

# The Listening Post

Magazine for the Intelligent Horsemanship Association



AUTUMN 2010

Monty Roberts reveals  
**"Five Things I Wish  
I'd Learned Earlier!"**

In this issue

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## AN ADDED BONUS AT 5 DAY FOUNDATION COURSES – EQUINE TOUCH!



Equine Touch Instructor Lara Neighbour met students on the 5-day foundation courses and provided a presentation of Equine Touch. Here are a couple of key points Lara believes are worth any horse owner or rider remembering:

### 1. Horses don't yelp

Whilst this may be obvious we can tend to forget that, unlike us, a horse does not vocalise its pain – they can only try to communicate it through behaviour. So if you observe 'grumpy' behaviour, make sure you check whether pain is causing the behaviour before tackling it with training.

### 2. Bodywork for you

Once you've got your horse's body, behaviour, feet, teeth, saddle, bit, feeding all sorted (phew, that's quite a list!) don't forget to look at yourself.

**Think about it...would you want to give someone a piggy-back if they hung off to one side all the time?**

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The UK team runs courses nationwide and Lara regularly teaches courses at Hartsop Farm and also in Kent, Sussex, Berks, Hants, Norfolk, Suffolk and Staffs. And as IH members you can claim a discount on courses costs. Contact the National Co-ordination Centre for a prospectus and further details.

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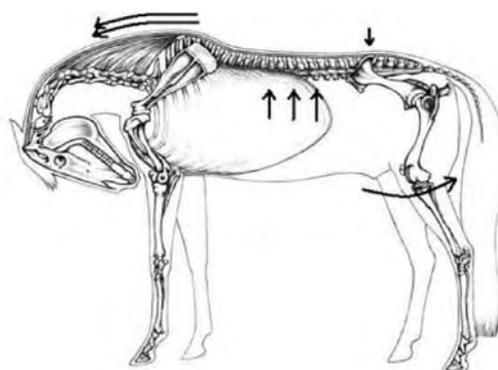
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# Letter from Kelly

Hi Everyone,

The last couple of month's we've been working extra hard to show our appreciation to IH Members and give you all sorts of extra benefits. We don't want you to miss a single thing so do go on the members area of the website and see the online film footage, special members discounts and other great things we've organised for you there!



Photo by Katrin Junker

I know the major thing holding us back with our horses (apart from money) is TIME and I think the best book I've read on the subject is called the 80/20 Principle which asserts, among other things, that 80% of the results you achieve are from 20% of your efforts. So, of course, the tricky thing is deciding what that 20% is!

Another idea is that 80% of your pleasure comes from 20% of your activities or relationships. The principle of the book is to discover the key 20% areas of your life and do more of that and less of everything else. So with careful planning what changes could you make so that time would work better for you?

For instance, our Listening Post editor does her editing whilst going back and forth from London on the train – now there's an efficient use of time! If you only have a certain amount of time with your horse on some days – how can you best use it? Perhaps we should make that a feature in the next Listening Post? Do let us know if you have any ideas to maximise the time spent with your horse. You may win the Star Letter prize which will make it time well spent!

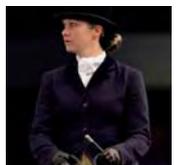
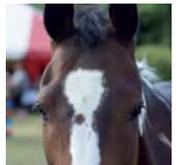
I'm looking forward to catching up with you at Monty's October tour – and don't forget to bring your friends!

*Kelly*

P.S. The photo is of Corky - who is going to have to wake up a bit once I've got all this office work finished!

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**Do you have a contribution for the Listening Post?  
Do phone, email or send your carrier pigeon to the IH office!**

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On the cover: *Pie plays Uncle to youngster Aroma. Photo by Katrin Junker.*

## Fergus BY JEAN ABERNETHY

[www.FergusTheHorse.com](http://www.FergusTheHorse.com)



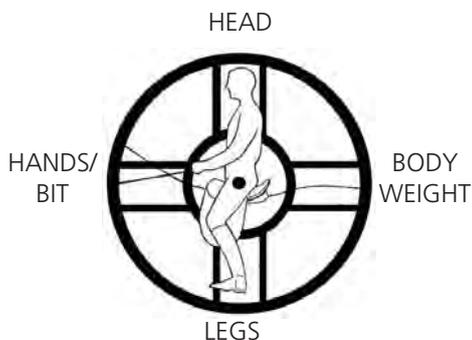
# A bit in hand!

## Part 2: What factors affect the contact?

By Elaine Sutcliffe MRPCH of [www.whiterose-equestrian.co.uk](http://www.whiterose-equestrian.co.uk)

*“A Horse is a thing of such beauty... none will tire of looking at him as long as he displays himself in his splendor.”*

Xenophon



This brilliant diagram is courtesy of Elwyn Hartley Edwards, who sadly passed away in 2007. He called it The Equitational Wheel, a representation of the Buddhist Wheel of Life for the horseman. It shows the 4 riding aids which are the means of communication between horse and rider.

The wheel is made up of 4 spokes (the rider's aids) and a hub (the rider's seat), the central balance point, secure and independent of the reins. Elwyn uses it to show that the bit is only one element in successful riding, to be considered and used in conjunction with the other elements and not in isolation.

The first 3 spokes are physical aids – use of the legs, trunk/body weight and hands – and the 4th comes from the head, i.e. our thought process. All our physical actions on a horse are preceded, be it subconsciously, by the thought of doing or not doing something and should always be applied considerably and rationally.

As the head spoke is always the first link in the chain to be used, the hand/bit spoke should always be the last link to think of using.

When all these elements are used correctly and thoughtfully, then equestrian 'Nirvana' is reached!!

Oooh, so many things have to be right, don't they – and that's before I start considering the right bit to use! What I'm really trying to say is that a bit is a means of communicating with the horse, not necessarily the answer to all schooling issues. On the other hand, get the message across in a way that the horse accepts, understands and causes him or her no discomfort - and the results can be magic.

Let's go back to the building blocks in schooling that I spoke about last time, the Scales of Training. First question we must ask

is 'have we got rhythm and relaxation?' If not, why not? Aside from physical discomfort, it could be that we are asking the horse or rider to do more than they are physically or mentally capable of at that point in time?



But let's assume that the schooling is progressive, the back, saddle, teeth, feet, etc. have all been checked and the rider is being as sympathetic with his or her hands as possible. Many people ride nowadays in flash and/or crank nosebands. How tight is that fastened? Can the horse relax his lower jaw, chew and swallow easily? What effect is the noseband actually having? Is it improving the horse's way of going or suppressing something such as the mouth opening or the tongue hanging out?

Usually, the noseband is there to stop an evasion and now we begin to get to the route of the problem. What is it that the horse is trying to evade? Resistance and relaxation are the only ways a horse has of communicating with us. Moving free and loose, you will be waiting a long time to see a horse demonstrate the evasions that you frequently see when it has a bit in its mouth.

So the first priority is to ensure that we have a mouthpiece that fits comfortably and (s)he is relaxed with it being there – before we even pick up the reins. There is such a great choice of shapes, sizes, joints and materials available now, where do you start? Bits in sweet iron or with a copper content are designed to encourage salivation and be warmer in the mouth than stainless steel, but when the shape and thickness of the bit suits the conformation of the horse's mouth, I find the material that it comes in is less relevant.

Thick or thin bit? If you part your horse's lips at the side, you will see that the tongue

completely fills the mouth cavity. Where's the room to fit a thick bit? Imagine having a gobstopper in your mouth for an hour or more. To swallow, we have to close our mouth, then, with our tongue, move the saliva up to the top of our mouth and then to the back of the mouth at which point we swallow. With a thick piece of metal, rubber or plastic in there, this becomes more uncomfortable to do and then, when pressure is applied to the tongue, impossible without freeing the tongue up.

A final thought for you for now.

We use our mouth for breathing as well as our nose, more often to take more air in. Many people mistakenly think that is why a horse opens its mouth. However, a horse cannot breathe through its mouth, only through its nostrils, so there must be another reason for that. We must ensure that our method of riding and fitting tack does not restrict the horse's airways, as this will compromise his ability to get adequate oxygen to his muscles and perform to his maximum potential with ease.



*Horse on the forehand*



*A nice working trot*

# Taming a twelve-foot line!

By IH Recommended Associate Joanna O'Neill

One of the most useful tools when handling horses is a longer-than-usual lead rope. The 12-foot 'Lanky Lead Line' available from Intelligent Horsemanship is a great every-day length – short enough to tie up with, yet long enough to keep you out from under your horse's feet even if he becomes, shall we say, 'challenging'! However, that lovely extra length can become a liability if you're not used to it, and like all new techniques, leading with a 12-foot line takes practice. Everything can seem fine until you need to stop your horse treading on your heels or striding past you, at which point you might find you have altogether too much rope and can't correct him.



*Too long*



*Too long*

I have always found it helpful when learning something new to have some clear guidelines in the early stages; later, when I've built up some experience, I can abandon the 'rules' and work more freely.

So here are the guidelines I offer my clients when first using a 12-foot line. So long as nobody is around to laugh, I suggest clipping onto a convenient wall to check out how it works before attaching the line to a real, live horse.

1. Slip a rubber band onto the line one arm's length from the clip.
2. Coil the line below the rubber band, and then hold the coils in your left hand with the rubber band inside your hand and with your hand touching the front of your waist, where your belt buckle would be. That is your 'stay' position.
3. Your right hand can now rest over the line next to your left – thumbs touching – or, if necessary, can slide along the line right up to the clip.



*Wall*



*Just right standing*

With this position, when your horse walks with you he will have the comfortable arm's length of line between you, and your hands will stay together at your waist.



*Just right leading*

If he tries to fall in behind you or simply walks too close to you, you can slide your right hand up to the clip and correct him, moving his head out to your side, and then take your hand back to your waist again. You might have to do this several times, but eventually he'll find this position by himself.



*Just right correcting leading*

If you have a very challenging horse, perhaps borrow an easy one to practise with first.

Once you are comfortable with the long lead rope, the rubber band can come off and you can adjust your technique to whatever works best for you.

One final note: remember that, as with long-lining and indeed riding, the experts appear to do nothing and yet never get in a muddle. In fact, of course, they are constantly active, monitoring their horses, their bodies and their equipment and making tiny adjustments all the time. That is why Kelly's line never trails on the floor, loops around her knuckles or trips her up. So all the time you are leading your horse, pay attention to what is happening to the line and make those adjustments if necessary.

Many thanks to Jack for starring in this article, and to Emma for lending him to me!

Joanna O'Neill is a Recommended Associate covering Berkshire, Middlesex, Surrey, North Hampshire.

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*"Giddy Ups do work, but their action is to startle the horse rather than hurt them. They are a clear example of using assertiveness to influence a horse, rather than aggression."*

# What is that thing you are carrying?

By IH Recommended Associate Sally Hamilton

If you look on Mary Wanless's website, in the section on her school horses, you will find this picture showing Solomon the part Shire, her newest acquisition. The rider is me, Sally Hamilton RA, on a weekend clinic to improve my riding skills, and as you can see my personal challenge at the moment is to cure my default position of leaning forward. The question I want to answer in this article was one asked by many people on the course – what is that thing you are carrying?

Anyone belonging to Intelligent Horsemanship can answer the question – known either as a Giddy Up rope or a wip wop, once described as a curtain tassel, available on the IH website as an aid to forward movement. But surely they are only for use on nappy horses, not in a dressage clinic? A dressage whip is only for the lightest touch, surely, sometimes only a visual aid. For many people a whip is part of their outfit – what colour and style of jodhpurs are they wearing, what hat, what shirt, and of course the whip. Everybody has to carry a whip.

I have no problem with people carrying a schooling whip if they only use it to signal to their horses, or touch them lightly. My problem is that I cannot trust myself, after years as a BHSAI riding the conventional way, not to turn my tap into a hit. Anyone will know, if they have experienced a buck after using their whip more heavily than they meant, that horses can be hurt by schooling whips. If you doubt it, try it on yourself, but be prepared for a nasty shock.

