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Experience Horsemanship From the Heart!

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The MMR Newsletter
JUNE 2003
Vol. 3, Issue 3

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Coming August 9th!

MMR Saddle Fit Clinic Review: Know What to Look For

Dave Genadek shows this saddle is an excellent fit for this horse. It clears the shoulders, makes good contact in the middle and comes up off the horse slightly in the back few inches. Securing both the front AND rear cinches evenly will keep the saddle balanced on the horse.



In his second annual visit, saddle fit expert Dave Genadek spent a day explaining saddle fit to a full house at MMR. On May 16th, Dave traced the history of saddles and explained the reasons for current trends.

"The bottom line is that **even if you have a more commonly shaped horse, you need to try any saddle on your horse before buying**," Dave says. "Why? Because there are no tree size standards. So one saddle with a QH bar can be very different from another QH bar saddle sitting right next to it in a shop."

If you have a horse with an uncommon back shape, he adds, you will have to work much harder and likely need padding to get a saddle that fits. That is why it is so important for every rider to understand good saddle fit.

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8th Harry Whitney Clinic: Progress is Success

It seems like nearly everybody turned up at MMR to see Harry Whitney this April. Over his two four-day horsemanship clinics, more than 60 people participated or watched. There was lots to see, and much to be learned.

Even Dr. Deb Bennett--noted equine biomechanics expert-- attended. She could be heard complementing a student's efforts by quoting another master horseman, Buck Branneman, who said "yes, this form of horsemanship does require a little more intelligence."



Harry Whitney

Participants were stretching the entire time to improve their understanding of what their horses need from them, and their timing on providing it. There were a lot of breakthroughs and progress under Harry's watchful eye.

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Three-Week Apprenticeship

Sage, a 4-year old Mustang, rolls a barrel during the Spring Three-Week Apprenticeship. Play is an important part of horsemanship, according to MMR Owner/Instructor Julie Carpenter. Sage was one of several young horses being started during the session.

See page 2 for more on the Spring Apprenticeship.

The Miracle Mountain Ranch newsletter is produced and distributed quarterly. Its mission is to share MMR news & happenings and to supply continuing knowledge to help everyone improve their equine partnership skills using *Horsemanship From the Heart*.

Please let us know what you think of our content and what else you would like to see. You can contact MMR Newsletter Editor Susan Hartje at ACTsusan@earthlink.net or 209-245-3789 or contact the ranch at MMRI@MiracleMountain.com or 209-223-4421.

Three-Week Students Forge Solid Relationships



Above: Tracy's off the track Thoroughbred, Snazzy, worried about anything touching his hindquarters. She also wanted to be able to ground drive him. But he could not handle two long lines. She and Julie worked with him to help him overcome those fears, move his feet and learn to give to the lines. Here Julie supports him from outside the round pen while Tracy directs him from behind.



Above: Evelyn worked with **Hearts for Horses** resident, Printz, to get him ready to adopt. This quiet but talented 11-year old Warmblood is now looking for the right new home.



Above: Julie helps Niki get the feel of how her hips should be moving with the horse when she is riding in a balanced manner.



Above: Deb started her young Quarter Horse filly, Zoey, during the clinic. Here she is starting to ask her to follow the rope (or rein) and turn softly around to face Deb.

The Three-Week Apprenticeship is a fun opportunity for anyone to spend focused time dedicated to nothing but increasing your understanding of horse-human communication.

MMR Owner & Trainer, Julie Carpenter explains, "It is extremely helpful to spend this much focused time. It gives you time for a lot of information to settle in and be put into practice." The Apprenticeship is so popular, Julie has added a third session this year. Only a few spots are left!

Right: During a lesson on improving the rider's seat, Julie demonstrates how hard it is to move Evelyn out of the saddle when she is sitting balanced.



Left: Leslie and Rebel, an old rodeo horse, share a quiet moment. Leslie made great progress on helping Rebel become quiet minded so he would worry less and stop rearing up. He was pushed too hard in his early training.

