can, and raise much needed cash for a very worthy cause.

All of these fundraising ventures take up a fair bit of time, something our Charity Co-ordinator, Michelle Powers, is rather short of at the moment. RA Liz Pitman has therefore agreed to take over the role. Our thanks go to Michelle for all the hard work she has put in.

So if you've got any questions about the Sponsored Goals, if you have a fundraising idea yourself, or if you'd just like to know more about IH charity work, ask Liz! **lizpitman@btinternet.com**



Kelly supports the Horsepower team at the Royal Mews before they set off.

The Horsepower Charity

Founder Derek Knottenbelt reports that the team of vets successfully completed their tour of just under 4000 miles, and delivered nine CPD sessions for vets in nine different venues in nine countries. He adds, "We battled extremes of weather including ice, cold, and wet, and up to 48 degrees under a cloudless sky. We fought the red tape on entering and leaving Morocco (six hours and seven hours respectively at customs), and hurled ourselves down twisting country lanes and up autobahns."

"We are on target to reach £125,000 above our costs, and that will mean a significant benefit to the working donkeys and horses in Mali and Mauritania, and a major boost to the disabled riding centre in Bamako, Mali. We remain open for further donations and I would appeal to everyone to dig deep and help us.
www.justgiving.com/horsepower2012 or www.horsepower2012

The Shy Lowen Calendar

Available now!

The Shy Lowen calendar features 13 stunning images of Shy Lowen horses specially photographed by Deb Maxwell. This will make a perfect gift for anyone. Price £8 inc. p&p per copy through **www.justgiving.com/shylowencalendar**



Antics
supporting children affected by cancer
registered charity number 1102359

The Antics Charity

The Antics Charity, founded by Sandy Vandenberghe, continues to support children affected by cancer. The stud fees of Sandy's figurehead stallion go directly to the charity. Laptops and iPads have really made a difference to children experiencing extended periods of in-patient treatment, enabling them to keep up with schoolwork and maintain social contact with friends, and fill long hours when other activities may be restricted. Trips out to LegoLand and West End shows have enabled families to enjoy some respite from the focus on ill health or loss.

The Antics Charity has been lucky in having a small core of regular supporters, but fund raising efforts will need to increase next year and so a barn dance is envisaged for next summer. In 2014 it is likely that there will be a partnership with 'Dream Challenges' for a specific sponsored adventure.

Contact the Antics Charity at **info@anticscharity.org.uk** or call Hartsop Farm on **01993 868914**

Show Time!



Photo courtesy of Matthew Webb

Monty's Autumn Tour has been a resounding success. Just when you think he can't possibly get any better, he surpasses himself.

"I won't be able to do justice to the events of last night the events of at Easton College in Norwich, where I saw my first ever Monty Demo. I've heard lots of people say that seeing one changed their life - and now I can see why. Monty was absolutely incredible." Curlytobiano, IHDG

There was a feeling of palpable excitement before each of the demos.

"Just leaving at 8am to get to the demo at Glasgow. Watch out for my old blue Landrover Defender - it's a challenge, so sorry to everyone on the A9 this morning!" Marsayy, IHDG

The IH magazine asked Monty to tell us which four demonstrations had been the highlight of his tour.

As I write, we have completed seven of the ten demonstrations scheduled for autumn 2012. I will start by saying that this has probably been the most enjoyable tour thus far. Much of the credit has to go to an incredibly competent, efficient and compatible team.

For the first time since I started my global tours at Windsor in 1989, my highlights will include something other than a horse!

Our tour opened at Hadlow College in Kent. We started off with a fantastic evening that produced two of our highlights. The first, during the IH Members' Private Audience, was a three year old coloured Warmblood cross Welsh D mare called Honour. Clare Webb, her owner, described this beautiful young filly as being significantly head shy. A quick test of this revealed that she had an extreme fear of anyone touching her ears.

I made the decision that the best course of action would be to use my recently discovered Centaur system. As this requires a quiet gelding to sit on, I was in luck as Kelly had brought Pie along to assist in another session. After Kelly did Join Up with Honour, Pie was brought in and I mounted him. This allowed me to begin my work by stroking Honour and working my way towards her ears. As both horses were coloured it presented a beautiful picture. Although Honour initially displayed a tendency to rear, she was soon allowing me to rub her entire head without any resistance. The members seemed to appreciate this demonstration.

Two horses later a gorgeous black Hanoverian mare entered the round pen. Wakita is seven years old and owned by Pippa Drew. Pippa described Wakita as an extremely talented dressage mare that has won eleven of the thirteen competitions she has entered. We were told that she wouldn't go along the edge of the arena at the Hickstead Masters or past flower pots at the Regional Championships, whilst at home she would spook at shadows. The owner's description of her mare's spooky tendencies understated the problem, after observing her for just two minutes I would use the words 'volatile and explosive!' Wakita was on fire, and her actions could only be described as extremely dangerous for any rider or handler.

I went to work with my normal 'spooky horse routine' and what we saw was nothing short of magic. Wakita left the round pen overwhelmingly improved.

Pippa agreed that she would continue with the work at home. A few days later we received a message that Wakita had won another dressage competition in conditions where any horse might be spooky. We were told that Wakita remained calm and performed her test admirably. We will all remember Wakita and follow her progress with interest.

It was eight days later at Myerscough College, Preston that we met Poppalbee Minnie Mouse and her rider, Libby. Minnie is a 12 hh Riding Pony. The rider and the pony were equal in age – both nine years old. We were told that Minnie was called in second in the First Ridden pony class at the Horse of the Year Show but was sent out of the ring shortly after she was asked



Photo courtesy of Simon Palmer

to stand in line, because she was unsettled, threatening to rear, and disturbing the other competitors. Very embarrassing!

Minnie's entourage described her as fizzy and our test showed that they were telling it straight! After a good Join Up, I set to work with the new green Dually halter, helping Minnie to learn the value of standing still. Minnie proved to be a good student and was soon on the right path.



Photo courtesy of Simon Palmer

We actually finished the demonstration with her young rider in the saddle and Minnie standing like a sculpture, electronic sounds booming in the building and the live audience applauding and stamping. Minnie and her rider created a picture worth a thousand words, calm, cool and collected, were the new words to describe Minnie's behaviour. It was a treat.

The very next demonstration at Myerscough involved a combat veteran, Paul Rooney. I have been doing a lot of work with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) victims and so Paul was really the subject of the demonstration. Paul was overwhelmingly moved by Jack the horse he worked with, and this demonstration received an incredible amount of positive social media attention.

What the owners say:

"You will be glad to know that we have had Jack in and out of the trailer today in a nice relaxed way! Amazing! Please pass our thanks on to Monty." Jane (owner of Jack the non-loading horse, Myerscough demonstration)

"Thank you for the most amazing experience on Saturday. I still can't quite believe it really happened to me and my horse! All your associates and helpers were wonderfully friendly and helpful; nothing was too much trouble." Bridget Heath (owner of Otis, Reaseheath demonstration).

"Just to say thanks to the whole team for a fantastic evening, and in particular to Kelly and Monty for allowing us to help Charlie. Thanks once more for making this world a better place!" Cath and Mhari (owners of Charlie the Polo Pony that disliked being clipped, Ingliston demonstration).

"We have a new, positive outlook with Parker now and look forward to learning more about Intelligent Horsemanship." Claire and Mark (owners of Parker, the horse that was water phobic, Ingliston demonstration).

What the audience said:

"It proves time and again that a horse is never a lost cause." Ladyndibs, IHDG

"If I had to watch Monty work every day I would be in heaven. Each horse is so special and each opening of the communication lines so moving." Marianne, IHDG

"Seeing Monty and his methods on television and reading about it in books is great, but not even close to seeing it done live, right in front of your own eyes where there is no time editing, or editing of any kind, and you can see that it really does work just like you see on those programmes or in those books. Regardless of how many times you see it, it never fails to be powerful, emotional, thrilling, inspiring, and very humbling. You really do come away from every demo with an amazing buzz." Cobblersmonkey, IHDG

"I saw Monty at Myerscough College and he was brilliant. It gave me the confidence to go home and do Join Up with a horse I help." Harriet Allen



Lillie from Shy Lowen soon has Monty 'mirroring'.



A handshake for Keri



Photo courtesy of Simon Palmer

By Kelly Marks

My World!

I hope you enjoyed watching the Olympics as much as I did. I'm sure you'll agree it wasn't just the younger generation who were inspired by it. Our Olympians may have given us all that extra push we need to consider stretching our boundaries a little.

I decided to treat myself to a dedicated horsey week, putting three shows in the diary plus taking Harry on 'hound exercise' with the Southern Shires Bloodhounds.

