



T.E.S. Riding Club Accepting New Members

The T.E.S. Riding Club's mission is to promote and inspire continued education of the horse world. It provides social activities such as barbecues, trail rides, field trips to local shows as well as other horse-related activities for dressage, western, and hunt seat disciplines. Membership dues are \$20.00 per year or \$35.00 per family, and applications are available in the T.E.S. office. For more information, contact Susan Burig.

Farewell Massachusetts

School horse, Massachusetts, has retired to former T.E.S. student Julie Martin's farm in Paso Robles. Massachusetts has been with T.E.S. for many years and has taught hundreds of students how to ride. We will miss him very much. To greener pastures, Massachusetts—we love you!

Sign-up now for Spring Horse Camp!

Spring Horse Camp aims to teach kids about the wonderful world of horses. Through horse-related games and activities, kids (ages 7-12) will learn about:

- ◆ the care of horses
- ◆ their characteristics
- ◆ breeds & colors
- ◆ ground and mounted safety

In a fun-filled environment, supervised by trained staff, campers have riding lessons on suitable horses for young riders, hands-on horsemanship workshops, as well as games, arts and crafts.

T.E.S. Beginning English & Western Show March 21, 1999

The Beginning English & Western Show is on **March 21st**. Prize lists/entry forms are available in the T.E.S. office. You must have your instructor's permission to ride in the show. If you have



never ridden in a schooling show, come out and see what it's all about!

Information and prize list available on the T.E.S. web site (www.tes-laec.com/shows/beg-show.html).



New Instructor at T.E.S.

Chuck Smallwood was raised in Amarillo, Texas, deep in the heart of Quarter Horse country. A graduate of West Texas State University with a B.S. in Horse Science and a M.S. in P.E. and Recreation, Chuck was coordinator of Equine Studies at Johnson Country Community college, spending 10 years in the Kansas City horse community.

In 1986 Chuck moved to Fresno, California to be in charge of the Student Horse Center at California State University, Fresno and to coach their horse show team. After 10 years of winning riders, Texas and horses at CSUF, Chuck feels it's time to try life in the big city!

Stacy Festner congratulates **Michelle Douglas** for a fine job in her first horse show at the LAEC Hunter/Jumper Opener. She received a second place in Schooling Jumpers and a 4th and 5th place in Pre-Training Jumpers! What a way to start the year—great riding! Here's to a successful show year!

Kids Camp is designed for children at all riding levels—from a child's first experience with a horse to junior riders who show hunt seat, dressage or western.

Session 1: March 29 - April 2

Session 2: April 5-9

Monday thru Friday
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Enrollment is limited, so please complete the camp application available in the T.E.S. School Office. Cost: \$295 per week or \$75 per day.



www.tes-laec.com



The Equestrian Athlete

by Johanna Harris

The specificity of motor learning hypothesis, or specificity of learning, suggests that your ability to learn a physical or motor skill, and then perform it well afterwards, will depend on the *specific* practice conditions. This means that if you learned to ride by practicing with your eyes open, you won't be able to ride as well with them closed because you didn't practice with them closed. And the more you practiced with your eyes open, the harder it will be to ride with them closed. On the other hand, if you learned with them closed, you won't ride as well when you suddenly open them.

Learning is specific to the conditions of your practice in part because your body learns to use whatever information it has available at the time. When you practice, your body takes in everything it sees, hears, and feels (consciously and subconsciously) that's important to doing the skill. It takes in this sensory information and learns how to use it to tell your ankles, seat bones, and big toes when and how to move. Unbeknownst to you, practicing a skill over and over again under the same conditions teaches your body to rely on this information exclusively. So exclusively that when it disappears or changes, or when new information suddenly appears, your body is at a loss and you're left wondering why it's so hard to ride in a different saddle.

Scientists know relatively little about what happens to all of this sensory information between the time that we take it in and the time that we move our arms and legs. But they do know that if you want to learn how to do a particular skill, you need to practice it under the same conditions as you plan to perform it later on. For example, if you want to learn how to ride a training level dressage test, practicing without stirrups or on the lunge line without reins won't help because the conditions during practice are not the same as the conditions during the dressage test. The feel of stirrups on your feet and reins in your hands are critical sensory information to your brain and nervous system. The more you practice without them, the harder it will be to ride with them later on. This is because your body won't learn how to read the pressure coming from your feet and hands and use it to keep the stirrups in place and guide the horse.

