



What's in a Name?

During the last few weeks, you may have noticed that there's more to your regular group lessons than just a new name. Our school director, Sherry Doyle-Murphy, Leslie Morse and the instructors have worked very hard over the last few months to integrate eventing into our program and to reorganize our present structure of English and Western classes. So, you will not only be seeing new class names, but a better, more consistent system of levels.

For example, each level now has a specific set of skills that must be achieved before you can move on to the next level. That means that all Beginning English classes, for instance, will be learning the same set of skills -- and that will provide more consistency if you need to add or move to a different Beginning English class. It will also help us place you in the proper level classes. Another great benefit of this reorganization is that we will eventually be able to offer a lecture series on riding theory and horse management geared specifically for each level.

Although we have restructured the Western classes, the biggest change has occurred in the English program. The series of classes for the English program is now: Intro to English, Beginning English and Advanced Beginning English. All English students must achieve the skills in the Advanced Beginning English level before they can graduate to jumping or dressage classes. At this point, you must then choose the tract you wish to pursue: Dressage, Eventing or Hunt Seat.

The Dressage Tract (Novice Dressage, Intermediate Dressage and Advanced Dressage) is a flat class (no jumping) based on the classical principles of Dressage and prepares the student to compete in Dressage schooling shows.

The Eventing Tract (Novice Eventing, Training Eventing, Intermediate Eventing and Advanced Eventing) is combined training -- dressage, cross-country jumping and stadium jumping) and prepares you to compete in combined tests and horse trials. (See "Eventing: What's it all About?" in *T.E.S. Talk*, April 1990 for more information about eventing.)

The Hunt Seat Tract (Novice Hunt Seat, Training Hunt Seat, Intermediate Hunt Seat and Advanced Hunt Seat) is strictly Hunt Seat flat and stadium jumping and prepares you to compete at Hunter/Jumper schooling shows.

We look forward to implementing this new system and hope that it will enable us to help you achieve your riding goals.

Advertise in T.E.S. Talk!

T.E.S. Talk will now be accepting business advertisements from student who either own their own business, or who work for companies that provide services that might be of interest to our students. The advertisements will be placed on separate, pull-out pages for the convenience of our readers. The monthly rates are as follows:

Business card ad: \$5.00
 1/4 page ad: \$10.00
 1/2 page ad: \$15.00
 Full page ad: \$25.00

We will also be adding a new Classifieds section to the newsletter for students who want to buy or sell riding equipment, books or horses, lease a horse, find a roommate, rent a place in the area, etc. The monthly rate is \$3.00 per 25 words.

Horse of Your Own Clinic June 16

If you're interested in owning your own horse, this clinic will provide you with valuable information on horse ownership and all that it involves. It will cover topics like: choosing the right horse; buying or leasing; feeding, housing and caring for your horse; and basic horse management principles. Sherry Doyle-Murphy will conduct the clinic on June 16 from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Wear comfortable clothing and sturdy shoes. Bring a packed lunch. The cost is \$55.00. Sign-up in the office.

Learn to Ride in T.E.S. Dressage Schooling Shows

This clinic is designed for students who want to learn how to ride in the T.E.S. Dressage Schooling Shows. It is especially geared for English students with no prior Dressage experience and Dressage students with little or no show experience. The clinic will cover:

- Introduction to Dressage Shows
- Show Etiquette, Dress and Rules
- Choosing, Analyzing and Memorizing the Tests
- How to Interpret Your Score Sheet
- Mounted Practice of the Tests

The clinic will be held on Saturday, June 9, from 2-4:30 p.m. The Dressage Schooling Show is on Sunday, June 17. Students must be able to walk, trot, and canter and must have their instructor's permission to ride in the show. The cost is \$55.00.



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T.E.S. Dressage Schooling
April 22, 1990

(to 3rd Place)

Pre-Training, Test A: 1. Phantom of the Opera (72%), Davida Johnson, and 2. Mississippi (64%), Lesa Moody.

Training Level, Test 1: 1. Mr. Finnegan (64%), Karen Kuser; 2. Mississippi (61%), Lesa Moody; and 3. Michigan (61%), Charles Kishaba.

Training Level, Test 2 (A): 1. Michigan (66%), Charles Kishaba; Kansas (57%), Melinda Hallmark; and 3. Conejo (56%), Linda Rothman.