I also spent a great day with IHRAs Julia Fisher and Linda Ruffle having some tweaks to my riding. Many of you will be familiar with Julia's brilliant riding position lessons on the Five Day Foundation Course and how adjusting the position of your pelvis can aid security, confidence and effectiveness.

I'd felt less effective in my riding during the last year and couldn't understand why as I was really trying harder to ride well rather than taking it for granted. It all became obvious after less than five minutes under Julia's observation. In my head riding properly meant sitting up 'straight'. Unfortunately my version of this had the effect of tipping my pelvis forward; making me less secure and effective throughout my body.

The third show in the week was The Royal County of Berkshire. Any of you who have watched the Horse and Country TV programme about Harry will know that galloping wasn't his strongest point before, and so it was especially good to hear the judge who rode him rave about his wonderful gallop.



Photo courtesy of J.P. Event Photography Ltd (Copyright)

He was placed second in the Heavy Weight Hunter class below the horse that went on to be Champion with professional show rider, Katie Jerram. I was surprised to learn we'd qualified for the Royal International Horse Show next July, so there is something to aim for in 2013!

The key training point came later when I was quietly hacking Harry around the show ground. Suddenly he felt as if he'd grown another hand. He had spotted the Shire horses pulling carts and I felt as if I was sitting on an unexploded bomb. This was way out of his comfort zone.

Photo courtesy of J.P. Event Photography Ltd (Copyright)



I took Monty's saying to heart: 'There are old heroes and there are bold heroes but there are no old, bold heroes'. I got off Harry and fetched a Dually and a long line to put on him before we went back to face them. I have to admit there was a little while when I don't think he even knew I was on the end of the line. I didn't have much choice but to let him circle round me, look and snort again, but when I had the opportunity I took a couple of steps back to get at the right angle to give one pull and move his feet. Gradually he circled less and stood still, quivering, for longer.

When I could back him up and lead him nicely, I took the opportunity to lead Harry behind the Shires as they came out of the ring. Following things of which they are frightened really helps a horse's confidence.

"This part of the exercise went so well that I could put his bridle back on, hop aboard, and was soon able to ride him around with all the driving horses."

This part of the exercise went so well that I could put his bridle back on, hop aboard, and was soon able to ride him around with all the driving horses. A Shire handler told me that he had known some of the Shires be terrified and bolt if another team came towards them. He thought the noise of the chains might be a big part of the problem.

The next day was our day with the Bloodhounds. I was fairly hopeful our first meeting with hounds would go smoothly. It was the equivalent of just an hour and a half hack in company and Harry was very good. However, my heart stopped momentarily when I realised we were going to ride over a single lane motorway bridge – I do not like heights – but I just reminded myself to breathe and we made it!

I'm so glad I did this. I think it will help me to help others as I now appreciate more of the problems that can literally come up 'in the field'. It shows up any weaknesses in my training which I can then come home and work on. I really enjoy this aspect of horsemanship, continually trying to improve myself for my horses. It was also great fun. Being with my horses, being around other horsey people, grooming, primping, riding, praising – I wondered why I hadn't made time to do more of this!

It's funny but IHRA Gitte Monahan who is a vegetarian used to tell me how much fun 'Bloodhounding' was. I always used to think it was odd as it sounded so well, bloody, somehow. Of course, Bloodhounds actually hunt the 'natural scent of man'; This is a volunteer who runs off for eight miles or more with the hounds setting off to track him ten minutes later.

So all in all, a fantastic horsey week with plenty of key learning points including:

- A riding position lesson with Julia Fisher is definitely worthwhile!
- If you are going to a county show and decide to take your horse for a nice relaxing hack round the grounds, it would be an ***intelligent*** idea to have a look at the programme to get some idea of what you're likely to meet, such as donkeys, camels and air displays, so that you can prepare.
- To have a truly pleasant time on your horse, teaching him to stand still while on a completely loose rein is essential, especially if the Bloodhounds stop at the pub.
- You can learn and achieve much more by spending seven days totally immersed in horses as you can if you spend dribs and drabs of time throughout the year. This isn't always easy for any of us to do, but I really believe it's so worthwhile and another reason you should come and join us on some of the courses!

Elvis Lives!

Pearly King, known as Elvis at home, was the recent winner of the Supreme Championship at the Horse of the Year Show.



Photo courtesy of ESPhotography.co.uk

His owner, Sarah Carey recalls, "I bought Elvis as a precocious three year old from Stanley Grange Stud in Middlesborough. From the moment I saw him I knew that there was that special 'star quality' about him. He came home until the November when he went back to Stanley Grange for Simon Charlesworth to start riding him."

HOYS sponsor and IH Member Julia Topham-Barnes, saw Pearly King as a four year old and thought he was the most perfect hack she had seen for a very long time. "I told Sarah and Simon that one day I would be presenting this horse with my Hack of the Year trophy."

Sarah continues, "Simon showed Elvis only four times in his first season as I don't like to over-show youngsters. At each show, including Devon County and Cheshire County, he was chosen as overall Hack Champion. The following year he won the Hack Championship at Royal Windsor. We went to the Royal International Horse Show and once again won the Hack Championship, but when it came to the judging of the Supreme Championship he could not cope with the big occasion and Simon, quite rightly, left the ring before it got too much for the horse.

Elvis's problem was that he would lock onto something that would take his attention. He would begin to fidget, something that a hack must never do as they need to have exceptional manners. My mum suggested that I contact Kelly."

Kelly takes up the story, "My part in Elvis's story seems to demonstrate 'synchronicity' to an incredible degree. He first came to my attention at The Royal International Horse Show 2010 when, just before the Supreme Championship, Julia Topham-Barnes said that I must look out for him. I dutifully obeyed but didn't see that much of him because he was unsettled in the line up and his rider asked to be excused.

It was the following year when I received a call from Sarah, asking if I could come and help. I explained I was 'on tour' with Monty at the time but asked whether it was 'OK to bring Monty along?' She didn't seem to think this was an inconvenience at all!

We arrived to meet the most elegant horse you can imagine. His chief issue was not being able to stand still but, as so often happens in these cases, he would also 'boil over' afterwards. What was most impressive was how Simon took in the instructions and tips he was given and turned them into an art form. Neither Monty nor I mentioned to anyone that we had worked with Pearly King. It might have subliminally influenced judges into thinking he was a 'problem' horse, and we understand and respect that there are many times when owners appreciate confidentiality."

Sarah carries on,"Kelly and Monty came to Simon's yard on a bitterly cold February morning and quietly showed Simon how to ask Elvis to stay relaxed and focused on the job in hand - just standing still! It was amazing to watch the three of them working together.

As the 2012 season began Elvis was a much more focused horse. His biggest test was at the British Show Horse National Championships at Addington where the atmosphere at night is always electric. He stood like a rock and was declared champion. Simon continued working steadily with Elvis in preparation for HOYS, always bearing in mind what he had learnt.

In the Large Hack Class at HOYS, all the horses stood in line following the judging, waiting for the prizewinners to be called. When it got to the final three my heart was pounding, "3rd…, 2nd…, and the winner of the Large Hack of the Year is Pearly King!" I was over the moon. He stood like a rock whilst he was presented with rosettes and did a marvellous lap of honour. In the Hack Championship which followed the pair performed impeccably yet again, and then they were called forward as Topham- Barnes Hack of the Year."

"I don't think sponsors are supposed to cry when they present prizes, but I certainly did this time!" adds Julia.

Sarah continues, "Ten HOYS champions from various classes come forward for the preliminary judging of The Supreme and they all have to give an individual show. Elvis and Simon stood quietly until it was their turn and then performed a breathtaking show."

Julia recounts, "Monty and Kelly arrived just before the preliminary judging and I told Monty that he was going to see the best Show Hack he could ever wish to see. I didn't know that he had actually worked with Elvis!"

Sarah recalls, "At the final judging Simon and Elvis performed an immaculate show. I saw Simon take his top hat off to someone in the Sponsor's Section and only later realised it was Monty. As all of the champions lined up I hardly dared to hope that Elvis could win. When his name was read out as HOYS Supreme 2012 I could hardly contain myself; it is what dreams are made of."

Kelly adds: "Not only was the result fantastic, but the fact that Simon took his hat off and nodded to Monty and me in acknowledgement made it doubly thrilling. That week in the Horse and Hound Simon gave full credit to Monty for all the help he had given him."

Sarah finishes, "During the Cavalcade Elvis stood calmly, ignoring everything going on around him, whilst Auld Lang Syne and the National Anthem were played, all followed by the tumultuous applause that signals the finale to HOYS.

