



*Hello Everyone*

*It seems that along with the cold, frost and the shorter days - that hibernation has also set in!! I yet again have to present not a double but a triple month edition of the newsletter!!*

*I am sitting here looking out the window and it is pouring with rain - we can not complain as this winter rain is just wonderful.*

*The Polocrosse season is in full swing now - however Wayne and I have only signed up for 3 carnivals—bit hard travelling across the region what with the clinics as well as the horse education jobs that Wayne has that just seem to keep coming!!*

*The first carnival was in pouring rain the whole weekend - it was tiring yet very exciting BUT my dear loyal horse Doc has strained his tendons and is out for the rest of the season!!!! Doc worked his heart out for me but the mud proved too much for him. The next carnival was also not great weather wise and other commitments came up so Wayne had to pull out. Next is Mendooran - we will see how the weather pans out this time!*



Photo shows Wayne in his whites (which did not stay white for long) on Matilda just before one of his chukkas.

Inside I have an article on the absolute necessity to have your horse fit for any sort of activity from trail riding to hard competition such as Polocrosse.

I have found that trying various types of sport and horse competition from Dressage, Endurance, Teampenning, Campdrafting, general showing and now Polocrosse—has given me, personally, a wealth of knowledge because when I go into a sport I seek out as much information as I can for my benefit as well as the horses'.

Cheers for now

Wayne and Jenny

**PLEASE NOTE SOME CHANGES TO DATES**

**CLINIC SCHEDULE**

- ⇒ 28/29 August, Gulgong, Australian Stock Horse Members only (in affiliation with Central Tablelands ASH Branch)
  - ⇒ 2ND—5TH SEPT 4 day, Renmark, South Australia
  - ⇒ 25/26TH SEPT 2DAY CLINIC AT JILLIBY
  - ⇒ 9TH/10TH, 2 DAY CLINIC AT CANOWINDRA
  - ⇒ 30/31 Oct, 2010 Broken Hill, Venue to be confirmed
- EMAIL NOW TO SHOW YOUR INTEREST**

**SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:**

- ◆ Care of your Performance Horse
- ◆ Shed update
- ◆ Clinic dates

*Remember*

*You need to have fun with your horse.....don't get bogged down too much with serious training...if you are having trouble **RING WAYNE.** And go back to basics in the meantime....*



## CARE OF YOUR 'PERFORMANCE' HORSE

The title of this article has the word 'performance' in it. I am using this word loosely because when we saddle up our horses - we expect our horses to perform or to do as we ask. Whether you are having a natural horsemanship session which could require front and back leg crossovers, direct and indirect rein movements, lots of cantering and stops; or you could be going on a 6 hour trail ride; or having a go at dressage or team penning.....it all amounts to you and your horse having a certain level of fitness to match the exercise. We are going to concentrate on the horse in this article as the horse is unable to verbally let us know that his muscles are sore or he has pulled a ligament in his leg.....it is up to us as the horse's caretaker to learn as much as we can to recognise ill health signs and to know how to get a horse fit.

Back in the MARCH edition of the newsletter you will find an article on how to perform a health check on your horse - learning what is normal for your horse such as his 'normal' temperature and heartbeats — then once you have documented this—you will then be able to determine what is abnormal for your horse.

Back in FEBRUARY edition of the newsletter you will find an article on dentistry. This is vital for a happy and healthy horse.

Back in January edition of the newsletter you will find an article on farriery. Again vital for a happy horse expected to perform in any way shape or form!

*You will need to have performed all of the above checks and dealt with any problems before taking your horse out for any exercise or training session.*

So we move on from understanding our horse's health status to now looking at the level of activity we do with our horse, how we feed our horses, how our horses are kept, to the actual activity.

Firstly, how the horse is kept is important and following closely is how the horse is fed. Perhaps you are lucky enough to have good paddocks which can be rotated (remember, horse paddocks can become 'sour' and weed infested if not rested and managed correctly). Some horses are yarded with only access to small paddocks.

The book by **John Kohnke, Feeding and Nutrition of Horses** is a great source of information for feeding a horse in whatever situation it is in from Pleasure riding to Endurance to Racing.

Below is a guide for when we feed rations:-

1. The class of horse (i.e. workload, growth, reproductive status etc).
2. Management style (stabled vs. pastured horse).
3. Weight of the horse.
4. Available ingredients
5. Horses likes and dislikes.