Training Level, Test 2 (B): Jessie (66%), Cynthia La Porte; 2. Sunrise Reflect (63%), B.C. Cameron; and 3. Bif (53%), Joanne Dahlquist.

Training Level, Test 3: 1. Indiana (66%), Cheryl Kriske; 2. Conejo (58%), Linda Rothman; and 2. Lucky Penny (58%), Michele Schultz.

Training Level, Test 4: 1. Kamekani (58%), Allis Armenta.

First Level, Test 1: 1. Kamekani (57%), Allis Armenta and 2. Bif (51%), Linda Blizek.

First Level, Test 2: 1. Chaucer (67%), Stephanie Strong.

Combined Test -- Training Level, Test 1 and Stadium Course: 1. Justin, Mary Bessel.

Combined Test -- Training Level, Test 2 and Stadium Course: 1. Illinois, Kasey Gilmore and 2. Sunrise Reflect, B.C. Cameron.

If you're interested in learning to ride in the Dressage schooling shows, sign up for the Dressage Show Prep Clinic.



New Books in the Van Dahn Memorial Library

American Horse Council 1989-90 Horse Industry Directory
Common Sense Horsemanship (Vladimir Littauer)
Dressage Questions Answered (Charles De Kunffy)
Dressage: An Approach to Competition (Kate Hamilton)
Equus (Robert Vavra)
Horsemanship in Europe (Jane Kidd)
Hunter Seat Equitation (George Morris) -- original and revised editions
Ireland (Irish Tourist Board)
Jack (Brian Carter) -- Fiction
The de Nemethy Method: Modern Techniques for Training the Show Jumper and its Rider (Bertalan De Nemethy)
The Horseman's Encyclopedia (Margaret Cabell Self)
The Language of the Horse (Michael Schafer)
Select, Buy, Train, and Care for Your Own Horse (Barbara Van Tuyl)

Don't forget to buy or bring a book for the library. We need your donations!

Sweet Memories

A Fond Farewell to Henrietta (Hank) and Georgia T.E.S.'s First School Horses

by Suzy Elman

I want to honor the first two T.E.S. school horses, Henrietta "Hank" and her daughter, Georgia (Rumple). Although they are no longer with us, they found their way into all of our hearts. Most of our LAEC riders knew Georgia, the sassy and beautiful buckskin (with a trot as smooth as glass), who liked to terrorize new riders with her unique "stall act," an entirely phone exercise in "horse smarts" designed to intimidate riders into thinking that she was dangerous. Those who rode her knew that she was an actress at heart, who always needed to be in center stage (maybe that's why she always wound up in the center of the arena so much), and who detested the fact that she sometimes *had* to have *group lessons* instead of *privates*! She was a horse with personality and pizzazz!

At one time, she could do almost everything from barrel racing to jumping. One of her special impersonations was of Houdini, the escape artist. Although Georgia dined on the LAEC cuisine, she loved to escape from her stall during the night and raid all the nearby feed barrels for some expensive, gourmet dining! Even though she thought of herself as royalty, she would still give all her students a really nice ride when she had a mind to, and she had a way of making you look and feel like you were a top rider.

If Georgia was a brilliant, amateur actress, it was clearly a case of "daughter following in mother's footsteps." Henrietta "Hank" (previously owned by a movie producer) was a real, big-time actress herself. She

appeared in *Mask*, a new *Snow White*, plus many, many other movies throughout her career. She was also in a special quadrille at Santa Anita during the 1984 Olympics. Hank was a magnificent and sexy 16.1 hand bay mare, with a white blaze, who was, in her prime, one of the most popular and versatile school horses in the history of T.E.S. Many students would even fight over who would get to ride her in their lessons.

Hank was no longer a school horse when T.E.S. came to the LAEC, so many of you never got a chance to know her. But if you had, you would have loved her (she was such a beautiful horse that when our school horses would go home for R & R, where Hank spent her retirement, many of them would fall in love with her). She was a testimony to the 1990s woman! When Georgia was on R & R herself, mother and daughter were inseparable, often grooming one another and planning mischievous strategies. For example, if you tried to catch either of them, at least 20 extra minutes were needed for the task, for they loved to play Dodge the Halter!

Hank was originally a Western horse, but she could also jump. When I entered her life, she learned Dressage and, even though she galloped through X at one of her first Dressage shows here at the LAEC, she went on to win many ribbons -- there were even several blues among her collection. Even though she was bothered by arthritis, she was such a giving horse and would always do the movements asked of her. And, like her daughter, would always make her rider feel like a million dollars!