Women's Ranch Retreat Tons of Fun!

by Kim Bolewine



"On The W a y R a n c h " Ranch Retreat participants take a break to pose for the camera! hosted it's first Women's Ranch Retreat Clinic with Julie Carpenter in May. We had a wonderful group of women who came with their horses to stay at our ranch. It was nonstop fun from the first hour to the last.

We had a close knit group; we ate all meals together and everyone slept in the house so we could have more time to reflect and talk. It was great to be able to have that time. I think that this was the most valuable aspect of our clinic. And, the most fun too.

We had a variety of horses of various ages and training stages. So the first few days our format was private sessions, then we evolved into groups. We appreciated Julie's adaptability to the needs of her students, and her being very "present" for the person as well as the horse. Her balanced style of teaching helps each student focus on the positive things that are taking place, as she walks them through any challenges they may be having.

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A Better Place

I may never be what's expected of me,
As in showing, or training, or perfect horse reining.

We may never make it to the top,
As many like to say.
We may never do a piaffe, or be a Harry Whitney protege.

But I promise you; I'll try my best,
That today will be better than all the rest.

And when I drop that halter and walk away,
You'll look forward to another day.

I promise that when you worry, I'll find that trouble source.
And you can look to me, to be the leading horse.

And when we come together, and we are face to face,
I promise you I'll take you

To a better place.



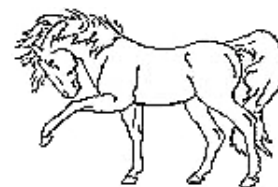
Deb & Cysco take a relaxed ride.

-- Deb Dales, Three-Week Apprenticeship Participant

"Julie, Of all the things you've taught me and all I've yet to master, I believe your teachings of a "Better Place" is the most valuable lesson of all."

MMR 2003 Calendar

Date	Event	Cost	Notes
June 24-25	Two-day Clinic in Santa Cruz	\$250	Individual slots open
June 28-29	Two-day Clinic	\$250	
July 2-6	5-day Adult Clinic	\$625	
July 9; 23	One-day Clinics	\$100 ea	
July 14-16	Three-day Clinic	\$375	
July 18-20	Three-day Clinic in Santa Cruz	\$375	Filling Fast!
July 27-Aug. 2	7-day Youth Camp	\$775	Limited space left!
Aug. 6; 20	One-day Clinics	\$100 ea	
Aug. 9	Trail Trials Challenge!	\$50	Proceeds Benefit <i>Hearts for Horses</i> entry includes pizza dinner
Aug. 13-17	5-day Clinic	\$625	Two spaces left!
Aug. 25-Sept. 12	3-Week Apprenticeship	\$2,100	Added due to Demand! 2 slots left
Sept. 14-20	7-day Fall Women's Camp	\$775	Filling Fast!
Sept. 24	One-day Clinic	\$100	
Sept. 26	One-day Ranch Work Clinic	Private	FULL
Sept. 27-30	Four-day Ranch Work Clinic	\$600	Held at On The Way Ranch in Copperopolis. Contact Kim Bolewine, OnTheWayRanch@caltel.com or 209-785-5075, for details.
Oct. 1	One-day Clinic	\$100	
Oct. 4-5	Two-day Clinic	\$250	
Oct. 13-31	3-week Apprenticeship	\$2,100	One space left!
April 24-27, 2004	Harry Whitney 4-day Clinic	\$600	Both Clinics: Individual Slots Full,
May 1-3, 2004	Harry Whitney 3-day Clinic	\$450	Groups Available & Waiting List



* Camps include horse board, a bed in the bunkhouse and all food.

* Camps begin at 1 pm on the first day and end at 2 pm on the final day.

All multi-day Clinics cost \$125/day including horse board.

All clinics run from 9am - 5pm unless otherwise noted.

Deposits are required to hold your space in all clinics & camps except one-day clinics. If you cancel without time to replace you, we ask that you cover your commitment.

MMR maintains a waiting list on all camps and clinics because we understand things happen. If we can refill your space, you may transfer your deposit to any other MMR service, or get a refund. However, if we cannot fill your space, your deposit is non-refundable.

