



The Equestrian Center, LLC



Hoof Prints & Happenings Newsletter

Volume 3

Issue V

January-June 2008

IS summer here?!!!

We all thought winter was over, but the real question is "IS summer really here?" We returned to 90% of our fences down, gates broken and a lot of snow damage... but we are up and going for the season! Weather has yet to stop us, as we put on our layers and ask "Is it really June?" Drop us a line: sam@learnhorses.com

Toll Free 866-904-0111

hoofprints@learnhorses.com

www.learnhorses.com

Upcoming Clinics

June 16, 17 & 18 Benewah County 4-H
St. Maries Fairground, ID
Horse Camp Clinic- Horsemanship

June 23-27 TEC Full Immersion #1

July 14-18 TEC Full Immersion #2

July 28- Aug 1 TEC Full Immersion #3

TEC, Sandpoint, ID

<http://www.learnhorses.com/2006/camp.htm>

5 Day clinic focusing on working with raising people's awareness and their horse's mental availability to build a trusting partnership. All level horses & riders welcome.

To participate or audit in either of these clinics please email sam@learnhorses.com

THE SMALL PRINT All information presented in this newsletter is ©2008of The Equestrian Center, LLC & Samantha Harvey and may not be copied, reproduced or otherwise used unless permission granted in writing.

Ride the West Horse & Ranch Expo



Sam returned to the RTW Expo held in Spokane, WA, Interstate Fairgrounds for the third consecutive year with the weather FINALLY holding up and offering a wonderful spring weekend.

Sam presented a Round pen demo, anatomical riding lectures, Three Day Eventing Slideshow, Introduction to Riding a Dressage Test, Stadium jumping course walk and more over the three day expo.

Her round pen demo was themed, "It's the thought that counts!" The emphasis was on the importance of finding your horse's mental availability and how that influences the quality of the partnership when you work with your horse from either the ground or when riding him.

Her last minute demo horse was a 14 year old Belgian who had separation anxiety issues (we've all dealt with one of those, right?) AND it was his first time away from home.

By demonstrating her "less is more" approach she showed the audience that by giving the horse time and being clear with what behavior "worked" and what did not, the horse was able to narrow down his options until he chose that he wanted to be with Sam.

So many times people tend to want to micromanage their horses without encouraging the horse to gain confidence in making a decision for himself.

Ask the Trainer

Question:

My 6 year old Paint gelding sometimes paws at the hitching rail and in situations where he is stressed or agitated will paw into the air. I'm afraid he's going to "get me" one of these times. How do I stop this?

Answer:

Pawing or signs of impatience are the symptom and not the issue at hand. As you said when he is stressed or agitated he takes this action. If you address why or what is causing his stress and change how he feels about whatever is bothering him, then the pawing will disappear without you having to reprimand him for it.

If you can take the time and use some patience you will need to assess and break down his "stress." You will need to learn how to recognize when it first starts to appear, rather than when it has reached the climax and your horse feels that he "has" to act out. Then instead of "getting by" or forcing your horse to have to tolerate what is bothering him, you will need to help him address the issue at hand and help him change how he perceives the problem.

Here are a few examples: If your horse is bothered by leaving his pasture mate, you will need to work on creating a more trusting relationship between you and your horse so that when you are around him he offers you a mental availability to want to be with you, instead of tolerating being around you. Or if he is inexperienced with being ridden, although he may not have done anything dramatic with you in the saddle, the ride itself may cause him to be bothered. In anticipation he may be showing his worry by pawing as he is tacked up because of the association with being tied, saddled and ridden.

You will need to notice if his pawing is what I call "patternized behavior"- does he always paw in the same way, at the same time when you work with him, or is he inconsistent about it? Most of the time people and horses get stuck in "routines" in how and where we

interact with our horses. They easily learn the routine and become aware of "what is coming next." If there is anything that bothers them about the routine, they will start to act out ahead of time, rather than waiting until the actual problem or concern has occurred.

