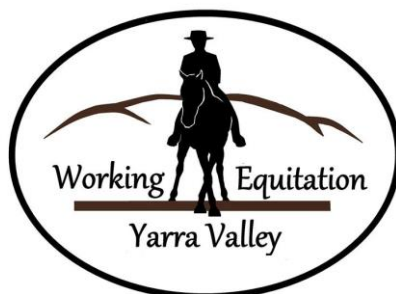


# JULY 2016 NEWSLETTER



## PRESIDENTS PONDERINGS

At the last Wednesday rally in July we hosted a guest instructor Natasha Jones and she did not disappoint.

Natasha's main style of instructing is with one on one so I think at first she seemed to be a bit 'lost' with 2 of us in the arena but by the end of the day she'd gained her mojo and was flying high.

As well as being a L'Egerete instructor Natasha has also done some study with Peggy Cummins and she was able to show us some of Peggys work to help improve the way our horses went (lack of forward).

By all accounts the lessons were enjoyed by all and we would certainly welcome Natasha back to instruct at WEYV again.

## **STYLE OBSTACLE TEST PRACTISE DAY**

The Obstacle Test day was a huge success for those attending on the day and one to definitely put on the calendar for the future.

The way the rallies are structured now means that we are less likely to have the whole obstacle course set up to ride as a whole so opportunities such as the test day should be taken when presented.

I think we ended up with 15/16 riders with a couple of scratchings on the day due to illness. Most of the riders were in the Introductory section with 4 riders in the Prelim section. I had a dabble at the Debutant for the experience which was great but we're not quite ready for that section in the real world!

The day ran on time thanks to Margaret Andersons judging. The course was set up by a few volunteers the afternoon prior and was packed up really quickly at the end of the day so thankyou to all those members that helped in this regard.

## **RALLY DUTY ROSTER FOR AUGUST**

### **Rally Duty this Month: August at Gruyere**

**Wednesday 3<sup>RD</sup> Rally: Anna Gust, Lindy Whitfort**

**Saturday 6<sup>TH</sup> Rally: Jenni Silver, Jason McInness**

Remember it is **YOUR** responsibility to arrange a replacement if, for whatever reason, you are not able to do your rally duty day.

Please note the following 'Rules & Regs' for our rallies/clinics at Gruyere.

### **GRUYERE INDOOR ARENA NOTES**

[Note to members & Guests re Rallies & Clinics at Maurice Road Indoor:](#)

The indoor at Gruyere is a private property and residence of Deb, Wes & Hayley Harper.

In order to make sure our club can continue to have access to this indoor we ask you to please

Ensure the following:

1. Please enter the gateway past the indoor arena for parking. For safety of riders and horses the first driveway is not be used.
2. We ask that visitors cars (without floats), leave ample clear space for floats and horses to move around.
3. [Collect all horse poo from the arena as soon as possible, before it spreads, barrows and scoops are provided around the arena and in the car park.](#)
4. We have access to great yards but ask that you also [ensure no manure or left over hay is left in the yards or car park when you leave.](#)
5. [When full, barrows need to be emptied onto the manure heap at the back of the arena.](#)
6. There is a lovely new kitchen, with a wood heater and lounge. Our club provide tea and coffee making facilities for you and ask that you clean up any mess after you and also do

your dishes and put them away. Please be careful with the log fire and ensure no articles are placed close to or on the fire box.

7. Toilets are at the end of the stable block.

8. Water is available for the horses near the tanks in the car park and also in the laneways by the yards.

9. Please leave dogs at home

If you have any questions or concerns about the facilities please advise one of our members as soon as possible.

As per the notes above re not leaving any manure or hay when you leave - it may be a good idea to bring along a bag and take it home with you.

## **JUNE RALLIES**

A few pics of riders at the Saturday rally in June. Thanks to Susie and Justyna for these.





## **INTERNATIONAL JUDGE TO VISIT VICTORIA**

The Nicola Danner Clinic has had a change of date -

It is now to be held on the 1st & 2nd October  
at El Castillo Indoor <http://elcastilloequestriancentre.com.au/>  
Half way between Lancefield and Kilmore

This is the home base of Macedon Ranges Working Equitation.  
<https://www.facebook.com/macedonrangeswe/?fref=photo>



Accommodation up the road - about 5 mins - is avail at discounted rates for us - at Lancemore Hill Conference Centre.

[http://www.lancemore.com.au/lancemore\\_hill/accommodation.html](http://www.lancemore.com.au/lancemore_hill/accommodation.html)

Nicola Danner is an international WE judge and she will be visiting Australia in October to offer lessons, clinics and judges days.

## **CLUB FUNDRAISER**

### **Goodwill Wines**

Don't forget to order your special wines for our club fundraiser.

Carola has advised that she ordered her half dozen and that they are a very nice drop, and the bottles with our logos on them look particularly wonderful as well.

May be a thought for a birthday or christmas gift idea?

### **BULBS**

I did eventually get to plant the bulbs I ordered from Tesselars for the previous fundraiser. I'm happy to say that they are starting to spout greenery and that soon I should have some beautiful colour in my garden. They will be a sort of surprise as I have forgotten what I planted and where!