Riders tend to use schooling whips in one of two ways. One is lightly, to reinforce a leg aid they feel has been ignored, and the other is to do what is euphemistically called 'waking them up.' Or, to put it another way, belt them. This is a classic case of the human saying to the horse 'you must, or I will hurt you' – the attitude that Monty has spent his life trying to change. Giddy Ups do work, but their action is to startle the horse rather than hurt them. They are a clear example of using assertiveness to influence a horse, rather than aggression.

I feel frustration on a horse who is ignoring you as much as a conventional rider. I enjoy the lightness and grace of a horse working in an outline as much as a conventional rider. But what I am not prepared to do is to inflict pain as a way to increase energy. Which long term does not work – think of the riding school horse, ridden three hours a day many days of the week, called lazy, hit on a daily basis both by novice and experienced riders (on the whole the more experienced the rider the harder the hit) who year on year decreases his pace and energy as experience teaches him that he is in a no win situation.

My solution is to carry a Giddy Up instead of a whip. Not that I would expect to carry one in a competition, but as a training aid, so that in a competition I would carry nothing at all. I use three different lengths – full length for a horse who might nap, medium (shown here) for flat work, and short for riding out just in case – small enough to be kept in a pocket.

For about six years I taught on Saturdays in a busy riding school without allowing sticks to be used, having previously been a traditional instructor who hit horses and taught her pupils to do the same. After 2001, when I became aware of Monty and Kelly's work, any rider on a slow horse or pony was lent a Giddy Up, and if necessary I would throw a long line to help forward movement. My perception is that the ponies became more forward going as they learnt that Saturday was the day on which they were not hit.

As for jumping, I would love it if Giddy Ups were the norm, but tradition being what it is I fear it will be many years before local shows have hoards of teenage girls carrying Giddy Up ropes instead of sticks. Think of the reduction in stress levels – human as well as horse. Fewer tears, fewer tantrums, probably fewer accidents. Perhaps if we could make them a fashion statement? Lime green, shocking pink, shot with silver or gold... I can dream. In the meantime, I am very grateful to Mary for her broadmindedness in allowing me to carry a Giddy Up rather than a stick in her clinics.

**Sally Hamilton is a Recommended Associate covering South Oxfordshire and Berkshire.**

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“  
*Pie at 15 though is looking great and has been on a couple of outings with my niece, Daisy, this year just so he doesn't start thinking he's retired.*  
 ”

“  
*If I knew as much as I've forgotten I'd be a genius!*”

# Summer Learning

By Kelly Marks

**I**n my May Masterclass introductions I noticed plenty of head nodding when I said “does anyone else here find... it's sometimes not what you don't know that holds you back... it's what you know - but you've just forgotten!” It's why it's so helpful to often be working alongside former students, now excellent horse people in their own right. They'll come up with some insightful idea and 'I'll say that's marvellous – how did you ever think of that?’ And they'll say “Well you taught it to me about 8 years ago!”

**Moral: Mentoring works both ways**

*The following pointers, I knew before, but this summer I've just been reminded again.*

**Horses are Addictive Because There's Never That One Perfect Answer**

Yes there are certain basic foundations we must lay to create a relationship with our horse. However, I find as soon as you think ‘that's it now I have the answer’ to one of those trickier little issues that can pop up; the Universe sends you a horse who completely confounds you. This is where we British have the advantage because we are tea drinkers. When problems get overwhelming we know the first thing we need (because it's what Grannie always told us) is to stop and have a nice cup of tea. What is it in that cup of tea that so often means that we go back and the horse works better and we work better? Some people might say this is ‘latent learning’ or that we need to give ourselves ‘thinking time’ but PG Tips might say it's all in the leaves.

**Moral: Horses need time to process and so do we**

**We're all ‘time poor’ – so what are we prepared to give up to spend more time with our horses?**

I was just involved in general chatter with a friend the other day and she came out with something quite profound. She said “there's this woman on the yard with two horses and their perfectly behaved but then they would be, she's retired and has got nothing else to do all day.” I thought actually that's an incredibly interesting comment. This lucky woman has time for her horses. It may well be the missing link to all our horsemanship endeavours TIME. In fact, thinking back to when I got my first pony Seamus, a nervous bolting, uncatchable, non loading, non jumping grey Connemara who, you can guess, I adored, nothing much changed while he was kept at the local riding school but when I was allowed to keep him at home for the summer holidays and just spent whole days with him, everything changed for the better.

Having studied countless time management books (mostly a waste of time ho ho) my biggest ‘Ah Ha’ moment came in the book which stated the obvious (isn't that often the way?) ‘If you're not able to cope with your workload – there is nothing else for it but you are going to have to give something up’. It might be

by delegation, efficient measures or just choosing to drop something out of your life. You'd probably better keep your kids and significant other but maybe you could persuade them that poo picking is a great game or could you make other time savings by say, shopping online, simplifying your feeding arrangements (horse and human) and get rid of some of your ‘stuff’ which takes up time and space?

**Moral: Make sure the time you spend on things reflect your priorities in life**

**Face the Facts – Don't spend more than a minute thinking about what should, could or ought to have happened – face the facts and deal with them.**

This summer I thought the new horses would be representing LH at horse shows and making us all proud. Sadly other things got in the way and their training got put on the back burner. Rosie Jones who helps me and I were disappointed initially but faced the facts and came up with a plan that's going to make 2011 sensational. Romi and Banksy have spent the summer at new RA Jim Goddard's yard with Rosie schooling but will most likely come back to Lambourn for the winter while Rosie continues her university course.

I felt sad I've missed some of their growing up time while I've had to catch up in the office. However, I feel sure it's been the sensible thing to do all round because it means with just Pie, Herbie and Corky staying here in Lambourn, Katrin (now my PA though Lou still helps us from London) and I have been able to ensure that those boys get regular attention. Corky is just 4, I think all the growing he's doing is tiring him out because he spends a lot of time sleeping! Pie at 15 though is looking great and has been on a couple of outings with my niece, Daisy, this year just so he doesn't start thinking he's retired. So by facing the facts we've managed to have a fun and productive summer – and look out for us in 2011!



*Corky is growing and spends a lot of time sleeping*

Photos by Katrin Junker

# Listening Post Competition Winners



## March 2010

**Stef Stokes** - 'Schooling Exercises in-hand' by Oliver Hilberger

**Sam Davis** - 'Feet First – Barefoot Performance and Hoof Rehabilitation' by Nic Barker and Sarah Braithwaite

**Jackie Foulds** - 'Born to Whisper' by Nicole Golding and Adam Goodfellow

**Liz Beddows, Debbie Patrick** - Premier Equine Sports Boots

**Elaine Brookes** - Happy Horse Hay Steamer

**Lydia Wade and Stephen Robertson** - Red Horse Products Sole Cleanse and Hoof Stuff

## June 2010

**Philippa Ellen** - Top Spec competition

Congratulations to all our winners!!

## FROM OUR EQUUS ONLINE UNIVERSITY COMPETITION WINNER:



Dear Kelly,

I am the lucky winner of the Equus Online University competition and would like to thank you and the IH office for such a fabulous prize. I had heard good reports about the Online University, though to be honest (as a working parent/horse owner) I thought I would not have the time to sit in front of the computer watching endless videos. Well, I was completely wrong. **“The site is so quick and easy to use, the videos are broken up into short informative step by step pieces. The details shown and the explanations given are truly excellent, easy for the normal horse owner to understand and follow.”**



I had no idea that so much information would be on the site, i.e. the bite size videos, audio lessons and 'Monty's challenge' where you can check your understanding of the lesson and so much more. I especially like the timeline where the site remembers how far I have watched on the training videos, it is like having my own personal book marker! It is clear that a lot of work has gone into producing the Online University. I can now honestly say it is not only easier to use than searching for a particular article in a book or magazine, but has so much more information and is a lot quicker!

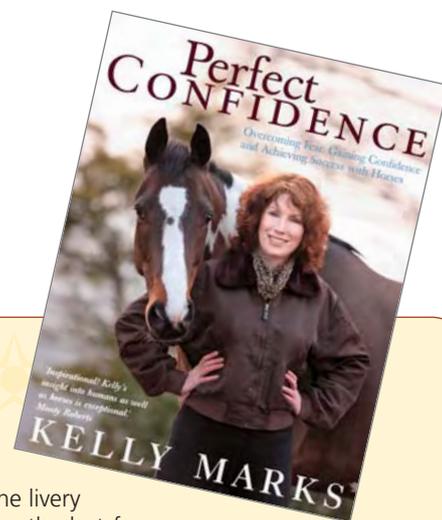
So thank you for such a brilliant prize, it has taken the place of (and is cheaper than) my usual horsey magazines!

**Jenny Crouch**

[WWW.MONTYROBERTSUNIVERSITY.COM](http://WWW.MONTYROBERTSUNIVERSITY.COM)

# Letters

## Your letters



Dear Listening Post,

Hi all, I would just like to thank everyone involved in the 5 day foundation course that I attended last week at Hartsop Farm. I can now say that to attend it was one of the best decisions I have made. I was made to feel really welcome and the other students were all friendly and supportive.

I would like to say this of all the tutors on the course - you are truly second to none! You have such knowledge, patience and a wonderful ability to install confidence when and where needed. This I have brought back with me and have already got the beginnings of a better relationship with my horses. I really enjoyed the whole package and learnt such a lot, everyone was so helpful. I will be going on more of your courses next year, even though apparently my husband lived on ham sandwiches and crisps while I was away, bless him.

And to anyone who may be considering going on this course, I would say...GO!!!!

To Kelly, Sandra, Linda, Julia, Ian, Rosie, all the IH helpers and to Ian and Sandy for letting us use your facilities at Hartsop.

Thank you all so much,  
**Kate Williams**

Dear Kelly

I am sending you an upbeat, massive, massive thank you! You won't realise how much what I have learnt from IH has helped today when we had to move to another yard. The livery yard my horse and I have been very happy at for the last few years had suddenly and unexpectedly been closed. On top of this, just to add the stress, it happened while my mum was in hospital having an operation.

I don't own transport, there's not yet anyone hiring horseboxes locally, we don't compete and therefore travelling is something my horse, Toffee, has just not really done. I do keep my eyes open for the chance to hire so that this situation could be different and I did get the chance to practise loading a while ago using what I'd learnt at Hartsop - which went well.

Anyway this morning new yard owner transported him for me and he loaded perfectly! Couldn't have been better and everyone was very impressed. This was despite having just had to say some very sad goodbyes as we'll all be scattered to various yards. So, having loading issues at that point could have been like your loading video from the 5 day course and more!

My red Dually is surely worth more than the £40 it cost! I was ready to use the sideways on the ramp method you showed us on the course but didn't need to. I think Toffee responded to the feel on the line I learnt from you on the 5 day course. You corrected my jerkiness and showed me how it should feel.

Very many thanks,  
**Kathryn and Toffee**

# Star letter

A copy of 'Perfect Confidence' by Kelly Marks goes to the writer of our Star letter



Dear Listening Post,

I had to get in touch to say a very BIG thank you to Kelly and her team. What fantastic people! They made both myself, Kyer and Blodwyn so welcome at Kelly's demonstration in Wales. We can't thank you enough for picking Kyer and Blodwyn to come to the demonstration and Kelly, Rosie, Linda have made my daughter one happy child. It meant so much to her to get her boxed.

I wanted to let you know that Kyer tried loading her today on the box and she went on beautifully. You are all very special people to us and do a tremendous job.

Kind regards,  
**Paula, Kyer and Blodwyn**

Dear Kelly,

Just to let you know we got Zena back from Sparsholt College. I turned up with the lorry and new Dually halter, spent a few minutes establishing ground rules with her and getting her to respect the halter. Then she followed me straight onto the lorry! I am not sure if it was luck, or she just wanted to come home, but thanks to you again for teaching me where I had gone wrong in the past.