Many who rode Hank commented that they always felt she would rescue them if they were in danger of getting hurt. I often tell the Tack classes about the mentality and uniqueness of horse's emotions, most of which I learned from Hank. One incident comes to mind. While feeding the horses their grain during their R & R, two horses cornered me in the yard. In a flash, Hank cantered over to my rescue, just like a typical movie heroine, and pushed the horses out of my way. When they tried to corner me again, she raced to my rescue and literally pushed the horses out of my way! She then went back to her food on the other side of the yard, looked up at me to check on my safety, and when she was sure I was okay, went back to her grazing. This, indeed, was a horse with heart!

This tribute comes straight from my heart, as I was personally so close to and loved and appreciated so much these two horses. They changed my life and taught me many things about my own humanity. I will miss them terribly. With our planet threatened by man's folly, the impact of two such wonderful creatures and the love they inspired is great indeed.

So, farewell to you two classy dames! All of us who rode and loved you will always have an irreplaceable, warm spot in our hearts for both of you forever.

My love to all of you and your special horses.

Suzy



Dressage

The Sense and Purpose of Dressage Part IV

The logical construction of the rider's training comprises four terms:

1. Sitting
2. Aids
3. Feeling
4. Influence

All items are very closely linked to each other. Correct aids can only be given from a correct sitting position; only aids used correctly and conscientiously will achieve a feeling and, consequently, influence the horse.

It follows, without a doubt, that a correct sitting position doesn't mean luxury, but signifies an absolute necessity. The sitting position of the rider comprises:

- (a) appearance
- (b) balance, relaxation and the influence on the horse.

The correct outer appearance is generally well-known. One should sit in the deepest part of the saddle. The weight of the rider should be spread over both the seat-bones. The thigh should lie closely to the saddle flap. The lower half of the leg should lie directly behind the girth. The heel is the deepest point in order to reach the lowest position possible for the knee -- toes up, heels down. The upper part of the body should sit straight from both hips. The shoulders are free and relaxed; the shoulder blades are drawn together without any stiffness. Elbows, forearms, hands, bit and mouth should be on the same level. The hands are uppermost (held upright) approximately a hand's breath above the withers, the fingers are closed around the reins with the thumbs on top. The eyes are directed straight ahead.

Balance is very important. Only a well-balanced sitting position assures independence from the move-

ment of the horse.

Relaxation is a necessary condition for a smooth sitting position of the rider and harmony between rider and horse.

Stiffness in the joints and cramped muscles can be overcome by special relaxation exercises.

Going with the movement of the horse prevents the rider from working against the movement and will assure that he gives the aids calmly and firmly.

The aids must be given extremely precisely. They can be given only under the condition that the rider sits safely and firmly and that his concentration is directed to the prepared aids.

There are two kinds of aids: pushing and restricting. *The importance of the pushing aids far out weighs the restricting aids!*

Pushing aids are given by means of weight and thighs. Weight aids can be distributed on both sides, on one side, or they can be taken off the horse altogether (rising trot, two-point position). The weight-aids on both sides transfer the tension of the croup across both the seat bones directly to the back of the horse, which produces, in any case, a pushing effect. The weight-aid on one side results in the ridden horse bringing its own center of gravity in agreement with the rider's displaced center of gravity (turning in place, transition to the canter, leg-yielding, side-passes). The weight of the saddle is used at reinback and at standing in the stirrups (weight on the knees).

Leg-aids: the forward, pushing, lower half of the leg lies directly behind the girth creating the impulsion, whereas the controlling leg is located approximately a hand's breath behind as a passive function. The sideward pushing leg is located at the same height as the controlling leg, but it is active (half-passes and turns on the haunches only). The legs always lie calmly around the body of the horse. All active leg-aids have to come from the lower part of the leg.

The rein aids. Giving the horse the rein is of special importance. It must follow all other rein-aids and must be accompanied, as all the others, by forward pushing aids. By giving the horse the rein, he'll stretch his neck downwards and relax his back into a rounded position. If the horse goes behind the bit, one should give the rein as well as push from behind in order to push the horse up into his bridle again.

Shortening one's reins is used with all half halts followed by giving the reins again. Shortening and lengthening the reins with forward pushing aids will help to correct the horse going against the bit.