I still have to pinch myself. There are so many people behind the scenes that have worked so hard to make this dream come true, but I truly feel that Monty and Kelly put the foundations in for us to build upon with Elvis."


Julia presents Simon and Pearly King with their prize. *Photo courtesy of ESPhotography.co.uk.*

By Liz Pitman, IHRA

Back to basics

Catch me if you can



There are few problems more frustrating than not being able to catch your horse. It can also feel very personal that your horse doesn't want to be with you. How can you teach your horse to be caught easily?

Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston and HorseWorld

Rule 1 - check there are no reasons why he might not want to be caught.
Catching problems fall into two broad categories - those horses for which being caught itself is an issue, and those horses for which being caught is a symptom of another issue, such as not wanting to be ridden or something upsetting happening outside the field. It's worth making sure that you don't always just catch your horse to work him and that sometimes you just do something nice and really relaxing.
In either situation, you need to analyse your technique.

Rule 2 - never make your horse feel like you are chasing him or trying to grab hold of him.
Many horses are simply worried by the process of being caught. Any time you feel stressed, hurried, or frustrated - typical feelings which are exacerbated when you can't catch your horse - you will worry your horse too. It's worth standing by the gate for a moment and making sure you are in the right frame of mind before you even attempt to catch your horse.



Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston

Any time you chase your horse you will be perceived as a predator and your horse's instinct will be to run away. To avoid being seen as a predator, keep soft in your attitude, and aim to just go and talk to him.

Rule 3 - use advance and retreat correctly.
Advance and retreat is a form of pressure and release which can be really useful when catching a horse. However it is the release that teaches, not the pressure.

When it comes to catching, you advancing is pressure, him moving away is a form of release. So what do we normally do? As soon as the horse stops we move towards him, and as soon as he moves away we throw up our hands and stand still. In other words, he gets pressure for doing what we want and a release for doing what we don't. That's the wrong way round!

Make it slightly less comfortable for your horse to move away from you by applying just enough eye contact and body language to move him in walk. The second he looks at you or stands still, drop the pressure. Turn away, and drop your eye contact so that you are providing the release. He'll learn to seek release from the pressure by standing still. You should then be able to gradually get closer as he understands that you don't intend to chase him.

When you do get close enough to touch him, resist the urge to catch him. Instead, stroke him gently for a moment, and then walk a few steps away. Prove you are a friend, not a predator. Start stroking at his shoulder, and then work up his neck towards his head. You will both soon be able to relax enough that you can gently pop his head-collar on.

Work through this when you have time and no pressure yourself, make it easy and nice for both of you, and it shouldn't be long before you have a horse who wants to be caught.



Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston and HorseWorld

Kelly recommends...

Personally I give my horses something nice to eat every single time they are caught and brought back to their stables. They always have a small fibre-based feed before doing any work since it is a myth that horses should be exercised on an empty stomach.

By Kellie O'Shea, Shy Lowen Horse & Pony Sanctuary, Liverpool

Horse Massage for Horse Owners



"I received a very positive response"

I was so excited to read Horse Massage for Horse Owners and to get started on the techniques. However, I also approached it with a degree of trepidation, given that I do not fit the 'horse owner' category and my knowledge of equine anatomy is minimal! Just a few pages into the book, it became clear that I needn't have worried. Sue provides clear, precise tutorials and anatomical descriptions which are appropriate for all levels of experience and understanding.

The preparation work ensures that the reader feels comfortable and confident when they move on to the practical hands-on sessions. It is recommended that the reader finishes the book before they do any hands-on work, in order to gain a full understanding of the benefits, application of, and reasons for massage, as well as the contra-indications.

The techniques are explored using human subjects to begin with. This gave me invaluable feedback on the various methods and intensity levels of the strokes that might otherwise have come in the form of a disgruntled horse, or even a hoof in my direction; nobody wants to test something in a real life situation that could make a horse unhappy, or worse, cause injury.

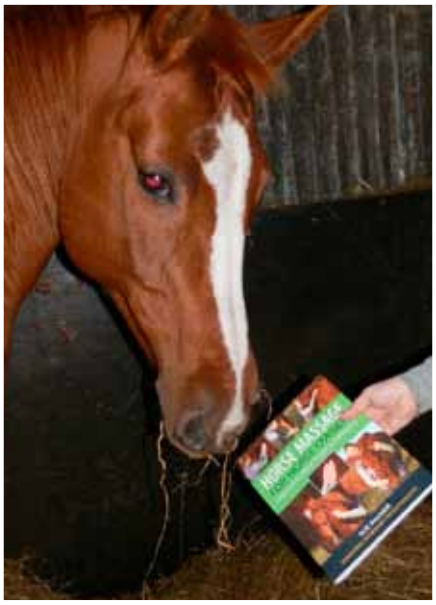
Sue is clearly extremely passionate about the benefits of massage for horses and their welfare generally, and urges us to be acutely aware of the physical and mental demands we make of horses in their various roles. She encourages the reader to accept responsibility for assessing their horse's fitness and physical and mental wellbeing at all times.

She acknowledges the gifts horses give us on a daily basis and the care and gratitude they deserve in return. Given that my own interest in horses comes primarily from a welfare perspective, it is rare and refreshing to come across educational material delivered by someone with significant expertise in their field who manages to marry 'functional' with 'feeling'. A minor issue to some, Sue identifies the horse throughout as 'he' because she cannot bear to hear a horse described as 'it'. This reflects the sensitivity and empathy in Sue's overall approach.

There is a great deal of factual information in the book, and the excellent photography and illustrations leave the reader feeling that they have fully understood each point. There is a useful prompt section at the end of the book which can be utilised in the hands-on massage sessions if required.

"the reader feels comfortable and confident"

Above all the book is accessible and fun, and was a pleasure to read from beginning to end.



All photos courtesy of Meg Challinor

I received a very positive response from my helpful equine test subject, Amber Jazz. Jazz had a difficult past, suffering injury and neglect, but has recently been brought back into ridden work here at Shy Lowen. Her rehabilitation partner, Megan, was on hand for our session and we both agreed that at certain points, particularly when receiving massage on her back and quarters, there was an almost audible "ahhh" from in the stable! Just after Jazz's session we removed a bandage covering a small flesh wound on her hock (avoided during the massage session as per the contra-indications) and Jazz appeared far more relaxed about us doing that than might normally be anticipated. This alone gave me all the feedback I needed in terms of the benefits of horse massage in action!

By IHRA Sarah Weston

I Say!

Having considered the training, feeding and physical condition of the horse, IHRA Sarah Weston talks about the importance of well fitting tack to the performance of the horse and his ability to develop top line.

I'm not comfortable with that

A horse that is uncomfortable is unlikely to be able to lift their back and to develop their muscles in a way that will enhance their performance. Some horses will express their dissatisfaction with the fit of their tack through very obvious behaviour. They may clamp their jaw to prevent the bit going into their mouth, cross their jaw when ridden, or pull continuously at the reins. They may move away from the saddle when it is brought out, bite the owner as the girth is done up, refuse to stand still when mounted, hollow their back when ridden or buck during transitions from trot to canter.

"Some horses will express their dissatisfaction with the fit of their tack through very obvious behaviour."

These are clear signals that the horse is not comfortable and that the underlying reasons need to be investigated.

Nola was standing quietly outside her stable when I arrived, enjoying the sun, and being brushed. However, as soon as her owner came out of the tack room with the saddle she began to move her bottom left and right, using the full 180° available to her. At one point she almost squashed her owner against the wall.

As the girth was done up she pinned her ears back and turned to bite her owner, only narrowly missing. At the mounting block she moved her bottom away from her owner and moved backwards and forwards, postponing the moment when her owner would get on board for as long as possible.

Further investigation revealed that she was highly sensitive when touched at the withers and in the sacro-iliac area, as well as at the girth. The synthetic saddle was tight at the withers but moved around a lot at the cantle where there was only a narrow weight bearing surface.

The girth was one of those designed with one narrow band down the centre which took all the strain. Nola was clearly shouting about all of this. I felt that she needed a visit from a Chartered Veterinary Physiotherapist and the saddler before we went any further with behavioural work.

"However some horses are much quieter in their response"

However some horses are much quieter in their response and may simply tolerate the discomfort whilst finding other ways to compensate physically. The art is to recognise the signs early so that the horse doesn't develop long term physical problems or feel the need to escalate their behaviour. This type of physical change is the most difficult to spot as they can take place very slowly over time and yet can result in injury, soreness, and loss of performance.