I am looking forward to a summer of fun now, and am hoping to get out to one of your courses as I am now hooked on your methods!

Great result all round with the loading! Worth every penny (and more) of the membership to IH!

Kind regards,  
**Helen**

Do you have something you'd like to share with us? If so, you can send your letters to us at: Lethornes, Upper Lambourn, Hungerford RG17 8QP  
Email: [listeningpost.editor@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:listeningpost.editor@hotmail.co.uk)



# Bridle shyness – *easy does it*

By IH Recommended Associate Sarah Weston



*Solo was one of the very first horses I ever worked with. A big solid, tall Welsh Cob with a broad forehead; a proper driving type with the capacity barge his way out of trouble, his owner had been struggling to put his bridle on for years and described how she would take a short cut by taking his bridle apart to put it on piece by piece every time. This persisted until one day he threw his head up so hard that he broke her nose. Julie didn't know how the problem had started in the first place, but now her confidence had been severely dented and she wondered if she would ever ride him again.*

## 3 quick tips for avoiding creating a bridle shy horse

- Make sure that the horse's teeth have been checked and treated by a vet or qualified dental technician
- Make sure that the horse that the horse is happy to have every part of his head touched
- Introduce the bridle with sensitivity and empathy



**T**he trouble with short cuts is that they inevitably become 'long cuts' in that the way around a problem gets longer and longer every time.

So often, these horses are good about everything else and yet their bridle phobia can be a real obstacle which has to be surmounted each time they are ridden. It can become a real disincentive to going out riding. No one wants to have a battle every day – and that includes the horse.

It's very easy to create a bridle phobic horse – someone simply has to mishandle the way they treat a horse's head on one occasion. Fortunately most horses are more forgiving than that, but banging the teeth with the bit or jamming sensitive ears through the crown piece may be all that it takes. Horses like to have their bridles put on politely and sympathetically. The art, if a horse starts to become awkward, is to become even calmer and quietly insistent rather than to get angry or rough.

It's really important to consider first whether there are physical reasons why a horse is objecting to its bridle. Has the horse got sharp teeth, broken wolf teeth under the surface of the gum, ulcerated cheeks or sore lips? Does he have mites in his ears? Is the bridle too tight (especially the brow band) or the bit too severe? How are the hands that use it? Does the problem only start when you attempt to do up a flash or cranked noseband? If the horse suddenly becomes difficult to bridle having been fine for a long time, neurological problems need to be ruled out.

The next step in overcoming the problem is to examine whether the horse is sensitive on a particular part of his head – if the horse flings his head about once the last ear goes under the bridle it could be either his ear or his mouth. Normal desensitisation work will



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*It's very easy to create a bridle phobic horse – someone simply has to mishandle the way they treat a horse's head on one occasion.* ”

help to overcome this: I often employ a scarf to drape around and about the horse's head, to gently tighten and release. I also massage the horse's face using gentle fingers to trace the horse's bones and rub the base of his forelock – seduce his head.

To overcome real ear shyness it is important to give the horse some control over the process. I start off by placing my hand on the horse's neck as far up as I can go without the shyness being activated and then begin to touch and move away. Once my hand is behind the horse's ear (and if it is a tall horse I use a feather duster) I wait until the horse moves his ear back towards my hand and then reward him by taking my hand away. In time the horse starts to touch my hand with his ear and I continue to reward him by taking my hand away. I wait until he has pressed my hand more firmly. From here I am usually able to touch his ear and then move away if he keeps still and so on. My aim is to be able to touch the whole of his ear and if possible gently, very gently, massage it. It's really important not to grasp the ear or to invade it with your fingers.

Next the horse can be taught to lower his head to a slight pressure on his poll. I simply place my hand on top of his poll, wait until he lowers his head even a fraction, and take my hand away. This is repeated until it becomes automatic. If the horse is tall, I stand on my mounting block.

Once the horse is accepting of pleasant touch anywhere on his head, then I will start to reintroduce his bridle. Traditionally the handler has their hands around the horse's nose while they put the noseband and bit in first. I have found that the IH way of putting on a bridle works much better. Basically, I put my right hand over the horse's poll and between his ears and hold the crown piece of the bridle. The left hand then holds the bit and asks the horse to accept it into his mouth – I gently put my fingers between the bars of his mouth on the off side in order to

stimulate him to open his mouth but in time, if you always do it sympathetically, the horse will voluntarily open his mouth for the bit. Once the bit is in place, I use my right hand to gently flatten the horse's left ear forwards to go under the crown piece (just as if it were as long as a donkey's ear) and then physically move to the offside of the horse to do the same on the other side. I might give a horse a click and a treat for each stage of this process or just at the end, and find this can be a useful addition to my training even if I do not use it at other times.

### Case Studies

- Shinika, a New Forest x Thoroughbred, was a horse that turned out to have neuralgia (nerve pain) and was cured with drugs. We had to trust our instincts here that something serious had triggered the problem.
- One summer I went to help a lady who had bought a driving pony sold extremely cheaply because the pony would take ages to have her bridle on. Careful examination revealed that the blinkers were actually resting on the pony's short eyelashes. A bigger bridle and a different way of putting it on, then the pony started to take just two minutes to accept her bridle. This made the pony a very good purchase as putting on the bridle had been her only problem.
- I went out to an Argentinean ex-polo pony called Willow, that had terrible scarring just behind her poll where a thin cord halter or gag attachment had pressed hard into her skin. By working with her gently and, in her case, using food rewards, we got her to the stage where she was asking for her bridle to be put on.

Horses need to be able to trust that the bridle would be put on sympathetically. In each of these cases, the horses went on to be easy to bridle each time, every time.



\*Please note that the horse shown in most of the photos is a complete love and doesn't mind posing as a horse with problems. **He is modelling a genuine Masai Browband which are available in different colours from Sarah. Priced at £10 ALL proceeds go to a Masai Community Project in Loisaba, Kenya. They are all 38 cms wide (14 1/2") and can be seen at:** <http://s22.photobucket.com/albums/b333/Sweston/Masai%20browbands/>

**Sarah Weston is a Recommended Associate of Intelligent Horsemanship. Based in the New Forest she covers Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight.**

**She can be contacted on 01725 512434 or 07871 252954 or at [sarahweston.logg@virgin.net](mailto:sarahweston.logg@virgin.net) More details of her work can be seen at [www.sarahweston.co.uk](http://www.sarahweston.co.uk)**

# Ask the Ex



Jackie JA Taylor

## Personal Profile

Jackie JA Taylor worked freelance in the horse feed industry for many years before taking several years out to research hormonal and metabolic conditions in horses. She now specialises in helping people with the management of horses with laminitis, insulin resistance, Cushing's and their ilk, and has a broad base of knowledge of the feed and supplements market. [www.metabolichorse.co.uk](http://www.metabolichorse.co.uk)

**Q. I have a question relating to my 32 year old cob, Magpie. She is happy bright and alert and generally in pretty good shape for her age, except for her teeth and weight, she is now unable to chew hay/haylage, even some forms of chaff she struggles with, her teeth have worn down to a degree where they are pretty useless as a grinding machine now.**

**The vet has said, they are 32 year old teeth there is nothing that can be done. So she is being fed huge amounts of High fibre nuts, 16 plus nuts, (both soaked), fast fibre beet and veteran chaff, this she manages to eat ok.**

**My problem is that she won't eat enough of it to keep the appropriate amount of weight on, if I try to increase it gradually she just leaves it. She is turned out 24 hours a day and is moved into fields with the longest grass as often as possible. She is gradually losing weight as time passes by, I was wondering if there was anything else that I could be doing to try and put a bit of weight on her, she is very bony now!**

**Many Thanks, Lucy Holland Veterinary Nurse (small animals)**

**A:** There are a few things I would suggest. Firstly it might be an idea just to arrange a blood test and run a screening 'endogenous ACTH' test for Cushing's, as there is nothing which causes them to lose condition so readily. A lot of older horses do show signs of 'pituitary ageing' at post mortem apparently, so there may be more occult mild Cushing's about than we realise, and it is so easy and cost-effective to treat nowadays.

Other than that you can try and increase the nutritional value of the feeds you are using, or add 'calories' another way. I would enlist the services of a senior nutritionist from one of the companies who's products you are using, or get the calculator out yourself and actually compare the protein and fibre levels, and Mj/kg.

Possibly due to factors like pituitary ageing or lowered digestive efficiency, veterans do

need a higher protein level in their diet overall. 12% is recommended by one leading US researcher in the area, Dr Ralston. Some fibre replacement products are a lot lower than that, maybe 8%, and that can make it hard for veterans to maintain muscle bulk. I know TopSpec offer a hay replacement product at 12% and there are alfalfa and grass nuts at around 16% which could balance a lower protein product.

In the same way a lot of high fibre products are aimed at the 'low calorie' requirements of laminitic ponies and may only be 8Mj/kg when higher value products are 11 or 12Mj/kg, so it's worth doing some research and making sure you are making the best choices there too. The gut does need a minimum amount of coarse fibre to function properly, so again, making sure levels are adequate there is important (which is why some specialist nutrition software to do all the maths helps!)

Lastly a good way to add calories without much bulk is to raise the fat profile of the diet. You can do that by choosing a higher fat cube, or by supplementing with a high fat supplement or top dressing like micronised ground linseed, or even a cupful of vegetable oil in each feed. I would be careful about adding too much oil/fat if there is any chance of laminitis or Cushing's as it can cause problems there. Linseed and fish oils high in omega 3 are the exception though, research suggests they are beneficial to such horses.

I hope this helps, you are obviously doing a lot right to get her to such a grand age!

# Experts

## Ivana Ruddock



### Personal Profile

MVDr. Ivana Ruddock the Director in charge of Education is a qualified veterinary surgeon from the Czech Republic and a member of the AHVMA (American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association). A consummate researcher, she is also a qualified university lecturer in anatomy and physiology who brings with her a wealth of training and knowledge from the orthodox veterinary world.

**Q. I have had massage and shiatsu on my horse and both Practitioners said my horse would 'detox'. What does this mean?**

**A:** Detoxification, or 'detox', is the body's natural way of neutralising and eliminating the following:

- wastes generated within the body as end products of metabolism within cells
- toxic or potentially harmful substances that enter the body via the lungs, intestines and skin
- materials for which the body has no constructive use (e.g. old cell fragments from regeneration or repair of tissue)

In normal circumstances the body has an incredible capacity to detoxify itself, with several organs especially dedicated to the cleansing processes e.g. liver, intestines, kidneys, lungs and skin. If for any reason the body's detoxifying system is overloaded or incapacitated, or elimination of toxins is impossible, these substances can be 'hidden' within the body. They are taken out of circulation and 'safely' stored in the liver, fat and other connective tissue e.g. deep and superficial fascia around the muscles. In this storage toxins cause less direct harm to tissues and organs, however, when stored they can cause pain as the build-ups can decrease pliability of the tissue which leads to stiffness and pain.

Many types of bodywork can help to release these stored materials, by using the pressure of the fingers or hands and by gently manipulating the soft tissue. Moving the skin, fascia and muscles can help to break up the fibrous tissue that holds onto the fat cells and permits fluid build-up to be

released. Bodywork can also stimulate the blood circulation and lymphatic drainage. Waste products will come back into the circulation via fluids in these systems which are then eliminated or, once again, neutralised in the liver.

Although the cleansing is ultimately beneficial, sometimes rapidly releasing large amounts of these materials can stress the body's detoxification systems. All the organs will need to work harder to get rid of the irritating or toxic substances. The eliminatory organs, the bowels and kidneys will work to their limits. Signs of this include higher frequency of urination or defecation, perhaps with loose stools or diarrhoea. A runny nose or sinus drainage can be a sign of high activity of the respiratory system and a skin rash or hives can develop due to detox through the skin. A low fever can be a proof that the immune system has mobilised to protect the body against released toxins. Aching muscles, swollen and stiff joints can be unpleasant signs of the detox.