Remember that when your horse is bothered about something in life he is not happy and he would much prefer to be in a "comfortable" place emotionally- but horses are not always capable of using "reason" the way people do to realize that his pawing is not going to fix what is really bothering him.

Reality wise, to maintain your safety there needs to be black and white boundaries of "what works" and "what does not" as far as when he is taking an action that may be dangerous to you (even if he is not trying to be aggressive towards you.) The problem is most times people try to correct their horse, but because of their timing (lack of) or the lack of clarity in the manner in which they do so, the horse cannot understand what the person is doing, which then only causes more confusion. The horse must understand that when a person does something, it means something, but many times people are "hopeful" in the way that they interact with their horse, rather than being clear.

It does not matter what action you take show the horse that striking out is inappropriate, but it must be like a hotwire- it only "corrects" the horse as the undesired action is occurring, it does not chase the horse or continue to reprimand him for a past action after the fact.

If the horse is clear on the change you are asking of him, he will "let go" immediately of continuing to try and take the same course of action (in this case pawing) when he is stressed. Keep in mind though just because you may have stopped the actual pawing, may not mean that you lessened his worry or increased his confidence.

Good Luck, Sam

For more Ask the Trainer advice or to submit questions please visit the link:

<http://www.learnhorses.com/forms/forum.htm>

Full Immersion Camps

Our fun filled Full Immersion Camps this past summer were a blast and we are already looking forward to next year's! The five-day camps are designed as intellectually stimulating, fun-filled learning sessions for both horse and rider. **We now have horses available for some participants depending on experience.**

TEC is accepting participant deposits for camps. Participants are welcome to bring more than one horse. Pasture and stall stabling available. On site camping ok (no hookups sorry) or stay nearby at a B & B or hotel. To view details and registration info please visit:

<http://www.learnhorses.com/2006/camp.htm>

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE SAM AS A GUEST SPEAKER OR CLINICIAN? EMAIL HER TODAY TO FIND OUT MORE!

sam@learnhorses.com

Pony Pals Program

Ride our horse/pony or yours! We prioritize safety (helmets provided or bring your own) and the importance of horsemanship. Depending on the individual's focus and attention span we include topics such as: catching the ponies, grooming, tacking & untacking, safe leading & tying techniques, mounting- from a block, from the ground and emergency dismounting, veterinary care, trim/shoeing information, stable management skills, trailer loading experience, and so on. We try to keep the lessons varied and encourage students to ride English, Western or both in enclosed arenas (starting in 60' round pens), over poles, on our "beginner trails" (with an instructor), playing an array of games that help improve balance, coordination and confidence in the student and much more! WE NOW OFFER A LESSON/PRACTICE PROGRAM! Visit link: http://www.learnhorses.com/pony_pals.htm

TEC Full Training Programs

At TEC we look to build mental availability in the horse's Sam works with in order to achieve the physical goals we set for ourselves and our horses. Customized training programs are designed to suit both the owner and the horse's needs along with a realistic budget.

We offer training packages from one week to six months. We ask that horses are current on shots, vaccinations, worming and hoof care. Horses do not need to be shod because we have mostly sandy footing. Included in the training package is training and either grass or alfalfa hay.

Horses are kept with a maximum of three other training horses of the same sex in wooded pastures ranging from one to two acres. They are fed twice a day and have access to an automatic water system at the top of a slight hill- this helps with self-conditioning every time they go to get a drink of water and burning off any excess energy.

We currently have a waiting list- if you would like to enroll your horse in one of our programs please visit the link:

<http://www.learnhorses.com/training-programs.htm>

The Equestrian Center, LLC & Samantha Harvey

Summer Months of Operation

Sandpoint, ID April- October

We apologize if you have received this in error- reply to this email with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line. Questions or comments? E-mail us at sam@learnhorses.com Call Toll Free 866-904-0111 Pacific Time