Supporting reins control the forehead (position of the neck and head which must not exceed the flexion of the ribs). A supporting rein for the part of the neck is as important as the supporting leg is for the body of the horse.

Holding the reins is used with horses that go above the bit. This will produce a steady contradiction to the pushing aids of the rider. The horse should go against it, so that it is forced to flex at the poll. As soon as the horse accepts the bit, the rider must immediately give the reins in order to allow the horse to stretch downward. The pushing aids must predominate, especially with the use of these rein-aids.

Single aids won't lead to success. Only the determined and correct communication of the aids will lead to a successful lesson and to a correct training of the horse. Concentrated and conscientiously given aids will help the rider develop the right feeling.

The rider can influence the horse if he is able to have a correct and firm sitting position and gives precise and well-balanced aids to communicate his feeling, so that he can train the horse independently and enable it to achieve records that correspond to its natural potential. The goal is not just to achieve these principles, but to steadily perfect and keep them.

Special thanks to Patricia Kinnaman for permission to reprint this article from the Van Dahn Instructor's Manual -- author unknown.

Western Round-Up

Western Riding: What's it all About? Part IV: Trail Riding

by Kathy Matthes

Although there are no set guidelines for trail riding in general, there are basically three categories: social, competitive and endurance riding.

Social Trail Riding

Social riding can take many forms. It is usually a small group of friends who ride together to enjoy the scenery, stop for picnics, or discuss topics of interest. Horseback trips through national parks or other wilderness areas are a form of organized social riding and are usually sponsored by pack stations or the U.S. Forest Service, where guides, horses and all the necessary equipment can be rented for the trip. Organized tours and equestrian holidays are also a form of social riding. There are also many riding clubs that sponsor rides, like the Equestrian Trails, Inc. (ETI), which is based in California. Such clubs often provide tours, games and educational meetings. Whether you join an organized trip, or just ride with a few friends on the trail, it is a nice, relaxing way to include horses in your social activities.

Competitive Trail Riding

In 1961, the North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC) was established to sanction competitive trail rides under a uniform system of judging. The NATRC publishes an annual rule book, a judge's manual and a management manual for horsepeople who are interested in competitive trail riding. Due to the NATRC's efforts, this sport has become increasingly popular during the last few years. The objectives of the NATRC-sponsored rides are: (1) to stimulate greater interest in the breeding and use of good

horses possessed of stamina and hardiness as qualified mounts for trail use; (2) to demonstrate the value of type and soundness and the proper selection of horses for a long ride; (3) to learn and demonstrate the proper methods of training and conditioning horses for a long ride; (4) to encourage horsemanship in competitive trail riding; and (5) to learn and demonstrate the best methods of caring for horses during and after long rides without the aid of artificial methods or stimulants.(1)

The NATRC sponsors two types of rides: one-day (Class B) and two-day (Class A). Points can be accumulated toward the annual championships, with awards going to the finishing horses. In the Open division, the daily mileage coverage is 25 to 40 miles, to be covered in 6 1/2 to 7 hours (the novice course is only 20 miles). All of the horses have to be worked over the same trail course in the same length of time in order to establish a basis for fair comparison of the horses' conditioning, soundness, and overall manner. It is not a race, but judgment in timing and pacing is crucial, because those riders who produce a consistent pace throughout the ride, instead of hurrying and resting, usually win.

There are two judges (one of whom must be a practicing veterinarian) who preside over the competition. There are two divisions: Open and Novice. Open is for horses over 5 years of age and is divided into junior (10-17 years), lightweight (rider and tack weighing less than 190 pounds), and heavyweight (rider and tack weighing more than 190 pounds). The novice division is primarily for young horses (4-5 years) and for newcomers to the sport. Each horse begins the ride with a score of 100 points: 40% for soundness, 40% for condition, 15% for manners, and 5% for way of moving. Although the competition is judged primarily on the horses, riders can also compete for horse-

manship awards based on the care and handling of their horses during the competition. Riders are penalized if they do not finish within the set time limit.

The reason why competitive trail riding is so attractive to lots of different horsepeople is because no special type or breed of horse is necessary to compete. The main prerequisite is a well-conditioned, calm horse. Riders must learn how to condition their horses to build up stamina and endurance by following a well-planned training schedule that includes work over many different kinds of terrain.