These symptoms of detoxification can appear during the bodywork session or perhaps afterwards - in some cases developing these signs up to three days later. Occasionally the 'original symptoms' of the disease may return and this is called the 'healing crises'. However, these signs are always temporary and should not last more than couple of days. To help with detoxification and to minimise the healing crises it is important to provide plenty of clean, fresh water to help the kidneys, skin, respiratory system and colon function to process waste and flush toxins.

**Immediately after bodywork it is beneficial to walk the horse in-hand to stimulate lymphatic drainage.**



## Sam Austin

MRPCH, BHSII and Director of Red Horse Products

### Personal Profile

Vet recommended, Sam Austin trained in New Zealand with The American School of Equine Dentistry and in the UK with BEVA and other bodies. Sam has been practicing dentistry since 2001 regularly working alongside vets and nervous horses has given him a wealth of experience in the field. Sam's Intelligent Horsemanship training (MRPCH holder) and his experience with difficult and scared horses has enabled him to treat these horses with tact and patience.

**Q. My thoroughbred struggles to stay at a reasonable weight. A friend suggested it is because she is 'parrot mouthed'. I'm not sure what this means or why it would make it difficult for her to put on weight. Would an Equine Dental Technician be able to change this?**

**A:** A 'parrot mouth' is when the front part of the upper jaw of the horse (i.e. its incisors) overshoots the lower. This can cause the teeth to meet badly and overgrow where they are not meeting - hence the upper incisors can become quite long. If the problem also applies to the molars (the back teeth) it can cause further problems where the teeth do not meet (or are 'un-occluded' in dental speak) and overgrowths form. Any overgrowth of the front or back teeth prevents correct movement of the jaw and will interrupt chewing, thus weight loss is likely as it will prevent the horse properly breaking down its food. If the incisors are touching very little or not at all then the horse will also not be able to graze effectively as it will be unable to grip and tear the grass. If this is the case alternative means of forage will need to be supplied.

In less major cases the problem is easy to manage through regular dental maintenance to remove overgrowths where they occur. Unfortunately in a mature horse only small corrections will be able to be made to the parrot mouth itself - but the correct care can help prevent it ever being much of a problem for the horse.

### Veterinary Advice Disclaimer:

Neither Jackie JA Taylor, Ivana Ruddock, Sam Austin nor Intelligent Horsemanship accept any responsibility for any advice offered through these replies which is purely for guidance. Always consult a veterinary surgeon.

# The bare bones of life

The 'need to know' of how your horse is put together

By IH Recommended Associate Sue Palmer

**S**ue is a Veterinary Physiotherapist and holds Horse Owners Massage Courses throughout the UK, giving hands on experience in understanding your horse's body and how you can help maintain his health and improve his performance. Here she introduces equine anatomy and links it to common issues that occur in horses.

## The Horse's Back

The horse's back is a complex structure, and one that is very important to us as riders. When we ride we place stresses and strains through our horse's body that can lead to tension and pain. It is our responsibility as horse owners to do what we can to keep our horse comfortable. In the case of the horse's back, this includes ensuring good saddle fit, and regular physical checks from a professional. Understanding the structure of the back can help you to know where to look for problems.



© Simon Palmer, Into The Lens

*The horse's back is a complex structure.*

The spine protects the spinal cord, and is made up of bones called vertebrae. Each area of the spine has vertebrae designed to suit the function of that area. Ligaments attach each bone to the next, and muscles that move and support the structure are attached to the bones via tendons. The muscles are also designed to suit the area of the body in which they are situated, so whereas the neck muscles are able to produce lots of movement, the back muscles are designed more for stability, and the muscles in the quarters for power.

Problems in the back can be related to the muscles (as well as to other structures). It is well documented that lameness in the lower limb can lead to back pain. Try deliberately limping for a while, and you'll soon realise why! Another common cause of muscular pain in the back is poor saddle fit. Think of

the blood flowing through the blood vessels in the muscles as bringing nutrients to those muscles to feed them, keep them healthy and help them grow. If your saddle presses down too much in a particular area (common areas are the wither pockets or under the back of the saddle), the blood will be squeezed out of the muscles in that area whenever you are sitting on the saddle. The muscle won't be so 'well-fed', and will become tight and sore. If the problem is not addressed, the muscle can literally waste away.

Back pain can quickly lead to behavioural problems such as bucking, rearing, bolting, napping, and much more. Anyone who has suffered from back pain will relate to a horse not wanting to or being unable to work at his best. The pain must be addressed before the behaviour can be resolved, and as always, prevention is better than cure.

### 3 top tips:

- 1. It is well documented that lameness in the lower limb can lead to back pain**
- 2. Poor saddle fit can lead to back pain**
- 3. Back pain can quickly lead to behavioural problems**

## The skeleton

The body of the horse can be thought of as a barrel (the rib cage) hanging from a pole (the spine), suspended between 4 struts (the front and back legs). The attachment of the trunk to the front legs is purely muscular, and so the trunk can be thought of as attached to the front struts by very strong elastic. The attachment to the hind limb is through the sacroiliac joint (commonly recognised as the 'jumpers bump'), and is therefore a more secure connection.



*Assessing the shoulder.*

## The forelimb

The forelimb consists of the shoulder blade (scapula), upper arm (humerus), forearm (radius and ulna), knee bones (carpal bones), cannon bone and splint bones (metacarpal bones), long pastern (proximal phalanx), short pastern (middle phalanx), coffin bone (distal phalanx) and navicular bone (distal sesamoid). The joints involved are the shoulder, elbow, knee, fetlock and pastern. The horse's knee is the equivalent to our wrist, and his cannon bone is the equivalent to the middle bone in our hand. Effectively, the horse is standing on his middle finger!



© Simon Palmer, Into The Lens

*The attachment of the forelimb to the trunk is purely muscular.*



Some of the neck and shoulder muscles.



It is well documented that lameness in the lower limb can lead to back pain.



A common cause of back pain is poor saddle fit.

## Soft tissue

Ligaments attach bone to bone, as though they are strapping the bones together to support the structure of the body. There are several ligaments supporting the limbs, including the check ligament and the suspensory ligament. Tendons attach muscle to bone, and are more elastic than ligaments, with a better blood supply. Controlling the movement of the limbs are many muscles, which attach to the bone via tendons including the superficial and deep digital flexor tendons. The muscles are found above the knee, and some of the tendons below the knee are quite long, contributing to the horse's athleticism and stamina.

### 3 top tips:

1. The attachment of the front legs to the trunk is purely muscular
2. The attachment of the hindlegs to the trunk is through the sacroiliac joint
3. If your horse is lame it's important that the vet assesses what might be causing the lameness

The gluteal muscles, the main muscle bulk of the quarters, are equivalent to the muscles in our buttocks. The horse's hamstring muscles, equivalent to the muscles at the back of our thigh, compose most of the rest of the visible muscle bulk. These muscles are powerful propulsion muscles. The muscles that bring the hind limb under the horse are contracted automatically to support the rider when you get on a horse. If any of these muscles are restricted by tension or pain, the performance of the horse will be affected, including his length of stride and ability to engage correctly.

## The hind limb

The hindquarters of the horse provide the power that makes horse riding such an exhilarating experience. The combination of powerful muscle and strong tendons gives the horse both speed and stamina. The hind limb of the horse also has a special 'locking mechanism', allowing the horse to rest standing up.

The locking mechanism of the stifle makes use of bone and ligaments to allow the horse to stand with minimal muscle engagement. 'Locking stifle' (upward fixation of the patella) is seen when this system malfunctions. The hock is connected to the stifle in such a way that if the stifle is held in extension then so is the hock. Thus a horse can rest a hind limb without the supporting leg getting tired.



Neck muscles produce lots of movement

## Compensatory movement

Lameness causes altered movement, which can lead to pain in a seemingly unrelated area of the body. For example, if your horse is lame on his right fore, he will try to avoid putting weight through his right fore, and will take more weight on his left fore. If you listen carefully you'll be able to hear him landing more heavily on his left fore as he walks. He does this by tensing the muscles around the shoulder and in the back, and so these areas may also become sore.

## Lameness

Injury can affect any of the complex structures of the body. If your horse is lame it is important that the vet assesses what might be causing the lameness, as damage to different structures requires different treatment techniques. Depending on the cause of lameness, your vet may recommend physiotherapy or massage to speed up your horse's return to peak performance.

The hind limb consists of the pelvis, upper leg (femur), lower leg (tibia and fibula), hock bones (tarsal bones), cannon bone and splint bones (metacarpal bones), long pastern (proximal phalanx), short pastern (middle phalanx), coffin bone (distal phalanx) and navicular bone (distal sesamoid). The joints involved are the sacroiliac joint (the joint between the sacrum and the pelvis), hip, stifle, hock, fetlock and pastern. As in the forelimb, the horse's hock is the equivalent to our wrist, and his cannon bone is the equivalent to the middle bone in our hand. The long pastern, short pastern and coffin bone are equivalent to the 3 bones in our middle finger.

### 3 key facts:

1. The combination of powerful muscle and strong tendons gives the horse both speed and stamina
2. The locking mechanism of the stifle makes use of bone and ligaments to allow the horse to stand with minimal muscle engagement
3. Problems in the hindlimb can result in your horse not wanting to go forwards in his ridden work

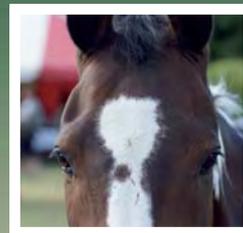


The hindquarters of the horse provide the power that makes riding such an exhilarating experience.

Sue Palmer MSc, freelance Veterinary Physiotherapist and Intelligent Horsemanship Recommended Associate, is based in Stafford and works throughout the UK.  
[www.holistichorsehelp.com](http://www.holistichorsehelp.com)

# Update from our charity fundraising team

By Lorraine Luke



**Firstly I am absolutely overwhelmed by all the amazing people connected with IH because in 7 years of Charity Fundraising you have managed to help out 7 charities and raised a whopping £22,000.**

That total does not include the current appeal for Shy Lowen, so massive congratulations and thanks to each and every person who made that possible.

After the Shy Lowen appeal the fundraising is taking a little break and will then have the following new arrangements:

- *During the summer (2011) the Garden Party will be held and the new charity of the year announced*
- *The following year (2012) at the Garden party the team will hand over the funds raised during that time and the next charity will be announced*

You should all be very proud that you make a huge difference to these charities and the brilliant work that they all do for horses.

The 3rd Annual Garden Party was a great success and lovely meeting so many new members. The party had a theme to encourage the guests to find an outfit purchased from a charity shop for less than £10. It seems that this bought out the competitive nature of many including Garry Bosworth who sported a stunning little purple dress!

Jenny Semmence ran a quiz whilst Derek (Del Boy) donated a super trophy and laid on a croquet competition on Kelly's lawn. David Topham-Barnes was a worthy winner and headed home with his trophy. We were very grateful to all of those who generously gave raffle prizes: Alex Jacob-Whitworth, Mr and Mrs Topham Barnes, Veronica Flynn, Julie Mussell, Red Horse Products ([www.red-horse.co.uk](http://www.red-horse.co.uk)), Annabelle Harling ([www.horsevideoanalysis.com](http://www.horsevideoanalysis.com)), Liz Henderson ([www.hendersonsculpture.co.uk](http://www.hendersonsculpture.co.uk)), Jenny Semmence ([www.earthstones-direct.co.uk](http://www.earthstones-direct.co.uk)), Amanda Place and Kate Foster. RA's Liz Pitman, Zoe Chipman and Joanna O'Neil also donated prizes.