Another example is that if you've always ridden with your legs too far forward, it will be hard to learn how to ride with them in the correct position. After constantly practicing under this condition (with your legs too far forward), your body has learned to detect, interpret, use, and ultimately rely on, a tremendous amount of information. It knows all about what it takes to feel your legs in this position and how to keep them there. And this will make it hard on your instructor when she tries to correct a bad habit and on you when you struggle to learn how to use new sensory information.

The only time you should make the practice conditions different from the skill you're trying to learn is when it's unsafe, abusive to the horse, or impractical. Suitable practice conditions are riding on the lunge line without reins until you're more balanced, learning to vault on and off a stationary horse, and practicing the emergency dismount when it's not an emergency.

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*Johanna L. Harris has an M.A. degree in Physical Education, Exercise and Sports Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is the editor/publisher of **The Equestrian Athlete**, a monthly newsletter providing equestrians with exercise and sport science information. View a sample issue online at www.circle.net/~eai. You can also reach her at (800) 404-8514.*



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Submissions are accepted for Q&A, Letters to the Editor, and OpEd as well as articles and equestrian success stories (Perspectives). We reserve the right to edit submissions. We do not guarantee publication of submitted materials.

To submit your items, please complete the T.E.S.Talk Submission Form available in the school office (in editor's mailbox) and attach your submission to it. Submissions can be sent by email to matthes@rcf.usc.edu.

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COLIC! The mere mention of the word strikes fear into the hearts of most horse owners, because colic can be as minor as excess gas or as serious as a twisted intestine—and the symptoms can be virtually the same! Colic is not a specific disease, but a generic term (derived from the Greek word for colon) for any form of abdominal pain in horses. The actual cause of the belly-ache can stem from a variety of different conditions, and the symptoms are equally wide-ranging.

Common Signs of Colic

The horse may exhibit all, many or only a few of the signs of colic. Typically, with early or mild pain, the horse has a decrease in appetite, strikes or paws the ground, raises its upper lip, stretches out as if to urinate, and looks at its belly. As the colic progresses, the horse kicks at its belly, is reluctant to stand, or rolls violently, thrashes and sweats. For the most part, the severity of signs parallels the severity of the problem. However, this is not always true, since individual horses (like people) have different pain thresholds, and what one horse perceives as extremely painful may only be a mild nuisance to another. (I always prefer the former, because in the latter case, a horse may allow its condition to deteriorate severely before alerting its owner of a problem.)

Common Types of Colic

A horse is “colicky” when it exhibits any signs of abdominal pain. The next step is to determine the type of colic, so that the source of pain can be treated and, ideally, eliminated. The intestines may be merely irritated and gas-filled, causing a “**gas colic**.” This is one of the major reasons to discourage cribbing or wind-sucking. A change of environment or feed may be enough to create a gas colic episode, so feeds should always be changed slowly, over a period of days.

Another minor form colic is called an **impaction**. At various spots along the

horse’s intestinal tract, a blockage may be created when ingesta packs together into a mass dry or large enough to stop the normal flow of material through the system. The distension of that area of intestine and the back-up of material behind it cause the pain. Laxatives (chiefly mineral oil) are administered to lubricate and soften the impaction which helps the horse pass it. Enemas are occasionally used, but are often too far from the source of the problem to help, since an impaction can be located anywhere along the 75-foot length of the system. In rare cases, an impaction can be severe enough that surgery is the only way to return the system to normal.

The ingestion of sand (**sand colic**) also creates many colics. Horses that eat off the ground on sandy soil are particularly at risk. Sand is heavier than the normal feeds and will settle in the intestines. Over time, this has the same effect as sand-paper on the lining of the intestines. Metamucil-type products are administered to help gather the sand and allow it to pass. Occasionally, the amount of sand is great enough to cause a full sand impaction, but more typically, only mild colic signs and loose manure are experienced periodically.

Parasites used to be a major cause of colic, but thanks to better wormers and conscientious deworming by most owners (minimum of every three months), worm colic is rarely seen in this area. Blood worms (strongyles) can damage the arteries that supply the intestines and stop the blood flow, killing the affected areas of the intestinal tract. In foals, a very large worm burden can cause an impaction and may even require surgery to remove the mass of worms.