Endurance Riding

An endurance ride is usually 50-100 miles long and must be completed within a maximum period. There are three one-hour mandatory rest stops where each horse is given a thorough veterinary check to ensure that they are sound and willing to proceed. This usually eliminates 40 percent of the entries. Awards are given to all horses that finish the ride, as well as to the first horse that finishes and the horse that finishes in the best condition.

Endurance enthusiasts who want to experience the ultimate competition can work up to the Tevis Cup, which covers 100 miles in less than 24 hours and runs over the old Pony Express route from Lake Tahoe across the Sierra Nevada to Auburn, California. The trail is very rough, dusty and rocky, and includes steep inclines, so the horses must be thoroughly conditioned and experienced. Horse and rider will encounter temperatures ranging from freezing in the mountains to 120 degrees in the canyons.

1. J. Warren Evans, *Horses: A Guide to Selection, Care and Enjoyment*, (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Co., 1977), p. 428.

Unrealistic Expectations: A Detriment to Successful Riding

by Kathy Matthes

Are you frustrated because you are not reaching your riding goals fast enough? Are you angry and disappointed when you have a "bad" lesson? Are you envious of other riders who are progressing faster than you are? Do you sometimes feel so discouraged that you want to quit? Then you probably have some unrealistic expectations about the sport and yourself that are not being met. Whether your riding goal is to relax and have fun, to compete, or to master the art of horsemanship, unrealistic expectations can hinder your success as a rider. However, if you build the right foundation, both physically and mentally, and develop a realistic view of your goals, your abilities, your commitment and the nature of the sport, you can remove the barriers that are preventing you from experiencing the joy and sense of accomplishment that this sport has to offer.

Although riders at all levels can nurture unrealistic expectations, beginning riders are more prone to approach the sport with misconceptions. For example, if you have never ridden before, your knowledge about the sport probably comes from the media -- movies, books and sports coverage of equestrian events like Grand Prix Showjumping, or the Olympics. Without actual riding experience, it is easy to be swept away by the romantic picture the media presents of the horse, horse ownership, and the people who overcome great obstacles to excel in the sport. There is no doubt that horses are wildly romantic creatures and that people do overcome great obstacles, but you must be able to separate the inspiration from the fiction. For example, the movie *Sylvester* showed how a young Texas cowgirl with no eventing experience, trained her newly-broken cowhorse and won the toughest Three-Day Event on the East Coast -- and all in less than a year! An inspiration, yes, but hardly realistic!

Even people with some riding experience can have unrealistic expectations about the sport. If you rode as a child, and are returning as an adult, your perception of your abilities (now 15 years out of practice) might be clouded by nostalgia. If your experience is mainly from rented trail horses, you are going to be quite amazed when you discover the depth and breadth of true horsemanship. If you were inspired to take up riding after seeing the Olympics or other international level equestrian sports, you are likely to experience a lot of frustration when you discover that you will not be able to produce a piaffe or jump a Grand Prix course in six months! Remember, top equestrian athletes, like all great athletes, make their sport *look* easy. But don't be fooled -- that ease is the product of many years (and often a lifetime) of hard work, sacrifice, discipline and dedication. No matter how talented you are, learning to ride takes time!

So, how do you know if you are harboring unrealistic expectations? One of the first tale-tell signs is impatience. If you are constantly asking your instructor when you can go faster (canter), when you can jump (or jump higher), when you can move to a higher level class, or when you can go to the Olympics (smile), then you probably have some misconceptions about how long it takes to develop the necessary basic skills. Although you may be genuinely excited about riding and have a passion to learn quickly and excel, you must try to temper your zeal, or you will impose unrealistic goals upon yourself and feel frustrated when you cannot progress as quickly as you think you should. You must realize that you are developing physical skills, such as balance and coordination on a moving object, and new communications skills. It's not the same as learning to manipulate an inanimate object (like a tennis racket or a bicycle); you must work together as a team with a living creature that has its own thoughts, feelings and physical limi-

tations. You must also develop a theoretical foundation -- the basic principles of riding, how and why they work and how to adapt them to each individual horse. Then you have to practice, practice, practice to develop and refine your skills. It usually takes *years* (not weeks or months) to become an accomplished rider.

In addition, you must realize that your progress will depend on your athletic ability, mental attitude and the amount of time you devote to the sport. If you are overweight, out of shape, timid, or not particularly athletically inclined, you will not progress as quickly as someone who is athletic, confident and fit. If you only ride once a week, you are not going to progress as rapidly as someone who is taking lessons five days a week, or someone who has the opportunity to ride three horses a day. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't learn to ride, or that you won't excel, it just means that you have to assess your limitations realistically and adjust your goals accordingly. So, be patient with yourself, don't compare yourself with others who may have more money, time or talent than you, and take time to really learn the basics.