Three years ago, Eileen Cottam offered to organise a Bring & Buy sale and this has grown with each Garden Party. Thank you to Eileen and everyone who donated a percentage of their sales to the fund. Huge thanks to Kelly for hosting this event and to the lovely ladies who do all of the preparations of wonderful food and drink. In particular the IH Office team, Ally Sixsmith, Ele Milwright, Alex Jacob-Whitworth, Jenny Semmence and Katrin Junker.



Photos by Katrin Junker

# Thank you from Shy Lowen!

"For us this is better than winning the lottery, I have tears in my eyes as I am writing this message. Shy Lowen means Home Of Happiness and your efforts will be helping immensely to make it exactly that. Thank you for choosing us, the telephone call from Lorraine which gave me the news that we'd been chosen arrived on the 10th 'birthday' of Shy Lowen.

Thank you to everybody who has donated items as prizes in the wonderful competitions that have been happening throughout the year. Thank you to everybody who has entered the competitions, bided for items and made donations. Thank you for the encouraging messages and support. Thank you to Kelly for everything and, of course, for the wonderful Garden Party. The £3650 you have raised will make a massive difference to us. Fundraising is very difficult in times of recession and this makes your effort that much more fantastic – raising this sum in difficult times is a reflection of the strength of the organisation.

Words aren't enough to say thank you, I hope you can pick up from this the deep gratitude we have for what you have done. The title alone of Intelligent Horsemanship Charity of the Year 2009/2010 is something that will live with Shy Lowen Horse and Pony Sanctuary forever.

## Thank You,

**Bernadette, Eric and the Trustee team, the volunteers, Care Committee young volunteer team and the horses and ponies**



**IH Kids link up on Facebook!**

IH Kids is now on Facebook, with a secret group for members only\*. Run by RA Liz Pitman, the Facebook group has photos, discussion pages and a Q&A section. This is in addition to the monthly Pony Post magazine, so there are now 2 ways to keep in touch with IH Kids.

IH Kids may be changing to become more easily accessible and interactive, but one thing hasn't changed - it's still free! Nearly 700 children from across the UK and beyond (we have members in 8 different countries) have signed up so far. Open to anyone up to 16 years old, all you need to do to join is email: [intelligentkids@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:intelligentkids@hotmail.co.uk) with the child's full name, age and home address.

\* Automatic invitations to join the Facebook group are sent to members who are at least 13. Younger members can also join with a parent's permission.

## Dear members - having trouble online? (website guidance)



Are you having trouble accessing the online features of the Intelligent Horsemanship website? It can be a little confusing as we have two brilliant online offerings both of which contain exclusive areas for IH members which no-one else can access. Hopefully the below guidelines will help!



It's worth clarifying that the online Discussion Group (DG) is a totally separate website from the main Intelligent Horsemanship website. We link to the DG from the website but the DG itself is run by volunteers and not the IH Office. To fully take advantage of the online benefits of IH membership you need

to register with both the website and the DG. Your login username and password for one website will not automatically give you access to the members only features of the other. There's no reason not to setup the same username and password for both websites though – it can make life a lot easier!

The following tips should help to make sure you don't miss out, and with exclusive videos, Kelly's blog and educational videos for members only, there's a lot you could be missing!

### To access the members board on the DG

First you must have a DG login, if you don't then click 'register' or go to:

<http://ihdg.proboards.com/index.cgi?action=register>

Then email: [moderatorihdg@yahoo.com](mailto:moderatorihdg@yahoo.com) to let them know you are a member. Once you've done this your login will be updated to 'member' status and your username will now appear in green with 'IH Member' underneath it.

Now when you log into the DG you will magically see the 'IH Members Board' in the list of forum names you can select (guests to the DG don't see this option).

### Problems with the DG?

Email: [moderatorihdg@yahoo.com](mailto:moderatorihdg@yahoo.com)

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The IH Office cannot help with DG problems – not because they don't want to be helpful just because it is not controlled by them!**

### To access the members area on Intelligent Horsemanship.co.uk

First you must be registered with the website by clicking **MAIN MENU > MEMBERS AREA > REGISTRATION** or you can register here:

[http://www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,registers/](http://www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,registers/)

You **MUST INCLUDE YOUR MEMBERSHIP NUMBER\*** so that Katrin/Bridget/Brenda/Lou can upgrade your account to give you access to the members area. This typically means they wait a day or 2 after registering for us to update your details.

\*actually don't panic if you can't remember your number, just put MEMBER after your first name and we'll look it up for you.

Once registered you need to log in whenever you visit the site so you can get to all the added extras you are entitled to. You can do this by clicking **MAIN MENU > MEMBERS AREA > LOGIN** or by using the link at the very bottom right of any IH website page.

If you're still stuck the log in form is here:

[http://www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk/component/option,com\\_login/Itemid,123/](http://www.intelligenthorsemanship.co.uk/component/option,com_login/Itemid,123/)

Once logged in the home page reappears and you can then access all the wonderful benefits we've been working on for you by clicking **MAIN MENU > MEMBERS AREA**

*If you have any wonderful ideas about what else the online area could offer to members please email your suggestions to [listeningpost.editor@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:listeningpost.editor@hotmail.co.uk)*

# The 5 things with horses I wish I had learned sooner!

By Monty Roberts

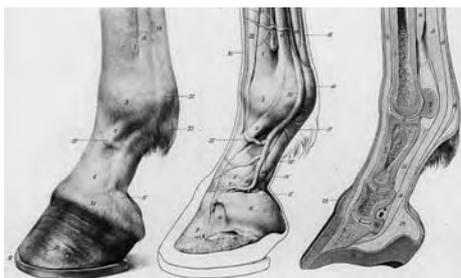
**1** I wish I had known sooner how fast we would move toward making violence the exception rather than the rule and the world would start to change for the better. I think now about how hard it was to watch my father's actions as a child, witnessing procedures that he used on a daily basis. These included the use of twitches, tying up legs, striking with a whip, tying heads to tails and an endless list of actions that I was to learn later were unnecessary and simply brutal. I have written extensively about the huge changes that came over me between 1942 and 1948. These were the years in which I became familiar with the language Equus and then to realise that violence was not the answer in training horses. 1948 marked the transition for me away from violence of any kind. Once aware of how affective non-violent training was, it was impossible for me to watch my father work.



People often ask why I have chosen Britain and later Germany to initially show my work when they are two of the kindest places on earth to horses. I tell them "The answer is simple – Britain and Germany invited me." Recently I had an extraordinary time in Brazil; it was my fourth visit to this beautiful country. The first three times, however, I saw horses treated similar to what I watched as a child. South America in general tolerates some of the harshest treatment of horses anywhere on earth. This latest visit, however, was punctuated by some of the some of the strongest acceptance of my techniques that I have experienced. Brazilian horsemen came to me en masse with a similar message. "You changed my life. You caused me to be a better person both with my horses and with my family. All of Brazil thanks you,

Mr. Roberts." It's an extraordinary feeling when someone says something like that to you.

It was incredibly gratifying to see a massive change come over a country which for generations had operated on the theme of "the more macho the better." I must say that prior to April of 2010 I had no idea that my books and videos had made such a difference. It has ignited within me the knowledge that if I work hard enough and expand my message to the widest possible audience, it can make a difference. I now am challenged to open the door to Argentina, Chili, Peru, Venezuela and even Mexico to invite a different way of thinking into cultures that have been driven by violence for hundreds of years. I am re-energised with a whole new continent to help. It is my sincere belief that South America has reached that tipping point where it is moving rapidly to embrace non violent training.



**2** I wish I'd learned sooner about the needs of a horse's foot. Within the past twenty years or so, I have become far more aware of shoeing and foot care than I ever was during the time of my competition career. It seems to me that in my earlier years all of the professionals thought, "You just start shoeing them when you begin the training and you re-shoe about every six weeks." I believe too few of us even understood the value of foot flexion or hoof angle. It has been extremely helpful for the medical and farrier industries to come together and give us more information. I feel I am a better horseman now because of the process of educating myself in this subject.



**3** I wish I'd learned sooner that's it not as much about the equipment as the hands that hold it. Intermittent trends regarding horse equipment are brought into play for several reasons. Many horsemen are often looking for a quick fix. I believe that most professionals will, from time to time, try a new piece of equipment with that aim in mind. Another reason for these fads is that equipment producers can sell a whole new line. There have been times in my training career that I now realise that I reached too quickly for certain pieces of equipment, and possibly gave them too much opportunity before discarding them. Experience has taught me that the most important part of any equipment is the hands that hold it.

A good trainer should keep this idea firmly placed in their mind and take great care when expecting a new innovation to do any of his work for him. Although I feel by listening to the horses and putting together the Dually Halter and my Starting Stalls Blanket has been enormously beneficial to horses and horsemen worldwide, most particularly because it means harsher methods aren't used, generally speaking I believe I could accomplish my best work if I were to use only the equipment that was available to me fifty or sixty years ago.

Recently, I did a demonstration in Rotterdam with Albert Vorn, Show Jumping Silver medalist at the Sydney Olympics. Mr Vorn went into great detail about his opposition to the use of so much harsh equipment in Show Jumping. It is unbelievable to watch the modern day competitions and observe the incredible array of forceful equipment. Nose bands, tie ups, tie downs,



leverage producers of every description. It filters down to young people and novices so there are now people who believe this is all essential equipment. Of course, I am not against innovation and I am proponent of keeping an open mind, but I believe that we need to keep reminding ourselves 'it's the release that teaches' and think not about forcing horses to do things but causing them to want to get it right for you.

**4 I wish I'd learner sooner that cereal grains are really not necessary for the majority of horses and in fact, in some cases can do horses an awful lot of harm.**

When I was brought up it was believed that cereal grains were a necessity to produce an energetic horse that is ready to go to work with you. Prior to the discovery of methods more user friendly than the use of grains, I believe that all of us as professional horsemen unknowingly abused the digestive tracts of our horses. The answer to this, and each of these five items on the list, is education. It is essential that a good horseman becomes far more aware of the equine digestive system than we ever were in the past. Through education it is now easy to see how little we knew, and how wrong we were, but it is now an easy fix.

**5 I wish I'd learned sooner that 'the horse will tell you' and that not every horse (or human) can move along at the same pace that I can.**

It was 1950 when I won my first World Championship. I was 15 years of age and full of myself. I was winning competitions weekly and began to develop goal setting standards to start to live the life I dreamed. Upon reflection, although these goals were right for me, nowadays I'm far more aware that horsemanship is a partnership and both parties need to feel the benefits. There were times when I hadn't checked in with the horses and expected too much from them, too fast. The horses would always tell me but I wish I'd learned sooner how to really listen so they never had to shout in order to get me to pay attention!

As I wrote about in *Horses in My Life* there was an example in the early 1970s, when the horse Fancy Heels brought that lesson home so clearly I hope I'll never be able to forget it again. Since that experience I know that I have become a far better partner for my horses than I was prior to my Fancy Heels experience. I also believe the experience made me a far better teacher than I would have been otherwise. I feel I have no right to hide away these experiences as they are so



valuable to people with less experience than me. If those of us who teach could really bring home our experiences good and bad to our students think of the frustration we could save horses as they struggle to teach a whole new generation of horse lovers!

I do hope my experiences help Intelligent Horsemanship members, and remember - I don't want any student to be better than me - I want every student to be better than me!

## IH Course Dates

### Horse psychology

- Dec 4th/5th 2010 (Oaksey House, Lambourn)
- Jan 8th/9th 2011 (Oaksey House, Lambourn)
- Jan 15th/16th 2011(Oaksey House, Lambourn)

### Feeding and nutrition/the horse as an athlete

- Nov 18th - 19th 2010

### Five day foundation course

- Mar 14th - 18th 2011 • March 21st – 25th 2011

### Perfect manners

- Apr 2nd - 3rd 2011

### Intermediate courses

#### Handling the untouched horse

- Nov 30th - Dec 1st 2010 • Dec 2nd - 3rd 2010

#### Leading and loading the less easy horse

- Dec 6th - 7th 2010 • Dec 8th - 9th 2010

#### Perfect confidence in hand and under saddle\*

- Sept 8th - 9th 2010

\*This course is offered by Recommended Associates Julia Fisher, Linda Ruffle and Dido Fisher. For more information or to book, call Julia on 07950 965 099. This course is not organised through the Intelligent Horsemanship office

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## Horse psychology projects: future plans

Dr Veronica Fowler

**A**s many of you are aware I have been striving for the last few years to 'Join-up' scientists and practical horse people so that we can make greater progress in improving our understanding of equine science.