More **severe colics** are caused by twists in portions of the intestines, fat cells tumors (lipomas) that wrap around the intestine, stones (called enteroliths) that form inside the intestine (like an oyster forms a pearl) and block the intestine, displacements of a portion of the intestine within the abdomen, and entrapment of a portion of intestine within a hernia. These are all examples of colic that require surgery to correct the prob-

lem. Without surgery in these cases, the bowel would begin to die (at a rate dependent on the compromise of the blood supply to it). As the intestine dies, the horse begins to absorb toxins from it, and also loses a tremendous amount of fluid to the intestinal tract. This leads to shock and can rapidly lead to death.

Prevention and Awareness

Horses that have multiple colic episodes should have their feeding program evaluated and may require special care. As always, a little preventative medicine is better than treatment. Most of all, be aware of early signs of colic and don’t ignore them. A horse lying down should get up when disturbed, and stay up. Very few horses will turn their nose up at a carrot or at food of any type. Early treatment can often stop the problem before any serious complications result. Your veterinarian is best able to help you decide how serious a colic episode is. If you are unsure whether the symptoms your horse exhibits are colic, call your veterinarian.

T.E.S. Helmet Policy Reminder

- Anyone (student or instructor) mounted on a school horse must wear a helmet at all times.
- Helmets worn must be properly-fitted ASTM-SEI approved helmets.
- All students in T.E.S. riding classes and shows must wear helmets, whether they are riding school horses or privately-owned horses.
- New students must purchase their own helmets after completing our introductory programs.
- Current students must have their own properly-fitted ASTM-SEI helmets.



Mar. 21 Beginning English/Western Show
 May 16 Dressage & CT Show
 June 27 Point-to-Point Show
 Aug. 29 Annual Potluck & Playday

Oct. 17 Beginning English/Western Show
 Oct. 30 Halloween Party
 Nov. 21 Dressage & CT Show
 Dec. 19 Christmas Party

For more information, call 818-569-3666 or visit our web site at: www.tes-laec.com

LAEC Events

Mar. 6-7 Mid-Winter Dressage
 Mar. 13-14 Spring Saddlebred Horse Show
 Mar. 19-2 LAEC Winter Horse Show
 Mar. 19-21 Paint Horse Show
 April 10-11 Gold Coast Series II
 April 16-18 Best of the West Barrel Race
 April 24-25 Andalusian Horse Show/
 Paso Fino Horse Show
 Apr. 29-May 2 Hollywood Charity Horse Show

For more information, call 818-840-9066.



Dressage Shows

Mar. 6-7 Dressage at LAEC
 Mar. 27-29 USET Selection Dressage at Indio I
 Apr. 1-3 USET Selection Dressage at Indio II
 Apr. 17-18 Dressage at the Paddock, Spring I, II
 May 28, 30 Flintridge Dressage Show

For details, see the CDS web site: www.primenet.com/~cds1/showcal.htm



Hunter/Jumper Shows

Mar. 6 H/J Paddock March I
 Mar. 7 H/J Paddock March II
 Mar. 19-21 LAEC Winter H/J
 Apr. 10-11 Gold Coast Series II
 May 27-31 Memorial Day Classic

For more information, see the Hunter/Jumper Network web site: www.hunt-jump.com/



Combined Training

Mar. 14-15 Meadows of Moorpark H.T.
 Apr. 3-5 Ram Tap H.T.

For more information, see the USCTA web site: www.eventingusa.com/omnibus/fall98/area_06.html



Western Shows

May 16 Open Horse Show (Pierce College)
 June 27 Nat'l Horse Show/Convention
 Oct. 3 High Point Show (Pierce College)

For more information, see the Equestrian Trails web site: www.eti.av.org/etiNatCalShows.html



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Upcoming Events!

► **Journeymen & Vogel Custom Chap and Boot Fitting Dates**
 May 27- 31, 1999

► **Harvest Sale**
 October 16-17

► **Grand Prix Festivities**
 May 31st (Memorial Day Classic)
 Sept. 26th (International Grand Prix)
 Nov. 20th (L.A. National).

► **Holiday Open House**
 December 11 (20% discount)

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