Another sign of unrealistic expectations is feeling frustrated when you have a "bad" lesson. "Bad" usually refers to a lesson in which you had a horse that did not instantly obey your every command. You may tend to think that because you had a difficult time with the horse, that you didn't have a successful lesson, but it's really quite the contrary. That horse has taught you what you *cannot* do, and that is a valuable (albeit humbling) lesson. Once again, you have unrealistic expectations about the nature of the sport and the horse, as well as a little bit of bruised ego. When your focus is "what's wrong with this horse," instead of "what am I

(Continued on page 8)

Vet's Notebook

Lameness Part II

by David W. Ramey, DVM

In the last newsletter, I talked about how to recognize whether or not your horse is lame. This month I'll address how I determine where your horse is lame and the methods that I use to determine what is causing the problem.

After a thorough physical examination and watching the horse in motion, I will usually have a pretty good idea in which leg the horse is lame (although even this can occasionally be tricky to see). Once I start focusing on one leg, there are a number of things that I will do to try to locate the source of the problem.

Any areas of heat, pain, or swelling are examined thoroughly. Sometimes it is possible to determine immediately that a particular area is causing the lameness. A swelling in a tendon that is accompanied by pain when touched, heat, and lameness are pretty good indications that the tendon is the source of the problem. A course of treatment may then be prescribed. Not all lameness is easy to determine, however, and in more difficult cases, I follow a systematic method of determining the location of the lameness.

If there are no obvious areas that are sore to the touch, I always start by examining the foot, since most lameness is related to the foot in some fashion. I will first go over the foot with hoof testers. This device applies pressure to the foot when it is squeezed, and if a horse is sore, he will react by attempting to withdraw his foot from the testers. If I suspect an area is sore, I may also trot the horse after pressure is applied to that sore area, because the horse will be worse at the trot after hoof testers pressure is released.

Applying pressure, or stressing, a suspected sore spot on the limb is a very useful way to help diagnose lameness. For instance, if a horse has a sore knee, holding the knee in firm flexion for a minute before trotting him may cause the horse to be sore for a few steps. This situation is similar to what would happen to you if you had a bad knee and were asked to crouch for a minute before running off. You'd be sore, too. This principle can be applied to a variety of lamenesses, but interpretation of the response is something of an art. Unfortunately, some normal horses will be sore after stress tests, and experience is the only way to determine the proper diagnosis from these tests.

Nerve blocks are another way to discover the location of lameness. The nerves in the horse's limbs lie close to the surface. This enables me to use local anesthetics to numb specific areas of the limb to rule out lameness by process of elimination. If a horse is sore in a particular area, and I make it numb, the horse will appear to be sound when trotted because the spot no longer hurts. Thus, by using nerve blocks (placing a small amount of anesthetic over the nerve to an area), I can localize the sore spot of the horse's limb. The systematic use of nerve blocks can completely anesthetize the horse's leg, so I generally start from the ground and work up. This procedure can be time consuming, but it's often the only way that the location of a lameness can be determined.

After I have discovered where the horse is lame, I will either prescribe treatment or suggest further diagnostic tests to determine the problem. Generally, I would suggest either radiographs (X-rays) or ultrasound, depending on the injury.

X-rays are a form of radiation generated by an X-ray tube. The X-ray camera is placed on one side of the limb and a plate, containing X-ray film, is placed on the other side. The density of the tissue between the camera and the film will determine the amount of X-rays that will reach the film. Bone stops a lot of X-rays, and it looks white on the film. Air and water (soft, non-bone tissue is mostly water) allows most of the X-rays to reach the film and appears black on the film. Therefore, X-rays are useful primarily for disorders of the bones. When I examine the X-rays, I compare what I see with normal bones and make recommendations for treatment based on my findings.

Ultrasound is the best method available for examining the soft tissues of the leg. Even though the problem might be obvious, a swollen tendon for example, the only way to determine the extent of the injury is to examine it with ultrasound. It is just not possible to accurately evaluate a soft tissue injury to the tendons or suspensory ligament without this technology. One noted expert in the field has estimated that ultrasound demonstrates that his clinical impression of injury was wrong 25% of the time! With ultrasound, I am often able to discover that what appears to be a minor injury is, in fact, quite significant, or that what appears to be a major problem will heal relatively quickly. Based on the severity of the injury, a course of treatment will then be prescribed.