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2016**

For info and bookings email Lisa Saunders at [lisandian@bigpond.com.au](mailto:lisandian@bigpond.com.au)

Book early: Closing dates for bookings & payment is 5 days prior to event.

WEYV Calendar:

<http://www.workingequitationyarravalley.org/calendar.html>

## **2016 DATES**

August -      Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>  
                 Saturday 6<sup>th</sup>

Club rally  
Club rally

Gruyere  
Gruyere

|             |                            |            |              |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| September - | Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Club rally | Gruyere      |
|             | Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup>  | Club rally | Gruyere      |
| October -   | Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Club rally | Melrose Farm |
|             | Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>     | Club rally | Melrose Farm |
| November -  | Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Club rally | Melrose Farm |
|             | Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup>     | Club rally | Melrose Farm |
|             | Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> | AGM        |              |
| December -  | Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Club rally | Melrose Farm |
|             | Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup>    | Club rally | Melrose Farm |

Dates for 2017 calendar were pencilled in at the last committee meeting and once confirmed with venues will be published in a forthcoming newsletter.

## **MEMBERS OUT AND ABOUT**

All seems a bit quiet on the riding side of things, may be the winter blues to blame for this?

## **FACEBOOK and WEBSITE**

Don't forget that our club has a Facebook page as well as a great website. If you are a Facebook member go to Working Equitation Yarra Valley to get some great training articles by Susie along with lots of our general info re rallies and special events, photos etc.

The website is also great for more technical club info with HRCav links.  
[www.workingequitationyarravalley.org](http://www.workingequitationyarravalley.org)

## **UNIFORMS**

If you have any queries re uniforms or saddle blankets please contact Julia on 0437 741871 or on the email at the end of the newsletter.

We do have a small amount of embroidered short and long sleeved white tops available for purchase.

## **Balance vs. Motion in Dressage**

POSTED BY JEC A. BALLOU ON JUNE 21, 2013 IN HORSEMANSHIP ESSAYS

**Written by Jec Ballou**

*The development of dressage horses falls more or less into two camps, with a lively debate dividing them over the proper foundation and training progression.*

For example, should a horse in the early work achieve precise and stable longitudinal balance prior to developing the motion of his gaits? Or, should the horse learn first to push himself forward with loose and rhythmic strides before knowing how to balance and carry himself at all times? The two prominent sides of this training argument are commonly seen as a “German” method versus a “French” or classical Iberian method. It is not as simple as that, though. Historical dressage traditions have melted together so much in our country that it is impossible to say any technique is purely German, French, or otherwise. There certainly are at least two prevalent philosophies regarding the dressage training scale, but it is fair to only loosely ascribe national ties to them. Yet, it is interesting to examine how the traditions may have evolved.

Modern trainers and riders—competitive or otherwise—strive toward the standards upheld by the F.E.I. and classical riding academies around the globe. With one uniform set of goals, it might seem logical to have just a single path to get there. But that is not the case. Each training system has its own progression to arrive at the same place. So, the question remains: which is the best way?

Sometimes, this question is tackled in forums about classical dressage versus competitive dressage. The former prides itself on a slow, tedious training program that teaches a horse to round and carry itself in an uphill manner in early work. The latter, meanwhile, teaches pushing—as opposed to carrying—power in the beginning, and a primary achievement of horizontal balance prior to uphill carriage.

The difference in methods is sometimes wrongly referred to as “balance before motion vs. motion before balance.” But it is incorrect to say that one school of thought favors balance while the other does not. Both are in pursuit of balance; the difference lies in how each seeks to achieve it. A historical perspective helps explain why different methods evolved.

Prior to the French Revolution, dressage was expressed in ways that emphasized extreme collection and agility. The Renaissance and Baroque eras saw riders excelling in the piaffe, passage, and airs above the ground, the preparation for which included collection and shorter strides in early training. The very “forward” and thrusting movements like the extended trot, on the other hand, were only seen in carriage horses working to cover great distances.

For the most part, this changed during the 19th century when dressage became less of an aristocratic pastime and moved into the cavalry schools. Now, the equitation emphasized longer, flatter strides and greater adjustability of the horse’s frame between varying degrees of collection. Dressage competitions grew out of this environment, and therefore, the medium and extended gaits became part of the tests while the most highly collected movements (i.e., canter in place, etc.) did not.

At the same time, larger and less compact horses like Thoroughbreds and Warmbloods replaced the previously popular Andalusian and Iberian mounts. So, the focus became building thrusting power in

these taller, lankier horses with naturally horizontal balance as opposed to an accented uphill body structure. The German system could be said to have grown out of this period.

A current instruction handbook from the German National Equestrian Federation states that by acquiring looseness and by stretching through his back and lowering his neck toward the ground, the horse demonstrates that he is then ready to be pushed into contact and to develop a posture or “frame.”

For those who follow a program like the German training scale, it is through motion that a horse finds his balance. But it is likely that in many cases the training scale is wrongly interpreted and has led to riders being single-focused on creating long, swinging strides and a low neck carriage. This possible misinterpretation may be contributing to an even greater division between today’s prevalent training systems.