One way which I have been achieving this is by injecting a little scientific methodology into Intelligent Horsemanship horse psychology projects. My motivation has not been to try and make scientists of horse psychology students but instead to enable students to gain the most meaningful results possible from their projects. It is a fact that Intelligent Horsemanship horse psychology students are some of the most dedicated and hardworking students that I have had the pleasure to work with and continue to produce projects which are directly relevant to everyone who is involved with horses. The start of 2010 has personally been a great year for me as finally the students hard work

is starting to be realised in the greater scientific community. In March I was invited to deliver a talk on the difference between conventional and natural horsemanship techniques when starting horses at the 4th annual equine science conference. This was a great opportunity to critically evaluate both techniques in light of current scientific understanding, including contributions made from horse psychology students, to an audience including scientists, veterinarians, nutritionists and students.

Following on from the 4th annual equine science conference was my attendance as a speaker at the 8th equine behaviour scientific symposium. I had been invited to give a talk on a subject relating to equine behaviour and I chose on this occasion to speak about the great work undertaken by two IH students, Louise and Sam Austin, on the effect of equine dentist speculums on the heart rate and behaviour of horses. This

presentation was very well received and the work of IH students highly commended.

My vision for the future is to continue to offer the results of horse psychology projects to the greater scientific community via submission of selected projects to scientific conferences and hopefully through publication in scientific journals. I would particularly like to see horse psychology projects accepted for presentation at the 7th Annual International Conference of ISES (International Society of Equitation Science) in October 2011. The theme of this conference is 'Equitation Science: principals and practice - science at work' and therefore it is very relevant to what we are doing at Intelligent Horsemanship. I will be selecting possible projects for submission to this conference from this year's horse psychology projects and will announce those ones which I have selected later in the year so watch out for your name!



## Win tickets for two to the Horse of the Year Show Sunday Gala Performance *and meet up with Monty and Kelly*

**F**ollowing the most successful show ever, Horse of the Year Show 2010 promises to be another exceptional event not to be missed! This year's show will take place from 6th – 10th October at Birmingham's NEC and will host the finals of the most highly regarded showing and show jumping championships, alongside an exciting line-up of equestrian entertainment. From spectacular displays to tense competition, Horse of the Year Show is not to be missed.

**Intelligent Horsemanship** has teamed up with **Horse of the Year Show** to offer you the chance to win tickets so you can experience the incredible atmosphere first hand.

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Countryside Pony Club Mounted Games for the prestigious Prince Philip Cup also return to the Show alongside the HOYS Dressage Special (Friday's performance only) and the new Dressage Grand Prix Freestyle during Sunday's Daytime performance.

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Tickets are on sale now.  
For show information and ticket prices:  
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**Intelligent Horsemanship has a pair of tickets to be won. These tickets cover the evening gala performance on Sunday 10th October 2010. The winner will also have the opportunity to meet with Monty and Kelly at HOYS on Sunday.**

To enter simply answer the following question and send your answer, together with your name, address and telephone number to Intelligent Horsemanship Competition, Grandstand Media Ltd, 7 Waterside, Station Road, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 4US (Closing date –17th September).

#### Q. What is the name of Frederic Pignon's brother?

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6th – 10th October 2010  
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# Shoulder control

By IH Recommended Associate Rosie Jones

*I was aiming to write an article called 'Top Tips for Youngsters' for this Listening Post, but I found myself writing in such depth about the first 'tip' that I have decided to dedicate the whole article to it!*

*When a horse is standing sixty percent of his weight is supported by his front end. The weight distribution changes depending on his posture and the way he is moving. Most dressage minded trainers are constantly striving to get the horses weight through his back legs. This is because the back legs can act like springs, (rather than weight bearing struts like the front legs) and by holding his weight over his back legs the horse is poised and balanced enough to change speed and direction very quickly and smoothly and comfortably.*



**O**ne of the best ways to gently begin to build the horses confidence in lightening his forehead is to move his shoulders about, because in moving his shoulder he has to support his weight a little more on his hind end. Not only that, but it seems to have the most positive effects on the horses neck, poll and jaw softness too. It really seems to loosen the strides, and can also be a great way to engage their mind in the schooling. I began to play with this exercise for remedial horses, because I find the more lateral softness the horse will offer, the more relaxed his mind is.

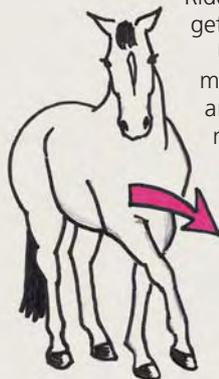
It's like the chicken and egg conundrum, it's hard to know which comes first really, but exploring some gentle lateral movement games like this one can certainly unlock a nappy, evasive, or resistant horse. Also, so many evasions or remedial problems begin with a lack of control of the shoulders, or a bracing, or locking up through them.

Many riders worry at the word 'lateral', partly because it conjures up images of intensive dressage production, or maybe because they have been yelled at by an instructor for not getting a perfect shoulder in, or perhaps because it has simply never been taught and seems a bit of an illusive goal. If we stay relaxed though and accept it only means 'sideways', there is no reason why any horse and rider, at any stage, can't start to have a play with it. The youngsters I back all work on these exercises from the very start.

Have a go on the ground first, set him up to succeed by thinking about where to put his feet. Encourage him to lift his head

Experiment with different feels of pressure, you will find if you get it wrong he leans into you, for some horses body language and intention works better than any touch for this reason!

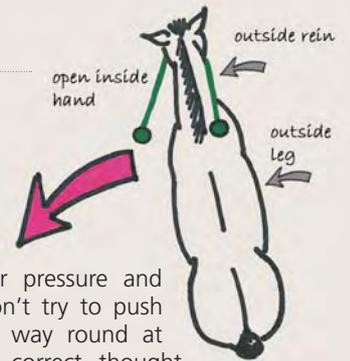
## Ridden



Ride along a fence line and get a good halt.

Use your outside aids to move his shoulders around. His head may need to lift so don't worry if he seems to lose his outline.

You may need to use an open inside hand to explain what you mean.

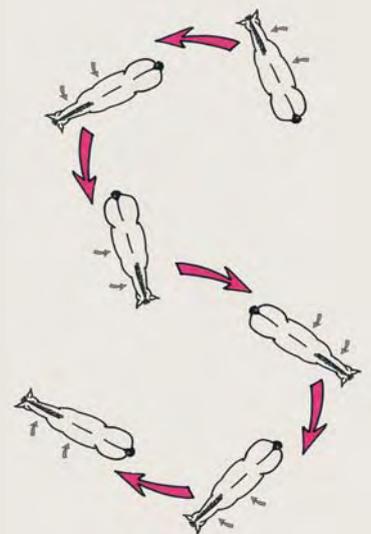


Remember pressure and release - don't try to push him all the way round at once, each correct thought needs a release, and if he tries to push forwards through your hands let him meet a resistance.

## Where to go from here

Play with shoulder control in walk, see if you can bring him round corners with his shoulders a little to the inside, outside, can you move his shoulders in or out of a straight line, and is it the inside or outside rein or a combination which achieves this? As long as you are reading your horse and being kind to him, feel that you have permission to try out how to change the angle of his body, even by one or two degrees for a couple of strides.

Once you are getting pretty good, ride a figure of eight from the outside aids, it will feel a little strange because he will not be bending around your inside leg, and need to lift his head and neck, but you will really see the benefit immediately after the exercise, when, if offered a nice soft rein and a supporting inside leg, most horses will stretch beautifully down into some lovely, round swinging strides.



**Rosie Jones is a Recommended Associate covering Sussex**  
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# Where do I stand?

By Esther Stirling and Tamsin Paling

*Following some interesting discussion on our online discussion group The Listening Post tracked down some legal expertise in order to get some clarity on a key question.*

“ I use a Dually halter and find it much the safest way to lead a horse. People tell me that I must lead out using a bridle because if there were an accident a bridle is the only recognised way to lead and I would be held automatically liable. Is this true? ”



**A**s the Dually halter grows in popularity, increasing numbers of people consider this question, though they may find that the halter gives them more, not less, control when leading.

As with most legal problems, the answer is never black and white.

A party who is involved in an accident is very seldom 'automatically liable', though accidents involving animals can lead to a finding of strict liability under the Animals Act. In this article, we discuss the principles which would be applied to determine civil liability in the event of an accident, in the context of using a Dually.

## The law

### (1) Negligence

All users of the highway owe a duty of care to others to proceed with care. If someone does not take reasonable care and causes damage or injury, they may be found liable to pay damages to an injured party under the law of negligence.

What amounts to reasonable care depends on the circumstances. If you lead along a busy high street, for example, you would be expected to exercise a higher degree of care than if you are on a quiet country lane.

The Highway Code is one yardstick establishing what amounts to 'reasonable care'. Rule 52 states:

*"Before you take a horse on the road, you should...make sure you can control the horse..."*

and that you should:

*"Never ride a horse without both a saddle and bridle"*

Drivers are warned that to take extra care on country roads, being prepared for horses.

The Highway Code does not specify that a bridle must be used when leading, as opposed to riding. It does not specify in what kind of bridle you must ride. Nevertheless, it's clear that you should ensure that you can control the horse.

The word *should* is important: failure to comply is not a criminal offense, but will be relevant in establishing whether you are liable in negligence.

### (2) The Animals Act 1971

Under section 2(2) of the Animals Act 1971, the keeper of an animal can be held strictly liable for damage it causes, i.e. they will have no defence to reduce their liability.

In general terms, an owner or handler will be liable if:

- their animal was likely to cause severe damage
- this was due to abnormal characteristics, or characteristics only found in particular circumstances
- which the owner or handler knew about.

The courts have applied this test inconsistently, leading to uncertainty.

For example, in *Mirvahedy v Henley* (2003), a frightened horse broke several fences and hit a car, causing injury. The owner was liable under the Animals Act: the horse was not behaving in a 'normal' way, but bolting as the horse had done was usual in the particular circumstances of the case.

In contrast, in *Welsh v Stokes* (2007), the owner of a horse which reared and injured its rider was not liable, even though the horse had no history of rearing and so was arguably behaving 'abnormally'.

There have been recent moves to amend the Act, to limit its application, protecting those who take reasonable steps to prevent an accident. For now, while uncertain, it remains the law.

## Insurance

There has been recent discussion in the press about the extent to which insurance cover may be invalidated if a bit is not used.

The British Horse Society have recently clarified that their insurance does cover users of bitless bridles. Each insurance policy is governed by its own terms and conditions, however, including specific exclusions.

You should check these carefully. If in doubt, consult your insurers, or a solicitor.

## Conclusion

In the event of accident, there are two possible kinds of liability for damage caused by a horse: liability under the law of negligence and under the Animals Act 1971.

Liability in negligence is the more common and depends upon whether you had taken reasonable care to avoid causing harm to others. Animals Act liability is strict, and generally requires a horse to exhibit unusual characteristics, or normal characteristics in unusual circumstances, but the law here is not always applied consistently.

Each case will depend on its particular facts, but consider whether you could demonstrate that you exercised reasonable care, and were sufficiently in control of your horse, given:

- the horse's age
- its characteristics
- your experience
- the surrounding conditions (traffic, weather, road conditions, etc)
- your horse's tack; and
- your own clothing/equipment

Use of a Dually may well be raised by an injured party, but to establish liability, in general terms, they would need to show this led you to be insufficiently in control of the horse, or to the horse behaving in a particularly dangerous way. It would be one of many factors to be taken into account. It would not, in itself, lead to an 'automatic' finding of liability.