There are many causes for lameness and many different ways to treat each one, but a systematic approach to diagnosis will usually uncover the cause and get your horse back on the rode to soundness.

The Vet's Notebook is a monthly column that answers your equine health questions. Please address questions to: Editor, T.E.S. Talk, and leave them in the School office. Ramey Equine Group is an equine exclusive practice serving the Los Angeles area since 1987. Dr. David Ramey and Dr. Patricia Chow provide full service care to horses of all breeds and occupations, including medicine, surgery, ultrasound, endoscopy, and X-rays. Call (818) 953-8528 to schedule an appointment or if you have any questions.

Traditional Equitation School

- 3 Western & Gaited Horse Schooling Show
- 9 Dressage Show Prep Clinic
- 16 Horse of Your Own Clinic
- 16 English Show Prep Clinic (to be confirmed)
- 17 Dressage & Combined Training Schooling Show
- 24 English Schooling Show

L.A. Equestrian Center

- 1-3 Summer Preview Dressage Show -- Glenda McElroy (818) 841-3554
- 8-10 Irish Fair & Connemara Show (213) 395-0063

- 5-17 Gold Coast Summer Hunter & Jumper Show (818) 840-6728
- 18 \$50,000 Gold Coast Summer Grand Prix (818) 842-8194
- 22-24 Equestrian Trails, Inc. National Convention (818) 767-7526
- 28-1 Region I Arabian Horse Show (619) 445-5520

So. California Area

- 2-3 Hunter/Jumpers at the Paddock
- 3 Rancho Santa Fe Hunter Show, Rancho Riding Club
- 6-10 Show Park June Jamboree San Diego
- 9 Camelot Riding Club, Newhall

- 9-10 Dressage at the Paddock (213) 662-3523
- 13-17 Charity Fair Del Mar
- 14-17 California Jumping Cup Del Mar
- 14-16 Mercedes West Coast Jumping Championship, Los Angeles
- 14-17 MEC Classic Preview Rancho Murieta
- 19-24 Murieta Equine Complex Classic, Rancho Murieta
- 23-24 CDS Pomona Chapter Summer Dressage (213) 944-2116
- 26-1 Red, White & Blue Festival, Newhall
- 29-1 Show Park of San Diego Horse Trials (619) 481-6535

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doing wrong, how am I miscommunicating my intentions, or what is this horse trying to tell me?" then you perceive the horse as a type of machine that should automatically do what you want. Just because you know the right "aids," doesn't necessarily mean that you have performed them correctly, or that you have effectively communicated them to your horse. Don't you ever wonder why those "plugs" suddenly wake up and become obedient, pliable creatures when the instructors hop on to school then for you?

If you are serious about being a good horseperson, then don't complain about the difficult horses -- hop on and face that challenge compassionately and intelligently, and glean all you can from that lesson. If your horse is acting up, then take the time listen to what that horse is telling you about *your* riding

skills. Sometimes you may actually be causing your horse pain (by pulling on its mouth or bouncing on its back), or sending such confusing signals that the horse simply doesn't understand what to do (for example, asking a horse to go forward with your legs while you inadvertently pull back with your hands). It's not the horse's fault that he doesn't understand your language -- you must strive to understand his language (the aids) and to use it fluently and effectively. After all, you are not just sitting on a robot with push-buttons that make it do what you want; you are developing a two-way conversation with a living animal that is simply obeying the signals you are sending to it -- be they wrong or right signals. Put your ego aside and patiently strive to correct the problem -- in your horse and in yourself. Anyone can ride a push-button horse, but, in the long run, it will not make him or her an excellent horseperson. The

truest sense of horsemanship is not looking beautiful on a perfect, push-button horse, but developing a partnership with a not-so-perfect horse and making it beautiful.

Well, I hope this overview of common unrealistic expectations has been helpful. Take some time to assess your perceptions of riding and to pin-point the areas that are causing your frustration. Have your instructor help you with areas of theory that you might have missed, or specific problems you are encountering. Check out books from the Van Dahn Memorial Library, or ask your instructor for a list of books to read to reinforce your theoretical understanding of riding. And, above all, develop an attitude of respect and compassion for your friend, the school horse, who works so hard to teach you how to ride.