Trust What Your Horse Tells You



Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston

I wanted to find a Western saddle that fitted my horse, Theoden, perfectly. When the saddler came out, he spent a very long time fitting a saddle and watching me ride the horse in it. The one I bought appeared to be a perfect fit and my horse seemed very happy in it. However, a day later and twenty minutes into a hack it was a different story:

Theoden started to swish his tail and act as if he was really itchy. I got off and checked whether he had a horse fly annoying him. When I couldn't find one, I got back on and carried on. Five minutes later it was the same unhappy picture, and he stopped and refused to go forward. This time I moved the saddle pad to make sure that there wasn't a problem with it. Back on board and five minutes later the same thing happened again. I wondered if there was a problem with the stirrups or the fenders so I fastened them over him and walked him forward to see whether it made any difference. As Theoden has a history of throwing me off if he is cross about something, I mused that it would be great if he could work with me, since I was doing my best to find out what was wrong. With that he turned his head to the saddle and touched the ring at the top of the rigging. It was only then that I noticed the ring was digging him in the ribs.



Photo courtesy of Sarah Weston

After a long walk home, I contacted the saddler and happily he came out again to see what was happening. Irritatingly, Theoden didn't show the same symptoms this time, but then it was hard to replicate the riding conditions in the field. However, I trust my instincts and I trust my horse, so I have requested the same style and shape of saddle but with the rigging in a different position where it shouldn't be able to dig into him at all. It may be that he is especially sensitive but I can't afford to ignore it.

As owners, the more we are educated about the fit and potential problems that could be caused by the tack we use, the better we can help the horse and the easier it will be to work with the professionals such as the physiotherapist, bitting expert and saddler. We are also less likely to blame the horse for loss of performance.

There are so many different styles of bit and types of saddle available, and different ones will suit different horses. However, fit is the critical factor. If a loose ringed snaffle, for instance, is too narrow, it can catch the horse's lip between the ring and the mouthpiece every time you take up a contact, especially once his lips are warm.

With Western and treeless saddles there is a mistaken but widely held belief that one size fits all. With treeless saddles it is just as important to check your horse's back for signs of discomfort since most treeless saddles still have a plastic form at the front and back of the saddle, and the weight of the rider, passing through the stirrup leathers, may be concentrated across the horse's back. Synthetic saddles, although light, are not as adjustable as the manufacturers like us to think since the gullet can only be widened at the front.

How complete is your knowledge? Can you tick the following boxes?

Bitting Basics



	✔
Ensure that your horse really understands how the bit works. Use gentle pressure and release so that he associates bit pressure with the need to soften his jaw and to respond to your directions.	
Be aware of the action of the mouthpiece of your bit and the effect of the bit rings.	
Make sure that your horse's mouth is comfortable and that he has regular dental inspections and treatment when necessary.	
Ensure that the bit is not too narrow and that the mouthpiece is not too thick for the conformation of his mouth.	
Make sure that the bit is fitted carefully so that it is not too high or too low in his mouth – it isn't necessary to have three wrinkles at the corners of the mouth.	
Spot any sudden changes in his behaviour that may indicate that he has a problem in his mouth.	
Be slow to employ flash or crank nosebands which will mask the symptoms of an uncomfortable bit.	

Super Saddle Secrets



	✔
Make regular templates of your horse's back so that you can monitor any changes in his shape. An artist's long flexi-rule is ideal for this.	
Be aware of any asymmetry in your horse's shape, and ask your saddler to take it into account with soft flocking or shims as well as working on getting your horse's musculature more even.	
Make sure that the points of the tree do not impede the movement of your horse's scapular.	
Check that your saddle is balanced. How many fingers can you get under the pommel and then under the cantle?	
Is your saddle too long? If it goes beyond the last rib it could impede the movement of the horse's spine.	
Is your saddle too tight? Put the flat of your hand under one of the points of the tree and ask someone to pick the opposite hind leg and move it forwards to see how much pressure this puts on your hand.	
Is your saddle too wide? If so it might drop down on to the withers like a clothes peg. Check whether the panel 'grabs' your hand if you move it downwards at the front of the saddle?	
Is your saddle 'bridging'? Place your hand under the panels and check whether there is the same pressure all the way along on both sides. Ride without a numnah to see the impression it leaves on your horse's back	
Does your saddle move about too much? Ask someone who is riding out with you to ride behind and observe what the saddle does.	
Is the underneath of your saddle lumpy? Ask the saddler to remove all of the flocking and replace it, preferably with wool flocking, rather than simply stuffing in a bit extra in here or there.	
Store your saddle on a surface that won't dent the flocking and don't store more than one saddle on a support. Use pipe insulation on saddle racks with narrow bars.	

By Jan Fennell, dog trainer and author of 'The Dog Listener'.



Photo courtesy of Jan Fennell

Let failure be a good friend, never your worst enemy

Failure can sometimes happen when people see that they are not getting the result that they want but refuse to accept that it is what they are doing that is the problem.

This is something unique to the human race. Whilst we pride ourselves on being the most intelligent animal on the planet we often repeat the same processes over and over again expecting a different result. All other species learn very quickly when something doesn't work and seek a better way, which is exactly why 'Equus' and my dog training technique 'Amichien® Bonding' work so well. It was probably not the smartest move for me to take on a young, inexperienced horse in rather poor condition, considering that I came back to riding after years out of the saddle following a very bad fall. Added to which some might opine that I am past the first flush of youth. Then again, using my head to make a decision was never my strongest point especially when faced with an animal in need.

I knew Cherokee would be a challenging project but I was confident that I would be fine since I am familiar with the whole thinking behind 'Equus' having seen Monty and Kelly at many demonstrations and having had the privilege of spending private time with both over the last twenty years. Also I have completed the Five Day Foundation Course at Witney and spent hours looking at the technique videos and re-reading the books.

Cherokee responded beautifully to kind and positive handling and quickly learnt to stand still, to respect my space, to back up and accept an affectionate rub. This was good news which resulted in very positive experiences with the blacksmith,

"We often repeat the same processes over and over again expecting a different result."

chiropractor, dentist and vet. However, there was something not quite right, as he would turn his head away from me when I wanted to put the Dually on and he would move his head further away from me no matter what I tried to do.

All went well initially when teaching him to work on the long lines but on one occasion, when I asked him to stop, he pulled away and showed me his displeasure in no uncertain terms.

I could have blamed him at that point, put it down to him being fired up by the spring grass, or even concluded that IH techniques were not for us, but my priority was to get this right for him. I quickly realised that the problem must be with me and that I needed to improve my skills and so naturally I contacted my friend Kelly.

Kelly suggested that I speak to Bridget Hughes (IHRA) to see if she would be able to help me since Bridget loves to ride and is used to bringing on young horses. Just two days later she came to see me and to assess what was happening. I secretly hoped that it wasn't anything simple and would be something that was far beyond most owners and this would justify my need for assistance; perhaps it would even be a challenge for Bridget.

Bridget complimented me on just how much I had achieved with him so far, and then began to show me just how much more subtle I could become. Consequently I could open better lines of communication between Cherokee and myself. She helped me to slow down the speed of my movements, improve my posture and allow the horse to find me much more. For example, I had not been aware of my tendency to give a little pull on the line to start him following me. Once I was shown just how to direct and focus on my forward motion, I was able to start with a smile in my line.

After just over an hour of gentle work, we put Cherokee into his stable with hay and water whilst we went off for a coffee and a sandwich, and to discuss this first session. However, I wondered what would happen as he had developed a habit of tossing his head around and twisting his mouth whenever he was left alone in his stable even for a few minutes. He was used to being returned to the field and his friends immediately after work. When we returned to the stable Cherokee was calmly munching on a mouthful of hay.

During the next session, Bridget taught me how to guide his attention to me. Each time he looked away I was encouraged to gently bring his head back to the relaxed 'sweet spot'. His head lowered naturally and his gentle eyes began to close. We had a little quiet time and then made our way back to the school so that Bridget could try a Join Up with him.

Bridget quickly spotted that Cherokee had probably been lunged on a single line quite a lot at some point in his life. When she invited him in he became absolutely stuck because he had probably been taught not to go up to the person in the middle. Everything in him wanted to walk up to her but there was something preventing him. He lent towards her only to pull back and then tried again. Bridget just kept calmly arcing around him and inviting him again. It seemed to take an age but he steadily moved forward until he was standing just behind Bridget, at which point she began to give him a gentle rub. I was wiping away tears that were streaming down my face.

It was sad to have seen so much suspicion in his eyes but equally beautiful watching him overcome his fears with every footstep.