**Esther Stirling and Tamsin Paling are solicitors in the dispute resolution department at Henmans LLP. A horse-owner and IH follower, she deals with disputes involving horses, amongst others. Henmans LLP handles commercial and personal matters for individual and business clients, with expertise in the rural and agricultural sector.**  
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# intelligent worming®

## Case Study - RA Nicole Golding's First Experiences

I suppose like many horse owners I haven't always been exactly fascinated by worms. I know what damage they can do, and how serious a health issue they can be, and that pretending they don't exist is not a good way of controlling their numbers, but I haven't spent as long looking into their life cycles as I have studying, say, feet, or saddles.

However I've always been uncomfortable with the idea of worming 'blind' - the notion that pushing a tube of wormer down a horse's (usually reluctant) throat at more or less regular intervals will take care of any worm burden that the horse might be carrying. Not to mention the problems that are being created by the misuse of wormers leading to resistance to the chemicals. I haven't really investigated herbal wormers, so for years we've been religious about mucking out the

fields. (I was wondering if that was really an accurate representation of our commitment to keeping the fields clean, and then remembered that I've been known to be mucking out the field in winter with a wheelbarrow, carrying my 15 month old son on my back whilst pregnant with my daughter, and I think 'zealous' isn't overstating it too much!).

We've had sheep grazing the fields, rotated the paddocks, and for the past few years we've been sending off poo samples to get worm counts. We've been delighted that they have always come back with

*"Intelligent Worming is designed to take the guess work out of worming, and to save the owner from having to work out an individualised worming programme."*

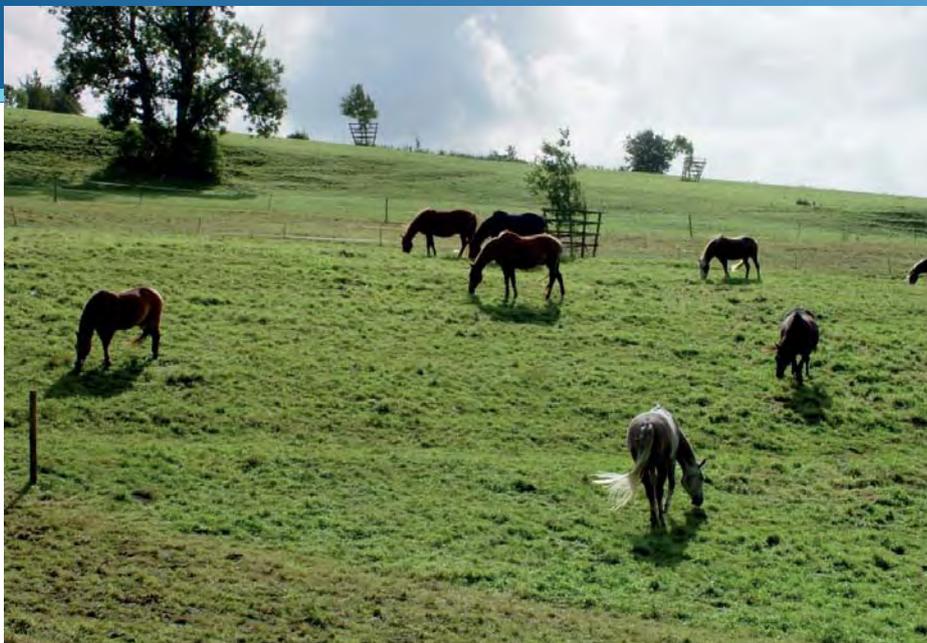
We've wormed for tapeworm annually, because blood tests had shown signs of tapeworm activity, and because tapeworm numbers aren't much affected by poo picking.

Intelligent Worming is designed to take the guess work out of worming, and to save the owner from having to work out an individualised worming programme. It starts with a poo sample, taken at least 13 weeks after the last wormer was given (this is how long the chemicals stay in the horse's system), and I was shocked when I got the results. Sensi (the only horse we tested with

either a zero count or a very low one, and have been convinced that our field hygiene has been paying dividends.

this free trial) came back with high levels of strongyles. The next day a five day course of Panacur Guard arrived in the post, with instructions to take another poo sample 5-10 days after the wormer course was started, to check for resistance to this wormer. This is where I'm at now, and will be sending the sample off tomorrow.

I'd thought we were fairly on top of the worm situation, but of course poo samples only provide a snapshot of any given moment. We've usually taken them at the time that we would be considering worming, to see if it's necessary, and since we own nine horses (eek - anyone want one?) we've usually only tested half, with the idea that if any of them come back with high counts we would test the others. We clearly now need to send off some more samples from the other horses to get a proper picture of where we're at.



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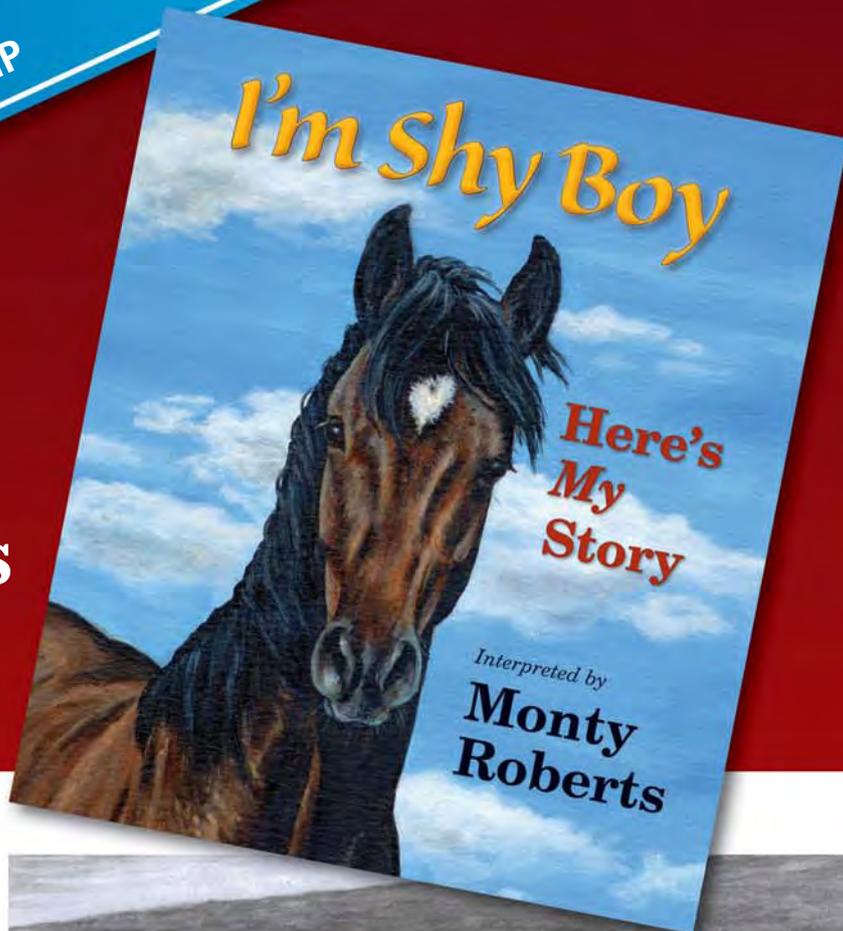
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Monty's new book 'I'm Shy Boy' has finally arrived at the IH Office and we are extremely proud to be the only European distributors for this title. Here's a sneaky extract:

“

As the evening sun cooled, we would resume a search for water. My mother knew how to seek out the low-lying areas where underground water might be close to the earth's surface. She seemed to be keenly aware of every location where water might be found. When we arrived at one of these spots, she would walk to the center of it and then scrape the ground with her front feet. If she continued for more than a minute or so, then other mares would join in and soon the whole family group was digging away in search of water.

I wasn't much help as my feet were still quite small, but I tried the best I could. If it was a good spot, the earth would become moist after a few scrapes and then I would see tiny pools of water at the bottom of the hole I was digging. My mother and the other mares were much faster than me, and as soon as I could see them drinking, then I would run to my mother's side and request a drink from her dug out area. My father was very good at this digging; he would often make a very large hole and after getting his fill of water, he would lie down in the pool and roll in the mud. It seemed like fun, so I would copy him. It was great to feel my skin becoming wet and cool after a long hot day. The life of the family group depended upon my mother's skill at finding both food and water. I came to appreciate her very much and continued to be drawn close to her in times of need. To this day, I enjoy a good roll in a muddy water hole, even when somebody is riding me.

”



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# Updates from our IH Recommended Associates



Photo by Katrin Junker

## A Happy Ending For Harvey... a home with RA Rosie Jones!

**W**hat's a girl to do? I really did try to keep a professional distance, we even advertised for a new home. But I found myself describing to different people the type of person I wanted to have him, only to see them look back at me with confusion and gently reply 'isn't that just a description of yourself?' I thought long and hard about exactly why it is that I really don't want to own a horse at the moment, and what other likely options for Harvey would leave me feeling at all satisfied, I drew brainstorm, pros and cons lists, and budgets. Finally, with great relief, I realised that I had really already made my mind up and was only seeking to justify it, so I gave up on the brain-ache, and took over ownership of Harvey myself, and then went totally gooey and spent the next few evenings looking at photos of him, planning which rugs to buy him, and acting like any other honey-moon horse owner. Day 2 of horse ownership and I am bandaging Harvey's foot because he lost his shoe and trod down on the nail, but the farrier has been to look and is confident it will only be a couple of days before he has his show back on and we can go and explore the cross country course within hacking distance. I'll keep LP updated with Harvey's progress!

## Joanna O'Neil launches her latest book 'A World Invisible'

By Joanna O'Neill IH Recommended Associate

*"You're telling me the Victoria and Albert Museum only exists because seven Victorians needed to hide a handful of objects for a hundred years?"*

Finding she can draw nothing but vines, Rebecca reluctantly puts her ambitions as an illustrator on hold when she is drawn into the machinations of a Victorian society founded to make safe an interface between parallel worlds.

But first she has to grow up.

Dragged into helping a cause in which she barely believes, Rebecca finds herself playing Hunt-the-Thimble amongst England's oldest institutions. Over one summer she will break a code, discover her astonishing ancestry, and half fall in love – twice.

But what begins as a game will shake her to the core... **;**

**Sorry – no horses in this, but a cracking read according to reviews from IH members:**

"Dan Brown meets C.S Lewis. Once I picked it up I couldn't put it down."

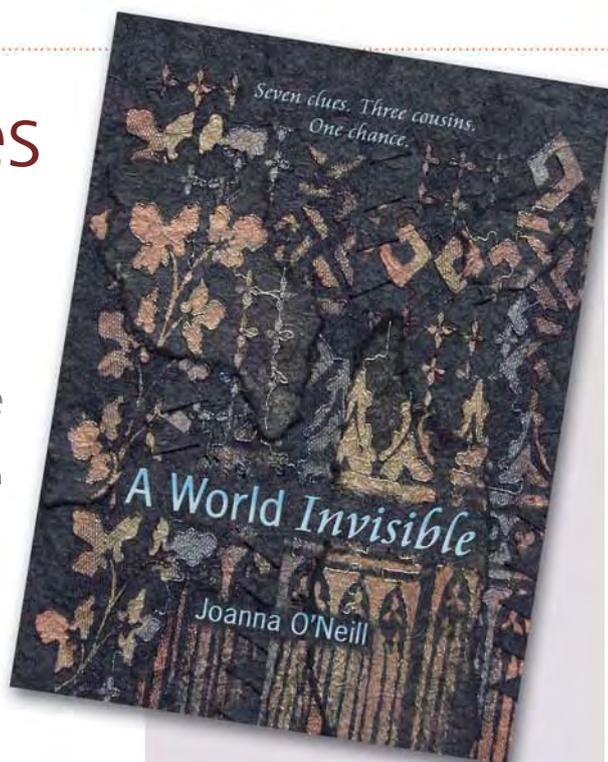
"The imagery made the pictures jump off the page (the ivy is still with me now)..."