Adult Camp Reunion

The 2002 Adult Camp was so fun that all six of us decided to do it again this year. We trimmed it to five days though. You know, our 'well preserved' bodies don't take seven days in a row so well.

We also decided to come at the start of the riding season so we could practice what we learned all summer. It was a good plan.

Monday morning we all rolled in late with horses in tow. So what if we didn't get started as early as planned. We were on vacation!

It was obvious right from the start that although none of us had ridden much all winter we had retained what we learned last Fall at MMR. Everyone's ground work was at least as good as they had left it. A few quick tune-ups and each of us was progressing in leaps and bounds.

The same went for our horses. It really is true, if you end on a good note, they will pick up right where you left off. Each one continued to get softer, quieter and more attentive as we learned to get clearer and more fluid with our requests.

Lora didn't make it to camp due to emergency doggie surgery. (Prognosis is good!) But Julie's assistant Melissa worked with her horse Mickey. I was the only one who brought a different horse.



(left to right) Susan on Majestad, Rich on Emy, Melissa with Cimmaron & Jerry; Petie on Shea, and Julie with KC & Pam.

After working with Autumn for two years, she is becoming a pretty good trail horse. Our still green Peruvian, Majestad, needed the work more. Truthfully, I was wondering if we would make it out of the arena at all that week.

Surprise, surprise. On the first day it finally clicked. I had been working quietly with him because he was so scared of nearly everything. Shortly after Julie had me get bigger and clearer with him, he quit fleeing and began to look to me for direction.

It was the same story with Petie and Shea and Rich and Emy. And although KC has never been accused of being nervous, Pam was able to help him start driving from behind with energy in his movements when she asked for a little more of him.

At that rate we were saddling up before we knew it. This year Pam rode every day and we were all out on the trail by day two.

Yes, that includes Majestad. Once we worked out that I could take care of him on the ground, it translated amazingly quickly to him under saddle. And, after we made it past the hanging monsters (aka: ribbons) at the gate exit, he was curious and confident on the trail.

Rich also made an outstanding breakthrough in the saddle. He and Emy learned to bend!

Ok, so it took nearly all of the first afternoon. And Rich showed several times how great a seat he has by staying on when she would check out. But he kept asking for her thought and some give to the rein, and finally she got it. The next day she was so soft and relaxed that we thought she had been replaced with a pod horse.

By the end of our time, everyone was happy and ready to ride for the Summer. Thanks Julie! We'll see you again in the Fall.

Harry Whitney Clinic

Continued from Page 1

As always, Harry's perfect timing and ability to read both horse and person netted successes for everyone. His talents rubbed off on anyone seeking to understand more about the horse-human relationship.. Following, are scenes from the clinics, along with some choice nuggets that Harry passed on to participants.



Above Left: Harry works Joe, a young Quarterhorse, off of his own horse, Sandy, to help Joe get a softer rear end so he can step over and have a soft bend in his turns.



Left: Owner Chris then saddles Joe for the first time ever and does more ground work with him to assure he is calm and relaxed.

Above: The next day Chris gets on for a first ride with Harry there to help Joe if he gets concerned about the new experience.



Dr. Lauren Derock, vet, acupuncturist and chiropractor, came out during the clinic to treat a few horses. **Above** she checks Misty, a Tennessee Walker, who had a history of being tight and slightly off. Lauren did some acupuncture on her. Later when Terri rode in the group she worked on getting softness in her horse. She reported this is the most relaxed and soft her mare has ever been.



Left: Harry uses a flag to help Casey and Starfire, her Missouri Fox Trotter, learn how to bend correctly so the horse can relax his topline.

Below: Harry shows Casey and Barbara how a correct disengagement of the hindquarters should look and feel.



Right: Voltan, an Arab- Andalusian gelding, won't go forward or back without pinning his ears and dragging his feet. Harry coaches owner Stella to help him learn to move more freely. First, they worked on disengaging the hind end. Then in the round pen he has her mix up quick stops, starts and turns, to help him think about preparing to follow her requests.