Now that Cherokee was so relaxed, Bridget felt that it was an ideal time to teach him to long line. It was wonderful to see how she used her body and eyes to control his movements, direction and speed, rather than the line. Once he understood what was wanted he moved easily on both lines. Bridget showed me how to feel the instant that he gave to the line when he was asked to stop, and how to reward this by relaxing the lines immediately. I realised that what I had done wrong before had caused him to resist and pull away from me.

Cherokee was so relaxed and happy as we returned him to his field and he calmly walked with me, stopping when I stopped, and walking when I walked, keeping that precious smile in the line at all times.



Cherokee when he arrived.
Photo courtesy of Jan Fennell

"I feel that I have turned what could have been a failure into a real success."



Enjoying this magazine?

Do you know someone who would love IH membership as a present this Christmas?

For just £25

they could enjoy all the benefits of IH membership. For details go to:

www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk

By IHRA and Chartered Veterinary Physiotherapist, Sue Palmer

Is it Brain or Pain?

Have you ever come across a horse that won't stand still to be mounted, moves to the back of the stable when he sees the saddle, bites when you do the girth up or bucks going into canter on the left rein? How often have you been told that the horse is just 'taking the mickey', or that you should give him a smack to sort him out?



Sign of pain? Courtesy of Sue Palmer

Horses aren't able to verbalise their pain; they can only demonstrate it through their behaviour. Therefore it is up to us to do our best to understand what they are trying to communicate to us. If a horse is punished for reacting to pain in a certain way, he may start to link the pain with the punishment. In many cases, we need to work to resolve the behaviour alongside the work to resolve the pain.

How do you know if your horse is in pain?

The first thing to do is to observe his behaviour. If he's behaving in a certain way on one rein, for example he bucks going into canter on the left rein but not on the right, it's likely that the behaviour is pain related. If he's suddenly started misbehaving, for example he starts napping when he's always hacked out happily, then it's probable that the behaviour is pain related. If he behaves in a certain way with you but not with someone else, for example he won't stand still for you to mount him but he stands fine for your friend to get on, it's likely that it is behaviour related.

You can also test his muscles to assess whether there is any pain reaction. Start with the back muscles, working from front to back, pressing with your fingers about as hard as you would press to dent a football. Ordinarily, this movement shouldn't cause your horse any pain, and the muscle should feel a bit like Plasticine under your fingers. If he flinches or moves away from you, or the muscle feels tight rather than soft and squidgy, then there may be pain or stiffness.



Checking a horse's back. Courtesy of Simon Palmer

What can you do about the pain?

If you think that your horse might be in pain, then your first port of call should be a qualified professional. Your vet might be the most appropriate person, or you can find your local Chartered Veterinary Physiotherapist at www.acpat.co.uk.

A simple massage technique that you can use yourself is effleurage, a stroking movement. Place the palm of your hand just behind the shoulder blade, in the 'wither pocket'. Press firmly into the muscle, and slowly slide your hand towards the horse's quarters. When you have reached as far as you can stretch, release the pressure, keeping your hand in contact with the horse and slide your hand back to the starting point. Repeat the exercise until the muscle feels softer and pain free.

If you would like to learn more about how to massage your horse yourself there are a variety of courses available. The Horse Massage for Horse Owners DVD and book are available from www.holistichorsehelp.com. Aimed at beginners, these teach you a basic massage routine to use with your own horse.

What can you do about behaviour?

Intelligent Horsemanship runs a number of courses which will enable you to understand and address your horse's behaviour or you can arrange for one to one training with one of our Recommended Associates.

ACPAT

Current list of Intelligent Horsemanship Recommended Associates		
Non-hands-on RAs		
Sylvia Arnold	Telephone help	07901 971170
Lyn Dixon	Email help	lyndixon@phonecoop.coop www.integralhorsemanship.co.uk
Liz Pitman	IH Kids, Stage 2 Video Assessments, and Charity Co-ordinator	0772 9629022 lizpitman@btinternet.com http://www.freewebs.com/thinkhovrse
Hands On RAs		
South Central		
Adam Goodfellow & Nicole Golding Cirencester	South/West/Central England & S. Wales	01285 831736 us@whisperingback.co.uk www.whisperingback.co.uk
Gitte Monahan Witney, Oxon	Oxfordshire, Berkshire,Bucks, Beds, Warks & Wilts	07515 417723 birgitte.monahan@virgin.net www.springtimeequine.co.uk
Ian Vandenberghe Witney, Oxon	Oxon, Berks & Northants	01993 868914 www.hartsopfarm.co.uk
Julia Fisher Hitchin, Herts	Herts	01438 871156 perfectconfidenceinfo@gmail.c om
Lynn Chapman Winchester, Hants	Surrey, Hants & Berks	01962 712230 Mobile 07834 067088 lynn@trainequus.co.uk www.trainequus.co.uk
Sally Hamilton Reading, Berks	South Oxon & Berks	0118 9415498 0795 1712611 sallyham@ntlworld.com
Sam Austin * Henley On Thames, Oxon	South & Central Oxon, Berks, N. Hants	Mobile: 07909 968742 austinequine@hotmail.com www.austinequine.co.uk
Sandra Williams Lacey Green, Bucks	Bucks, Beds, Berks, Oxon & Herts	Mobile: 07785 544174 Home:01844 274344 sandra@hearinghorses.com
Sarah Weston New Forest, Hants	Hants, IOW, Wilts & Dorset	1725 512434 07871 252954 sarahweston.logg@virgin.net www.logicalhorsemanship.co.uk www.sarahweston.co.uk
Sheila Reed * nr Cheltenham, Gloucs	Gloucs & surrounding counties	Tel 07780 668136 sheilareed95@msn.com www.sheilareedequine.com
South West		
Bronwen Packham * Bridgwater, Somerset	Somerset & Avon, Devon & Cornwall	07963 503429 bronwen@equineharmony.co.uk www.equineharmony.co.uk
Tim Piper Somerton, Somerset	Somerset	01458 223890 07721 617203 or 07736 118891 timandshirley@tiscali.co.uk
South East		
Cyndie Gould Between Guildford & Dorking	Surrey	01306 731224 07775 715894 cyndiegould@aol.com
Dido Fisher Hove, West Sussex	Sussex, Hants & Surrey	01273 736083 07970 887673 dido@talk21.com
Jim Goddard * Dallington, East Sussex	South of England	07540 607231 01424 838427 jimgoddardhorses@btinternet.com www.jimgoddardhorses.co.uk
Rosie Jones West Sussex	Sussex, Oxon, Wilts, Berks, Bucks, Beds & Warks	07872589514 rosiejoneshorses@yahoo.co.uk www.rosiejones.yolasite.com
Suzanne Marshall Upchurch, Kent	Kent & Essex	01634 386801 Mobile: 07767 755524 fridayfield@hotmail.com www.fridayfield.co.uk
Zoe Chipman Farnham, Hants	Surrey, Hants, West Sussex & S.E Berkshire	07759 374 603 zoe.equinemediator@ntlworld.com www.equinemediator.co.uk
East		
Bridget Hughes * Norfolk	Norfolk & Suffolk	07785 768929 bridget@rebelremedies.co.uk This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view www.rebelremedies.co.uk

Current list of Intelligent Horsemanship Recommended Associates		
Midlands		
Carrie Adams Newark, Notts	Notts	07739812997 01636 892519 centrelines@tiscali.co.uk www.centrelines.co.uk
Carrie Ferrier (Nee Davis) Cheshire	Cheshire & N. Wales	Maternity leave until further notice 07835690139 01978 269066 carolyndavis81@hotmail.com
Emma Halliburto Winsford, Cheshire	Cheshire	Maternity leave until further notice 07967 567781
Garry Bosworth Bracebridge Heath, Lincoln	Lincolnshire	01522 827527 info@equineempathy.co.uk www.equineempathy.com
John Jones Craswall, Herefordshire	Herefordshire, S. Wales & W. Midlands	01981 510 269 john@horselistener.co.uk www.horselistener.co.uk
Linda Ruffle Swadlincote, Derbys	Midlands	Mobile: 0780 3084451 Insight.equus@btinternet.com
Sue Palmer Stafford	Staffs, Birmingham, Shrops, Worcs, Warks, Cheshire, Leics, Derbys & more	Maternity leave until further notice 07976 413488 sue@holistichorsehelp.com www.holistichorsehelp.com
North		
Ali Johnson * Durham	County Durham	01388 731177 07932 798670 info@alisonjohnson.co.uk www.alisonjohnson.co.uk
Joanna O'Neill * Northumberland	North East and Scottish Borders	01434 270918 07889 422996 joanna@newleafhorsemanship.co.uk www.newleafhorsemanship.co.uk
Patrick Gracey Wigan, Lancs	Lancs, Greater Manchester & Merseyside	07708295868 01942 518309 paddygracey@blueyonder.co.uk www.horseshrink.co.uk
Ann-Marie Marek * Lampeter	Wales	07773 496226 a.marek@btinternet.com www.brynglasequine.co.uk
Europe		
Demelza Franssen Killarney, Co.Kerry	Southern & Northern IRELAND	00353 86032 9451 demelza.whispering@gmail.com
Stephanie Heeran * Co Tipperary	Southern & Northern IRELAND	052 6125767 (+353) 086 392 1728 andynstef@googlemail.com
Anne Lorraine Picard-Nizou Les Breviaires	FRANCE	00 33 (0) 6 81 06 83 06 nidzcom@wanadoo.fr
Jo Bond Tarn et Garonne	SW FRANCE	0033 (0) 5 63 94 58 69 jo@bondwithyourhorse.com www.bondwithyourhorse.com
Maj-Britt Mikkelsen Carter Viborg	DENMARK	00 45 2630 3067 majbritt@hippo-logisk.com www.hippo-logisk.com
Tracy James Malaga	SPAIN	00 34 9527 20271 tracyjames@hotmail.com www.naturalhorseridinginspain.com
Rest of the World		
Cara Kimber	AUSTRALIA	0410752811 helpmyhorse@ymail.com www.helpmyhorse.com.au