A good feeding routine includes:

- feeding at the same times each day
- keeping an accurate record of what is being fed.
- keeping an accurate record of what is being left from each meal
- regularly cleaning feed bins and water buckets
- providing good quality feed
- access to clean and fresh water at all times

The above is just the starting point in feeding your horse correctly. Whatever you do, any new feed you are thinking of giving your horse—you need to introduce it gradually.

The simpler you can make it the better. For horses in heavy work there are all sorts of supplements one can give the horse. These are very important especially if the horse is grazing on paddocks that could be mineral and trace element deficient. Soil testing with your local Produce store/Agronomist can help you there.

## CARE OF YOUR 'PERFORMANCE' HORSE.....continued

Understanding your horse's conformation is important. What you want your horse to do may not work in with his conformation or perhaps make it very hard work for the horse.

Such conformation differences such as paddling can use up precious energy when needing speed; or the horse having a very high action in trotting and cantering also uses up energy when needing speed—you want a horse long and low when galloping. This high action in trotting and cantering could be quite useful in hacking and dressage however when speed is not required.

The type of hindquarter will allow the horse lots of power or little power - a strong hindquarter is needed for tasks such as cutting out a cow or hindquarter turns in classes/dressage etc.

Conformation is closely linked with the type of breeding the horse has. Find out as much as you can about your horse's particular breed to get the best from your horse. For example you won't find many, if any thoroughbreds in the discipline of cutting! Also remember you can get 'hot' or 'cool' bloodlines in any breed.

It is a common belief that quarter horses are really quiet, well yes some can be BUT there are some very hot lines in the quarter horse breed as well for a particular discipline they may be following.



Saddlery and equipment- look at all of your equipment and make sure it actually fits the horse! It is amazing how many people buy saddles and bridles because they look good!. It must fit the horse and the rider at the same time. Keep your equipment in good order. Regularly check gear for wear and tear and cleanliness. Try not to swap gear too much if at all. There are some horrific viral diseases going around shows and events which is being spread by borrowing/lending out gear.

If you are doing a sport which involves a lot of leg work—look at bandaging your horses legs. There are a couple of different types of bandages. Support bandages for tendons and ligaments of the lower legs and Protective bandages such as skid boots for reining horses, bell boots, shin boots and much more. Talk to some professionals to see what you need for your horse for the discipline you are embarking on.



The fitness of your horse will depend on the type of work you are expecting to do with your horse. Even if you are doing the occasional trail ride - just like any overweight unfit person, a couple of hundred metres may be the limit for your horse if it is overweight and unfit. If you are expecting to be doing some cattle work, campdrafting/ team penning etc then your horse's hindquarters and legs need to be up to it to cope with fast turns on the hindquarter, slide stops etc.

Endurance horses need fitness for long distance at the walk, trot and canter. You just cannot take a horse out of a paddock and think it can do an 80 kilometre ride without proper preparation.

***This article is meant to plant the seed of thought for people to acquire as much knowledge as they can about horse management in general. There are a myriad of books and videos out there to be bought or borrowed from libraries to learn and learn and learn.***

***I find that most people want to do the right thing by their horse - just not sure how to go about it!!***

Happy Riding!!



## Progress of Clinic/Training Area

Well, we have lift off with the shed for the clinic area. This shed is for toilets and showers with a kitchenette and sitting area for participants for our clinics on our property.



Next step is the walls and roof!! We are going to the Gunnedah Agquip so you never know we might get a good deal from someone there!

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### **NATURAL HORSE EQUIPMENT FOR SALE**

**Don't forget Wayne stocks a small range of Natural halters and lead ropes. If you are coming to a clinic and need this equipment, give us a call so we can make sure we have enough in stock.**

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BECOME A CLINIC ORGANISER AND RECEIVE A BIG DISCOUNT ON YOUR PARTICIPATION FEE.....

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A CLINIC IN YOUR AREA, EMAIL US SO THAT WE CAN START THE BALL ROLLING. WE NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE IN ACCESSING THE 'HORSEY' GROUPS IN YOUR AREA.....

ONLY 15 PARTICIPANTS AND A SAFE VENUE ARE NEEDED FOR A CLINIC TO HAPPEN IN YOUR TOWN.

CALL US TO TALK ABOUT BECOMING AN ORGANISER....WE PAY FOR ALL COSTS...YOU JUST DO THE LEG WORK!!