Modern-day author, judge, and clinician Charles DeKunffy believes that the hysteria of driving young horses “forward” has led to a decrease in riders’ awareness of balance. He said that he sees numerous riders chasing their horses faster with no attention to how the horse carries himself in the movement.

“Teaching your horse balance before riding your horse forward is so important because forward is so misunderstood now. A forward-moving horse takes weight behind and lifts up in front like an airplane taking off. The horse must be balanced back into the haunches to take the rider forward,” said DeKunffy recently.

For those who follow an approach that favors developing posture and poise early on, more time will be spent in the beginning getting the horse to yield his jaw, relax his poll, and release his neck at slower paces. Through this release and suppling of the front of the horse, he will lift his forehead on his own and will carry himself free of contractions—and therefore in a collected balance from the beginning. This progression differs substantially from the German training scale.

In the 19th century, the French horseman Francois Baucher conducted a series of experiments with a horse standing on two scales that arguably became the cornerstone for this theory that balance should be emphasized before movement. He asked the horse to raise and lower his neck to various positions at the halt and then measured the amount of weight on both forehead and hindquarters at each level.

The results of this experiment led him to develop a truism: balance must be obtained with no interference with movement while, on the other hand, movement in the act of being produced must not interfere with balance. This idea certainly influenced many dressage trainers in the past few centuries, even though it can be interpreted and applied in various forms.

Tina Veder, who has trained Andalusians and Lusitanos horses for the past 20 years, employs these methods to some extent at her facility in upstate New York. She recommends that for horses built naturally uphill, riders should focus on developing collection in the beginning of training. She believes that there is no purpose in driving a horse more forward than he is able to keep his roundness. From the start, her horses learn to go in shorter, more elevated gaits than the training of most young Warmbloods in a German approach.

She said that for her horses, creating big ground-covering strides in the beginning does not have any benefit. Working on collection and yielding the body and jaw, however, puts him into the balance that he will be perfecting for the next several years on his way to High School training.

“We find when you have a horse that finds it comfortable to become round by nature, if he loses his balance, he can come back to roundness. Riders learn to bring them back to balance without tension,” she explained.

Laying down this concept in 1949, the French riding master General Decarpentry wrote:

“By first obtaining a relaxation of the mouth by means of special exercises called flexions of the jaw



and getting the horse, by shrewd progression, to move in all directions without deterioration of the relaxation, the rider will have the certainty of keeping his horse constantly and perfectly balanced.”

#### Academic Equitation

He goes on to suggest a lot of walk work, because in that gait, a rider can monitor the form and poise of his horse, making it his primary aim to stabilize and confirm the horse’s posture. This form is not sought for a flattering appearance. The rider maintains the proper form and poise for each individual horse at the point where he is balanced into his haunches, light to the hand, and responsive to the aids. It is the foundation and preparation for all following advanced work.

This early concentration on the horse’s uphill form and contact is a notable contrast to creating balance by developing active, rhythmic steps (mostly in trot) and a downward posture in the horse’s neck, as proposed by the German approach. A trainer could easily be confused which method to choose, with two equally successful—and very different— training systems available to them.

One system appears to balance a horse in the beginning by shortening his strides slightly and yielding his jaw, while the other seems to balance a horse by sending him well forward with larger strides and doesn’t concern himself with contact or the jaw until much later in the training scale.

So, how do we choose among the traditions available to us?

In the end, the debate of methods seems to come down to the type of horse in question. We must keep in mind that each training tradition grew out of a historical context where particular kinds of horses were being prepared for certain styles of riding. Different styles and horses require different approaches.

For somewhat phlegmatic Warmbloods, an early approach that confirms forward energy and a horizontal frame seems to be the right recipe. But for a horse with notably uphill conformation and naturally elevated gaits, like Iberian horses, it appears best to capitalize on their ability to sit into the haunches early on. Also, since they are generally more animated than Warmbloods, more focus can be placed on eliminating jaw and bodily contractions, rather than developing a forward, rhythmic stride. And for horses that fall between these two types, perhaps a blend of both methods is best.

Yarra Valley

## Working Equitation Clinic



## COVERING ALL FOUR PHASES

**PHASE 1= DRESSAGE**

**PHASE 2= OBSTICLES PERCISION**

**PHASE 3= OBSTACLES SPEED**

**PHASE 4= CATTLE**

**SEPT 23/24/25th-FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE ATTENDED A  
W.E CLINIC WITH ANDREW**

**SEPT 30<sup>TH</sup> OCT 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> - FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVENT  
ATTENDED A W.E CLINIC WITH ANDREW**

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## **MEMBERS CLASSIFIEDS**

If members have anything that you would like to sell or advertise please let the editor know and I can arrange to put it in the newsletter for you.

## **PRIVATE LESSONS**

Susie has advised that she is available for private lessons to club members should they be interested. These could be on an individual basis or a group situation.

Please contact her direct to book or for more details.

*Susie Walker*  
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