RAs with a * sign means they are provisional members in their first 3 years of being an RA.

Neither KELLY MARKS nor INTELLIGENT HORSEMANSHIP LTD shall be responsible to any person or persons for any accident happening or injury suffered, damage to or loss of any livestock or property sustained as a result of any act or omission by or on behalf of any of their Recommended Associates.



IHRA Bridget Hughes at work. Courtesy of Bridget Hughes.

By IH Members Ros Jones & Maike Ahlgrimm

Given the Boot!

IH members Ros Jones and Maike Ahlgrimm have been testing hoof boots on behalf of the IH Magazine during our wet summer, and report back on how they performed. Although they were very kindly given a pair of hoot boots to try out, their reviews are entirely objective.



Courtesy: Maike Ahlgrimm

Tell us about your horses and the activities that you do together.

Ros – I have had my six year old Arab mare, Ruby, since she was a yearling, with the intention of keeping her unshod. I backed her in 2010 and we have been slowly building up our mileage. We do an average of seventy kilometres a week. Living in Derbyshire, just outside the Peak District National Park, we have a good variety of surfaces to negotiate. Ruby's feet have taken until the last few months to really develop from juvenile paddock feet into proper working feet. We suffered a setback last winter when Ruby had stubborn thrush. It was about this time that I started to consider using boots. She became very sore on stones and I found it difficult to give her the exercise I knew she needed to stimulate her feet, improve circulation and get her feet healthy again.

Maike – My 10 year old Icelandic gelding Oskar and I go hacking most days in the local woods just south of Reading. We also compete at Level 2 Trec and Icelandic shows, and participate in the occasional fun ride. Oskar has no particular hoof problems, but can't quite cope being barefoot on the local forestry tracks where the reinforced paths consist mostly of sharp gravel. On average, we cover one hundred to one hundred and fifty kilometres per month.

How did you go about selecting a boot and finding the right size?

Ros – having consulted Lucy from Trelawne Equine, I measured Ruby's feet based on the instructions I found on the website. Lucy had advised that given the mileage we did, the Easyboot Gloves would be my best option. To ensure a precise measurement I waited a few days until my trimmer had been out. With fresh measurements to hand, Lucy was concerned that Ruby was in between sizes so to be absolutely sure of fit she sent out the Easyboot Fit Kit. This comprises a range of single boots and instructions on fitting. Once I had the kit the instructions were easy to follow, explaining how the boot should go on, and what it should look like if it was the correct size. After selecting the correct size, our own boots were with us in twenty-four hours. Without Lucy's help and knowledge, I'm pretty sure I wouldn't have selected the correct size!

Maike - I have tried and used a variety of boot styles over the years, but settled on the Easyboot Glove for Oskar about two years back. I found the right fit by trial and error, and by hiring the Fit Kit to try out various sizes of the Glove shells. In my experience, hoof measurements are only a guide to a good boot fit. Ideally, someone with booting experience should try different sizes and models on your horse, for example your hoof care professional. This can save a lot of frustration and money! Some online stores also offer a hire option for boots to give you plenty of time to trial the boot under normal riding conditions.

How did you get on with putting the boots on and taking them off?

Ros - I found the boots unbelievably easy to get on! I had heard negative stories in the past about boots being difficult to get on and off, and being clumpy, the Gloves are neither. I had a quick play with the screws connecting the gaiter to the boot first, just to make sure they were all tightened up. I then folded back the gaiter and pushed the boot on, giving a final tap with a rubber mallet, as advised by Lucy. On the odd occasion when I hadn't managed to get Ruby's toe right to the end of the boot, a few steps forward with the gaiter still undone and she would push them on herself. The gaiters Velcro together easily. Taking them off was just as easy; once the gaiters were peeled back, the boots came off with a firm push from my thumbs.

Maike – The Gloves do need to be quite a snug fit to stay on well. Technique is definitely more important than strength to slip them over the bulbs of the heel and seat them on the hoof. Easycare publishes really useful videos on YouTube which show the best booting technique for each style of boot. Don't be put off if the new Gloves are a bit harder to get on than the well-worn shells of the Fit Kit; new boots will stretch a bit after the first few rides.

How did the boots perform?

Ros – I have been so impressed with how well the boots work! During the time we've been using them Ruby has given them a thorough testing, and after a spectacular spook or an impromptu turn of speed, my first reaction has been to look down and check to see if they are still in place but the boots have stayed on firmly. Ruby is pretty sensitive and tells me in no uncertain terms if something makes her uncomfortable, but she's been very happy. The first time she wore the boots she just walked out as normal and seemed completely unconcerned. I was also worried the gaiters might rub her, but they've been fine. Although I will continue to work Ruby without boots on for the majority of time, I will definitely use boots occasionally during longer, stonier rides, or as a great fall back if she develops thrush again and is too sore to go completely bare.

Maike - Oskar has been wearing Gloves for two years now, so they are obviously working out well for him. He has lost a front boot on occasion while cantering, usually due to the gaiter not being closed properly. The neoprene of the gaiter stretches when wet, so it's a good idea to check that the fit is still snug when riding in wet conditions, or to start out with damp boots in the first place. Boot losses are rare and I've always been able to find them again.

Oskar is rather hard on his boots and wears out a set of front boots in about four to five months (around 600km). The hind boots last a bit longer, about eight months. Gaiters and shells can be replaced separately, which is great for saving money.

The Gloves perform well in almost all conditions – no slipping on roads, good protection over rubble and rocks, staying on in deep sucking mud. In thin mud, particularly over a slick surface, the traction of the boots can be less than ideal. This is where the amount of tread left on the boot can really make a difference. It is best to use a new pair of boots in the muddy season and keep the worn ones for dry periods or road work.

Any extra tips you'd like to pass on from this experience?

Ros – Make sure your measurements are exact and ensure you measure a freshly trimmed foot. If you're not 100% sure the Fit Kit is easy to use. Always check that the screws fixing the gaiters on are tightened up well.

Maike - If the boots don't fit quite perfectly, there are many options for optimizing fit. For example, I'm using Powerstraps on Oskar's front boots to keep the boot snug. I've also modified the gaiters a bit where they overlap on his front pasterns to avoid pressure points. Many of these tips and tricks can be found on the Easycare blog, or on barefoot discussion groups on the internet.



Oskar in full flow. Courtesy: Maike Ahlgrimm

Useful websites:

http://www.trelawneequine.co.uk

http://www.easycareinc.com



Ruby on track Credit: Dave Jones

By Cyndie Gould

Tiny Tim!

IHRA Cyndie Gould tells us about the special horse in her life and how she has sought to get his education as a riding and driving horse off to the best start.

My husband Martin grew up on a dairy farm where his Dad used heavy horses for all the farm work until he reluctantly replaced the horses with a tractor. Martin had always hoped to have a heavy horse in his life again. Laurel Bank Tim Bobbin or 'Tiny Tim', a Shire, was three years old when we bought him this summer and was already nearly seventeen hands.

Luckily for us he had been well loved and looked after carefully, giving him such a great start that there were no real mistakes to undo. He had done a little halter work and been to one show before he came to us, so that meant we had a pretty clean slate.