Above: Joan's new Lusitano stallion, Partizano, is heavy on the forehead. Harry explains he must first learn how to shift his weight onto his hind end. So he works first on backing and disengaging both in the saddle and on the ground.



Right: Later, Joan works on allowing him to carry himself in a soft bend, rather than her forcing him into the proper frame using her legs and a tight rein. The result is a nice open free stride from Partizano because he is now carrying more weight on his rear end which is driving his movements.



Left: Even those who didn't get to ride with Harry in the clinics were keenly watching and asking questions. Auditing a clinic is sometimes as fruitful as riding. This year's auditors were more numerous



Above Right: Prima, a Peruvian Paso mare, is scared of death of being ridden, even though she has been trained 18 months by a classical Peruvian trainer.. Here she is stiff and resists Harry's requests to bend toward him and step over. He spent two days getting her comfortable with having someone above her, learning to bend, and to give to the halter or rein.

Right: Julie agreed to ride this mare instead of her less experienced owner to help her overcome her fears of a rider.



than ever before..

Saddle Fit Check

Continued from Page 1

Dave coached attendees on how to tell for themselves what good saddle fit looks and feels like. **"Everyone should understand these concepts, and check them every time you ride,"** he says.

1. Correct saddle placement:

Place the saddle on the horse's back without a saddle pad. It should fit so that the bars of the tree (English or Western) sit 1-3" behind the shoulder blade. The tree should never sit on or hit the shoulder during movement.

Start by lining up the front of the Western cantle (that is where the bars start) with the high point of the withers. Then push it back slowly. Wherever the saddle clicks into place is right *for that horse*.

2. Saddle tree fit check:

Next, check the tree fit. The saddle should not perch nor should it ever touch the horse's spine.

✓ Run your open hand along the underside of the saddle from front to back. You should be able to slide your hand between the saddle tree (or English panels) and your horse in the front and in the back, but meet resistance in the middle. The middle 2/3rds of the saddle is where fit should happen; the tree/panels should contact the back evenly here. Also check this space from below.

✓ Now put your arm down the backbone of your horse where the saddle channel is. There should be a few inches of space so the tree does not touch the spine in any way.

✓ Next, try to rock the saddle by pushing down first on the cantle and then on the pommel. When you push down on either end, the other end should lift upward at least an inch. This allows room for the back to move and bend while riding. Too much rock means there won't be enough contact between the saddle and the back to distribute pressure evenly.



This saddle is placed correctly on this horse. The tree matches his shoulder angle, but there is ample room in front to run your hand from top to bottom between the tree and horse..



This saddle fits this horse correctly.



Dave shows his #1 tree to Peja before trying it on. (Note the nice amount of rock, twist and flare in this tree.) He checks the points noted below with the bare tree, because it lets him see the fit easily.

3. Saddle up check:

✓ Look at the saddle as it sits on the horse. From the side, the flat part of the seat should be level. A seat that has no flat area (instead it looks like a V) may make it hard for the rider to balance.

✓ If all this looks good, add a thin saddle blanket and cinch the front and rear Western girths evenly. Both cinches should be snug against the horse (not too tight) when the horse is working. When tightened, the saddle should still have an air channel down the spine where there is no contact with the horse. The girth should lay about 3-5" behind the elbow to keep it from rubbing the back of the leg with each stride.

✓ Look for signs of irritation and discomfort. Tail swishing, ear pinning, biting the saddle or moving away from you can be signs that the saddle is pinching. If these occur, re-check how the saddle is fitting. Or return the saddle because it doesn't fit. (Check the MMR website for tips on padding to achieve better fit.)

✓ If all your checks are good, work your horse on the line or in the round pen and watch his movement and attitude. He should move out softly with his head at a comfortable level and topline rounding up into the saddle. A horse that travels high headed, with the back hollowed out under the saddle could be saying this is not a comfortable saddle for him.