"...all the pieces slotting into place to make an intricate pattern."

**- and from RA Zoe Chipman:**

"Gripping from the first paragraph, this book takes the supernatural and the natural and weaves a scarily believable tapestry whose picture becomes revealed as the story unfolds. I can't wait for the sequel!"

*(Zoe won't have long to wait – A World Denied is scheduled for release by Wooden Hill Press in late autumn 2010.)*



**A World Invisible is available from Amazon and major booksellers. More information, including the prologue and first chapter as a taster, can be found at [www.a-world-invisible.com](http://www.a-world-invisible.com)**

### **SPECIAL OFFER FOR IH MEMBERS!**

£1 off cover price and FREE postage and packing (no limit on numbers).

Send a cheque for £6.99, made payable to Joanna O'Neill, to: Joanna O'Neill, 34 Stratfield, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 8WT Offer expires 31 December 2010

## Lorraine Luke

48 from West Sussex, IH member for 10 years.

### How did you first hear about Intelligent Horsemanship?

My sister Julie and I went to see Monty at a demonstration in Henfield 11 years ago. I clearly remember that the whole audience were moved to tears seeing a little pony who had previously been terrified of trailers, not only wanting to follow Monty into the trailer, but actually just wanting to follow him everywhere.

### Do you have horses?



I had Luke and Sunny. Sadly I lost Luke recently to colic after he had battled with Cushings disease for 7 years and even survived peritonitis. He was the most beautiful pony, full of character and very challenging in the early days. He helped to trial the benefits of Vitex (chasteberry) for Cushings ponies through the Laminitis Trust.

Sunny is now 17 and he has been with me since he was 4 months old. Having been removed from his dam early to be included in a sale ring, he has no social skills around other horses and definitely prefers the company of humans! Sunny is recovering from repeated bouts of laminitis and subsequent pedal bone damage so his future health requires me to dust off the tack and attempt to regain my riding skills. The exercise should benefit us both.

I am lucky enough to share the daily horsey chores with my sister and her four ponies and we quite often say that we will probably still be humping hay and feed about in our twilight years together!



Lorraine (second from left) with the IH charity fundraising team

### What involvement have you had with Intelligent Horsemanship?

Dido Fisher came out some years ago to help my sister with her rescued mare who had loading issues. We have seen many demonstrations by Kelly and Monty and always come away with something new to help us with our situations back at home...plus a handful of IH clothing of course!

### What's the best thing about being a member of The Intelligent Horsemanship Association?

One of the main benefits of being a member is the extremely important support network. I have made many very good friends through IH and all of the people that I have met are genuine horse lovers. I was honoured to be asked to become a part of the charity fundraising team some years ago and seeing what the charities do, day in and day out, to help the rescued animals is amazing. In the 7 years since Kelly first decided to do this IH has helped 7 charities and jointly they have benefitted from £25,600.

I love the Listening Post magazine and the discounts on demo tickets, clothing, books and more are superb. It is unlike any other horse association that I know of and I am very proud to be a member.

## Bryony Gale

16 from Reading, IH member for 5 years.

### How did you first hear about Intelligent Horsemanship?

Someone on my yard had been on the 5 day course and suggested I look into IH because my pony used to attack me when I tried to lead him.



### Do you have horses?

I got my first pony when I was 10, a 7 year old 13.3h New Forest called Minstrel. In hindsight, he was probably the worst first pony I could have found! He'd been passed around a lot as a youngster and was very unsettled when he came to us. He used to bite, barge, kick, buck, stop and refuse to move. He has pulled several stunts at Pony Club rallies including rolling during a show jumping round and sitting down on the trailer ramp while we were loading him.

I have outgrown him now so he is a happy hack for my mum and I occasionally take him to small shows so he still feels important. I got Golden Reputation (Snap), a 16h, 10 year old TB X Welsh chestnut mare, at the end of 2007. She was very calm when we bought her but turned into a bit of a firecracker once home. She was too tense and excitable to do dressage, scared of show jump poles and I couldn't do sponsored rides on her because she got too excited and started rearing.

With a lot of help from my instructor (an IH Student and BHSII) her dressage is now improving (she came 3rd in her first dressage test last September) and she is confidently jumping

small clear rounds. We even managed to complete a sponsored ride last October.

Just as everything was starting to come together, Snap started bucking whenever she was ridden and I knew something wasn't right. Following 2 visits from 2 different vets and a chiropractor, we were told she either had kissing spine or a bone disease in her poll and it was likely she may never come back into full work. However my mum went down the alternative route and got an Osteopath to come out and work with Snap. She is now coming back into work slowly and will hopefully be back in action soon!



### What involvement have you had with Intelligent Horsemanship?

I went to a Monty demo when I was first introduced to IH but all I remember was being totally star struck when Monty asked me to help him draw the raffle! I have regular lessons with an event rider who is also an IH student and another student, working towards being a Recommended Associate, has recently been helping me with Snap's pole phobia. I was lucky enough to get work experience at the IH office last October where I got to meet Monty and Kelly and help look after Pie and Herbie- totally the best week of my life!!

What's the best thing about being a member of The Intelligent Horsemanship Association? Definitely the useful articles in The Listening Post and knowing that if I ever have any problems, there is a whole network of like minded people I can go to for help!

# Where are they now?



## **M**eet Havana and her owner Jane Reeves

I hadn't intended to buy another horse after I lost my old mare in 2008, after having had two horses for 15 years, I couldn't get used to having just one. Surfing the internet one winter's afternoon, I found an advertisement which led to a phone call and then a trip to a stud and before I knew it, I'd bought the horse of my dreams – a 2 year old, brown/black Trakehner filly by the Grand Prix dressage horse Axis.

Havana was delivered to me on 31st January 2009 and was quiet and easy, in contrast to my gelding! She was in quite poor condition and suffering from severe rain scald but to me, she was beautiful.

### **Which demo was Havana part of and what happened on the evening?**

I had already bought tickets for the Monty and Kelly demo at Quob stables in February 2009 and subsequently put Havana forward as a potential demo horse, although I did have some reservations about it as she wasn't even three at that stage and looked like an overgrown foal!

I was delighted when Havana was chosen to be the horse used for the Members' Audience before the main demo – this meant she would be finished early and I could then relax and enjoy the rest of the evening!

During the Members' Audience, Kelly and Rosie worked with Havana and as well as doing join up with her, putting on a saddle and getting her first ever rider on, they worked on getting her to stand still should her 'rider' fall off, using some sand bags attached to the stirrups and then a dummy, which they slipped off her side. She took to this very calmly and I am sure this will come in handy one day, though I hope I won't have to find out!

Havana was the first ever horse to wear a heart monitor during a demo and during the whole session, she didn't even go into



'moderate intensity' and other than bucking when the saddle was put on, was reasonably calm and co-operative throughout. (If any of you have seen the IH DVD 'Starting a Safe Horse,' the main equine star is Havana and the DVD uses the footage of her filmed at the demo!)

Monty said that Havana was 'superior in her innate tendencies to move towards co-operation' and that she had fantastic potential as a Willing Partners horse. I couldn't have been more proud of her and pleased at the great experience she had at the demo!

### **How did Havana progress after the demo?**

As she was physically immature, I didn't do too much work with Havana in the months following the demo. I walked her out in hand regularly and she took most things in her stride. Over the summer of 2009 she filled out, matured and started to develop a personality, becoming a very bold mare who likes to be in charge of the other horses and who likes her personal space!

During the summer of 2009, we started lungeing and long reining her and she accepted everything pretty easily, except having her bridle put on, which she objected to strongly. Some days it was just too dangerous to persevere with it, so for several months we had to work her in a headcollar with the bit attached.

The solution to this problem was to put the headcollar on by undoing the throat piece and pulling the headpiece over her ears and to turn her out for a few months wearing her headcollar with a Velcro fly fringe attached, to simulate a brow band. (We only considered this because she was in a safely fenced field, where she couldn't get caught up on anything!)

This helped a great deal, and although she is still not 100% happy, I can generally put her bridle on without too much fuss by taking the cheek pieces and bit off the bridle and putting them on separately. This is something that I need to work on with my local RA Sarah Weston, but for the moment I am just happy that she's accepting the bridle.

By the winter of 2009, Havana had shot up, filled out, got stronger and was going really well – she was being ridden in the

school and showing her amazing paces and lovely self-carriage. She was very brave to hack out and was always very well behaved under saddle, although could do some impressive bucking on the lunge!

### **Plans for the future**

I had planned to start competing her in BD intro dressage once she had turned four in March of this year, but unfortunately, as so often happens, these plans didn't come to pass for various reasons – the weather, lameness (both her and me!) and a hormone imbalance that led to some behavioural issues (her, not me!)

Due to ongoing lameness, she was out of work from May to early July. Following visits from the vet, farrier, physio and chiropractor, she now seems to be almost 100% sound again, so we are back to walking out in hand – I seem to be back where I was this time last year with her, but I'm in no rush.

Maybe by the time this has been published, Havana and I will have taken part in our first dressage competition - we might even have our first rosette! Well, you've got to have a dream - if you don't have a dream, how are you going to have a dream come true?



# Spotlight

## Spotlight on Recommended Associates

The Listening Post meets Paddy Gracey



**Paddy:** I was taken to a demo as a birthday surprise and I knew instantly that what I saw was revolutionary, inspiring, and the only way to truly deal with horses. I booked myself on the courses and found I had a natural ability to use these concepts.

**LP: What is typical day for you?**

**Paddy:** There is no typical day. Each day is different and brings new and exciting challenges. One day a horse might have a fear of tractors, the next it may be a difficult loader. Every horse is an individual, and must be treated as such.

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

**Paddy:** There is no typical day. Each day is different and brings new and exciting challenges. One day a horse might have a fear of tractors, the next it may be a difficult loader. Every horse is an individual, and must be treated as such.

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

**Paddy:** To eradicate all accessories that cause pain, i.e. the whip, spurs, and excessive bits.

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

**Paddy:** The first thing I would say is not to rush into anything. A horse is a big commitment and shouldn't be taken lightly. It is important to get background information on the horse and don't be afraid to ask questions. Ask for a 2 week trial. Genuine horse owners will be happy to provide this.

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

**Paddy:** I have to say that the most common issue I personally have come across is loading horses.

Owners often, unintentionally, traumatise their horses when loading them because of their own frustrations and will try every method possible before contacting me. I am always the last person they contact, when really I should be the first. The problem could be resolved straight away if I was the first port of call.

**LP: What are your plans for the future?**

**Paddy:** In the very near future I intend to open my own therapy centre. It will focus on horses and children and will offer a unique insight into our concepts and enable children from all walks of life to get involved.



This dream is very real, as on the 16th of October, Monty Roberts will be cutting the red ribbon, and will be assisted by Kelly Marks at the grand opening on this exciting, innovative project. Tickets will be available on a first come, first serve basis. They are free and are open to the public and IH members alike. We intend to provide the famous Wigan pies along with other light refreshments and make it a day for all to remember. People will get the chance to view our facilities, meet Monty and Kelly, and gain a lot of knowledge on our concepts. Everyone will leave feeling inspired, educated and impressed.

**LP: How long have you been involved with horses?**

**Paddy:** My wife has been around horses all her life and decided to get my daughter a pony when she was three years of age. Of course I took an interest myself, and my passion for horses continued to grow as the years went on. I have now been involved with horses for 20 years.

**LP: Why did you decide to qualify as a Recommended Associate?**



**Paddy Gracey is a Recommended Associate covering Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside.**

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**Oct 22nd - Hartpury College** Gloucestershire

**Oct 29th - Quob Stables** Durley, Hampshire

**Nov 6th - Towerlands Park** Braintree, Essex

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