As one of the long standing Intelligent Horsemanship Recommended Associates I was really looking forward to this project and wanted to get him going under saddle, in front of a carriage, pulling a set of harrows, and maybe even a plough as well.

The fun began as we started to teach him and also learned from him in so many ways ourselves. Fortunately I had previous experience of backing horses to ride and drive. I've also worked with numerous youngsters and their owners doing crucial ground work to build a relationship of mutual trust and respect. I feel strongly that these two factors are essential for any relationship be it animal to human, or human to human. This strong foundation must be laid down and consolidated before any other work is done.

Our first job was to get Tim a new head-collar as his old one was becoming a little tight. In addition to a normal leather head-collar we purchased a Dually. We knew this would come in handy when leading Tim, but we were really looking forward to using it when we introduced him to long lining. This would be followed by him learning to pull various pieces of equipment and eventually being ridden too. Using the Dually meant that we could avoid dulling the sensitivity of his mouth.



Photo courtesy of Cyndie Gould



Photo courtesy of Adam Melcher

My first step in Tim's training was to loose school him in my round pen. It proved to be an excellent place to start creating that desired feeling of mutual respect between us. He soon learned to move in the direction and at the speed that I asked for. This was followed by leading without anything attached, just like an extended version of Follow Up. What a willing partner he was, even though he seemed to find it a challenge to know the location of each of his four feet.

Our next step was to do leading exercises in the field – forwards, backwards and around poles and cones which were eventually raised with plastic bags attached to them, and over and between poles. He soon became very comfortable with this and I think it was fun for him.

Soon it was time to open the back gate and go exploring in hand down the quiet lanes and the bridle paths close by. We started with short distances at first, though we quickly found that he resented having to turn back towards home and would halt quite firmly when we tried to turn him around. There were so many hedges to peek over and driveways to peer down, and then there were the local villagers to meet and cyclists to watch as they whizzed past. He wanted to keep going!

> *giving him such a great start that there were no real mistakes to undo*

With just two horses at home, I wanted to make sure that I could take each horse out separately. I did this at regular intervals, for short periods at first, to ensure that Tim didn't become dependent on my cob, Groucho, and that Groucho didn't miss Tim's presence either. They each needed to be able to be left at home too.

When we picked Tim up in the first place, he loaded straight away and travelled really well. I wanted to maintain this so I loaded him at home from time to time, with a haynet to keep him occupied, and left him there while I did the yard chores. I also took him for short journeys and visited places, starting with a heavy horse event organised by a friend. It was perfect to have a friendly,



Photo courtesy of Adam Melcher

relaxed outing with nothing expected of Tim other than to walk around among the other 'heavies', their lorries and their gear, and to be polite and relaxed. Tim was a star and thoroughly enjoyed himself.

He progressed so well that it made moving on to the next steps much easier, but I'm glad that we took our time in establishing a good foundation so that we were ready to begin what might be considered 'real' work.

It was now time to start long lining him so I refreshed the loose schooling work we had done before, moving him around with my body language and some verbal commands. Soon the round pen began to feel small and boring for long reining, so we went out into the field to go over poles and a bit of carpet that I'd introduced earlier. Next we went out onto the back lanes once more with a helper. The lanes were much more interesting and we covered territory with which he was already familiar.

> *It was perfect to have a friendly, relaxed outing with nothing expected of Tim*

Although I had introduced the bit, he was still wearing this under his Dually with the long reins attached to the Dually rather than the bit. For now it was much more comfortable to do the steering from the Dually and it worked very well.

From using just the 'saddle' part of the harness I quickly moved on to using the full harness, so that he could get used to the feel and movement of all the straps. Soon a second person was able to pull on the long traces, as if there were a carriage behind him. In this way we could add weight gradually. From here it was easy for Tim to start towing a metal spreader bar.

All the time we monitored his tolerance of the weight and feel of pulling something, as well as his reaction to the sound of the equipment dragging on different surfaces.

In the meantime I'd also been working on the riding side of things. Putting a saddle on Tim was not a worry at all after the feeling of all that harness wrapped around him. I'd groomed him from the top of a large box so that he was used to me being above him on both sides, and on a few occasions I leant over him which didn't even cause him to blink.

To give him the experience of going further afield I would ride Groucho and lead Tim at the same time. This also got him used to me being above him and taught him about traffic. Recently we went back to work in the round pen where Martin gave me a leg up onto Tim for the first time. Tim wondered where I had gone! He soon discovered that he was able to move with me on board and we walked around the round pen for a little while and then left our first session at that.

The second time I got on him in the field and then we headed out of the top gate with Martin on foot. This time Tim didn't want to go far, or very quickly, and he stopped at regular intervals as he came to terms with the new arrangement of me being on top of him. However, the third time I rode him he walked out much more comfortably with Martin on the end of a line just in case he was needed.

All of this took only two months and then Tim had a well earned holiday for three weeks while I visited the United States, where I was born.



Photo courtesy of Ted Nicholson

Now that I am back, we are revising all the basic work that we did over the summer in preparation for riding out in company and starting to put him in the carriage. I think that the next steps with Tim will go as smoothly as his initial training just so long as we watch him carefully and keep our hearts open to him. We will continue to read his reactions to what we are asking him to do and move at a pace that's suitable for him.

We have made more progress than I ever thought possible in the time we have spent together so far. Martin and I are so happy to have this wonderful young four-legged 'man' as a part of our family. He continues to amaze us and seems to keep looking around the corner towards the next project.

Top Tips from Tiny Tim's Training Team

- Groom your horse before work so that you are both relaxed
- Make sure your horse understands what he is being asked for and then make sure it happens
- Be flexible, creative, consistent and don't forget to have fun
- Little and often is far more effective that long training sessions
- Build up mutual trust and respect between you before progressing to more challenging work
- Repeat and review 'old' ground, before moving on to 'new' skills or challenges

Cyndie Gould is an IHRA and covers Surrey. She can be contacted on: 01306 731224 or 07775 715894. Email: cyndiegould@aol.com

Spotlight on IH Recommended Associate

IH Magazine meets **Sam Austin**



Photo courtesy of Lou Austin

How long have you been involved with horses?

I was involved from a fairly young age as my Mum had horses and ponies ever since our family farm was first set up. However, I didn't actually ride until I was seventeen. All my brothers (three older) had riding lessons, but as they didn't stick at it my Mum thought I wouldn't be interested! Now horses occupy all my time in one way or another. My wife, Lou, and I run a small training and livery yard outside Henley-on-Thames, and we both coach riders, school and exercise horses, and work with 'problem' horses. We are also both directors of Red Horse Products Ltd, an equine health care products developer and manufacturing company. In addition I am an Equine Dental Technician and also work on my family's farm.

Why did you decide to qualify as a Recommended Associate?

I am a BHS Intermediate Instructor and Pony Club Chief Instructor, and I felt that there needed to be more connection and communication between IH and these associations. Having a foot in each camp, along with a recognised qualification, helps with that. It also enables me to help those that may not normally come across IH techniques, for example, the owners of eventers and hunters from a more traditional background, who have barely heard of Monty Roberts, Kelly Marks or IH! For them what works is what matters, and often these encounters are very rewarding as you watch owners start to have success simply by adding some new tools and principles to their tool box.

What is a typical day for you?

I am usually up at 5.30 am to do some paperwork and answer enquiries for Red Horse Products. Around 9 am Lou and I go and work the horses that we have in for training and exercise liveries, and work our own youngsters. I then do farm work, dental visits, schooling, or RA visits. As soon as school is out, around 4 pm., I will teach younger students flat out until 7 or 8 pm. Finally dinner in front of the TV with my wonderful wife.

What's important to you when you see an owner and their horse for the first time?

Getting as much information as possible about the problem and the history of the horse, and watching how the horse and owner interact. From the moment I meet the horse I am trying to decipher the story from his point of view, and to assess what ground manners are or are not already in place. Whether the issue is on the ground or ridden, assessing the horse's manners and manoeuvrability on the ground provides an essential insight into the horse's character and the relationship with its owner.

What are the common challenges you face in your work as an RA?

Working with time constraints, and making sure clients' facilities are safe enough to use. Both of these issues lead me to doing as much of my work as possible at my own training facility. Getting clients to do their homework is always a worry as IH techniques can often bring rapid and remarkable results that owners can think that the problem is totally fixed rather than carrying on working at it.

If you could change one thing in the world of horses what would it be, and why?

It's tempting to get on my high horse and say 'issue competition bans to riders using rollkur' but I think a better welfare system for equines, mainly abroad, would benefit the species more. In the UK I think there should be a system in place to ensure all horse owners have at least a basic level of horse care knowledge. It's amazing how well intentioned and intelligent people can still make basic mistakes such as over-feeding and poor foot care.