✓ Next, take a ride. Again, watch the attitude of your horse as you mount. Ride out at a walk and then move up to a trot and lope. Ask your horse to bend and turn and note his attitude. Spirals or tight turns in both directions will show if the horse is not comfortable.

4. Post ride check:

✓ After 15 minutes of riding, take the saddle off. A clean saddle pad should show an even dirt pattern from front to back along either side of the spine. If there is a clean spot in the center of the bar, the saddle is "bridging" and not making contact in that area. If the horse has worked up a sweat, there should be no dry spots or rub marks (broken/bent hairs). That indicates a pressure point.

Women's Ranch Retreat

Continued from Page 2

One of the main things that about Julie is that she is able to communicate the information she has so clearly and understandably. I walk away with A LOT of information to digest. That "gift" of communication is vital to the progression of awareness that must take place in a student for them to be able to learn to clearly communicate with horses. The evidence of that is in how quickly her students and their horses pick up on what she is teaching.

Julie is helping us become more aware of what is taking place on the inside of our horses. That



Julie helped Jodi start Noah, Kim's young OH, under saddle during the Ranch Retreat at On The Way Ranch.

the physical quality of a yield is a by-product of what is going on mentally within a horse. The physical appearance of his movement, his breathing, tight or relaxed muscles, facial expressions and tail carriage are all things that tell us how he is feeling about things and where we should go from there. She helps us work with the horse from the inside out. If we can get his mind, his body will surely follow.

Julie's clinics have a refreshing atmosphere; there's a feeling of camaraderie and enthusiasm from beginning to end. Quoting a friend, "Julie hasn't lost sight that she is not just teaching a sport, but that she is working with people's dreams" She truly cares about the quality of relationship that develops between her students and their horses. I am really looking forward to our September clinic with Julie at our ranch....I'm counting the days!

By this point, you should have a good feel about the fit of the saddle. Keep in mind that horses can and do change physically as they mature, gain fitness, or age. So be in the habit of checking fit every time you ride.



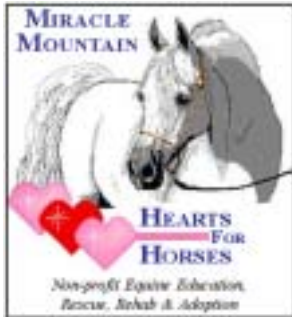
Dave re-checks the shoulder clearance on this saddle after adding shims to lift the tree off the horse's shoulders.

Trail Trials: Test Your Partnership & Help Save Horses

Want to spice up your riding routine?
...Or, add a little challenge to your charge?

Trail Trials is a fun way to add more purpose to your trail riding, without the pressure of showing or competing. Plus, it's a blast for both you and your horse!

Trail Trials are simply a series of obstacles or challenging situations spaced out along a pre-set trail ride. Each 'obstacle' is something you might normally encounter on a trail ride, like opening and closing a gate, fording a stream, or passing a bicyclist.



Participants ride out individually and complete the course in their own time. Judges monitoring each obstacle along the course are looking to see how well you and your horse work as a team, how you overcome fearful or new situations, and how safely you accomplish the task at hand.



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Courage Building Exercise



This exercise is called Drill Team. Here three horses form an inner circle going one direction while three others circle in the opposite direction on the outside. Every few turns, everyone is asked to stop when they are standing beside the horses they started out next to and pet their neighbor's horse. When all the horses get used to passing horses going in the opposite direction, the riders can begin weaving from the inner circle to the outer circle and back again as they ride forward. This teaches the horse that he doesn't have to worry about close interaction with other horseback riders, and to look to you for safe direction.

Prizes will be awarded for the top scoring horse-human partners, and, to winners in several fun categories. A pizza party for all participants will round out this fun day.

All proceeds from this event will benefit *Hearts for Horses* Many THANKS to Cathy Wahrlich, for her dedicated work in organizing this Fun Trail Trial! Space is limited, so contact MMR to sign up.

**SIGN UP NOW to have FUN with your horse
and benefit *Hearts for Horses*
on August 9th, 2003!**

Visit us for more news and information at our
website: MiracleMountain.com