You introduced Kelly's horse Banksy to competing in eventing this year, how did an IH approach help with this?

With Banksy it was about establishing a basic level of ability in all three disciplines, building his confidence and making sure competing was fun for him. Incremental training was a key to our approach to this. We worked at home on all three phases, and even built a simulated cross country course in our arena before taking him to

several low key dressage, showjumping and hunter trial competitions. In between times we schooled at home, long lined to introduce him to new types of fences and improve his flatwork, and introduced interval training to improve his fitness. Our IH background meant we approached his first one day event with a clear aim of what 'success' would look like – getting home safe was the priority, and we wanted Banksy to feel he was being asked fair questions that were within his abilities. Being placed at his very first event was a lovely bonus!

What would be the first piece of advice you would give someone looking at buying/loaning their first horse?

Take someone experienced with you, get the horse on trial if you possibly can, and get some good references. So many times I have met clients who have taken on unsuitable horses without taking someone with them and then finding out the horse has a known 'history' of being problematic.

The horse world is full of well-meaning advice and opinions. If you need advice when working with a particular horse who do you tend to go to?

I think networks of like-minded professionals are invaluable. Often in equine dentistry I email my original trainer and other EDTs to exchange case studies or pick their brains on unusual problems. The RA network is incredibly open and friendly and we all share knowledge and new ideas regularly. I'm lucky to sometimes have time with Kelly, and will often use that opportunity to pick her brains. I find that two brains and two sets of eyes are better than one, so Lou and I often work together on IH type work, not least because it can help to have someone explain to an owner what is happening allowing the handler to concentrate on the horse.

Also I'm not against having a quick 'Google' and looking at online forums where people have been discussing horse problems and sharing ideas. It's amazing the range of advice out there and very useful to have IH principles as a good yardstick for what ideas might work and what is simply not logical.

What is the most common issue you have to deal with when working with horses?

In my IH work, loading and travelling issues. With ridden work, rushing jumps and, more often, poorly trained responses to the aids. Issues with mounting seem to be getting more common, and I am contemplating training to be a saddle fitter after having seen so many horses in pain due to poorly fitting saddles. People seem to forget that a saddle needs to be checked regularly as the horse changes shape with the seasons and depending on its level of fitness.

What are your plans for the future?

To base more of my work at home. In the summer I'd like to run some 'IH for kids' type courses as I'd love the younger generation to be familiar with IH problem solving techniques and become more educated about how their ponies communicate and learn. Riding-wise we have a nice young Irish giant who will be six next year and I hope to start gently with his eventing career next season. If I have any spare time I will continue to train towards the BHS Instructors exam.



Photo courtesy of Lou Austin

Praise for IH Recommended Associates



Bridget Hughes

Norfolk

"I was having problems catching and bridling my pony"

I was most impressed with Bridget; she was able to put me and my pony at ease. She managed to get all the relevant information over to me. The proof is in the pudding because since her visit my relationship with my new pony has become closer and he seems to be much more relaxed and happy. He has improved with his catching and his bridling so Bridget has done an absolutely brilliant job.

Adele Cutler, Ipswich



Linda Ruffle

Derbyshire

"I needed someone to help me develop a bond of trust with my horse"

Linda was very understanding with me and my horse. She gave me some useful tips about body position and attitude. I felt better about what I was doing with my horse and can see where we would benefit from her advice. I am so glad to have found IH, I love Kelly's books and the whole RA set up, it's just what I need and a massive help to me.

Caroline Walker, Derby



Carrie Ferrier nee Davis

Cheshire

"I needed help loading my horse into a trailer"

We had a very successful session which left me very satisfied. I was so happy to be able to get out and about once again without having to worry that I couldn't go too far in case I had to ride home – again! This was amazing work from Carrie and I would use her again if any other issues arose in the future. I would highly recommend Carrie to others. She had a lovely manner with my horse. He took to her very quickly and was at ease with her straight away. Carrie explained things very well to ensure I could carry on with what she had started. I wish I had contacted Carrie sooner rather than battle with the problem myself without any success.

Mrs Helen Jackson, Cheshire



Sam Austin

Oxfordshire

"I was having problems loading my horse"

I found Sam extremely helpful. He came to help us on a Wednesday, and on the following Saturday I was able to take my horse to a competition with stress-free loading. What would normally have taken half an hour, now took one minute. I would highly recommend him to others.

Sue Graveston, Newbury



Stephanie Heeran

Ireland

"I had rescued a young pony and had no experience of handling them."

Stephanie made something that I thought was so hard into a very enjoyable task. She was concise, clear, friendly and very generous with her knowledge. I had a wonderful time and came away with a sense of relief. She was adamant that I should wear a hard hat and it does make me feel more confident. I think my pony senses that as she does not crowd or bite me. I am going to tell everyone who cares to listen that there is a woman called Stephanie Heeran in Clonmel, Tipperary and she works miracles.

Geraldine Reddan, Co.Clare, Ireland

To find your local IH recommended Associate visit: www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk and click 'Horse Help'

Woof-Bed

With your dog spending up to 16 hours a day at rest, maintaining healthy joints is vital.

Xmas Competition Win a free Woof~Bed !



Click on 'Competition' on the website

Free Delivery on all orders
Small - £35.00 (64cm x 54cm)
Medium - £45.00 (94cm x 70cm)
Large - £55.00 (104cm x 94cm)

For more information on how to get your paws on a Woof~Bed please visit www.woofbed.co.uk

Is it time to change the way you think about worms?

- ✓ Find out what worms your horses have
- ✓ Reduce the chemical wormers that you give
- ✓ Stop resistance and maintain efficacy

"Worms continue to be one of the biggest invisible threats to your horse's health"

Consult our on-line guide to assess your current program

www.intelligentworming.co.uk

T: 01267 22 33 22

Don't Delay. Register Today.

intelligent worming
The future of equine parasite control

Lucy Nicholas' book, 'The Barefoot Horse', launches spring 2012

TRELAWNE Equine

Easyboot Trail hoof boot: WINNER, Equine Product Innovation Of The Year, 2011 Vet Marketing Awards



Horses managed with a barefoot hoof care regime experience these benefits...

- Hoof function is not detrimentally affected, as with metal shoes
- Hoof boots may be used when required, to offer sole protection
- Hoof boots offer excellent traction, with none of the concussion of a metal shoe
- Shock absorption is provided, aiding long-term soundness
- Dramatically less heat is experienced in booted hooves than in shod horses - circulation dramatically improves, thanks to natural mechanisms of properly trimmed, non-shod feet

Speak to the hoof boot experts - Trelawne Equine Ltd:

tel: 0844 257 8585 web: www.trelawneequine.co.uk
email: advice@trelawneequine.co.uk Like us at: facebook.com/TrelawneEquine

The Saddlery Shop – an extensive range of leading equestrian products – below RRP!

NOW STOCKING 'The Barefoot Horse - An Introduction to Barefoot Hoof Care and Hoof Boots' by Lucy Nicholas.



SAVE MONEY WHILE YOU SHOP FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR HOME

- Bit hire available
- Secure online ordering
- Express delivery available
- Bitting and natural horsecare specialist

SHOP ONLINE AT: www.thesaddleryshop.co.uk
CALL US ON: 0844 880 6900
FOLLOW US AT: facebook.com/thesaddleryshop

THE SADDLERY SHOP

MONTY'S COMING BACK!

The Monty Roberts Spring Tour 2013

Bring a blanket and settle in for a masterclass in horsemanship from Monty Roberts and Kelly Marks



16th Feb - Bury Farm EC
Leighton Buzzard, Bucks
(Main Demo 4pm - 7pm, Private Audience for IH Members at 3pm)

20th Feb - Merrist Wood College
Guildford, Surrey
(Main Demo 7.30pm - 10.30pm, Private Audience for IH Members at 6.30pm)

23rd Feb- Solihull RC
Solihull, West Midlands
(Main Demo 4pm - 7pm, Private Audience for IH Members at 3pm)

2nd March - The Hand EC
Clevedon, N Somerset
with special guest MARTIN CLUNES
(Main Demo 7.30pm - 10.30pm, Private Audience for IH Members at 6.30pm)

Please ensure that you have included your membership number when booking tickets online

It could change the way you work with horses forever!

For tickets and more information go to
www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk
or call 01488 71300

Join Kelly Marks and Intelligent Horsemanship on Facebook

Save up to **£10** with our
EARLY BIRD TICKETS
(purchase by 5th February 2013)

Intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk