



# Balmoral Newsletter

MAY 2010

## Up coming events

*Balmoral Stallion show is set to take place on Saturday the 24th of July from 6pm!*

*The Balmoral Trivia night will hopefully run during August! Start planning your trivia table now!*

*We are in the process of training to organize another clinic with Bill Noble. If you are interested please let Shaneen know to ensure you are informed when dates are finalized.*

*The World Equestrian Games are less than 6 months away! The Games are a great opportunity to see the world's best competing head to head! Visit [www.altechfei.com](http://www.altechfei.com) for more details!*

## The Balmoral Stallion Show

The Balmoral Stallion Show is to be held on Saturday July 24th from 6pm.

This is one of our major events for 2010!

This year we have a very exciting line up! Not only are we showcasing the Balmoral stallions—Clint Eastwood, Westewind and Carabino, but we are also featuring:

- Ebony Park Abe
- Fluor de Lys Jack Daniels
- Ellendale Jake
- Megabyte
- El Caballero Corando II



Ebony Park Abe is a 16.2hh, jet black imported Friesian Ster stallion. Abe has been awarded the sports predicate

from the KFPS. He is the first stallion in Australia to achieve the award due to his outstanding results in the dressage arena. Abe is currently competing at Pre St George level.



Fluer de Lys Jack Daniels is currently being trained and shown with much success with Kerrie Ford from Wallan. He is a section D Welsh Cob Stallion.



El Caballero Corando II is an exceptional individual in looks, temperament, movement and trainability. With the intelligence and gentleness of the Spanish horse. He won at his first outing as a 3yo and third at his second outing as a 6yo at the Royal Melbourne Summer

Horse Show.



Megabyte is a QH x ASH stallion. He won the 2006 Qld Reining Futurity worth

and has picked up numerous impressive top placings at Drafting, both as a 3 and 4 year old. He is now training in dressage and General Western.



Ellendale Jake is a pure bred Registered Clydesdale Stallion owned by Luana Brown. As a 2 yr old Luana broke him in, in the May and took him to Royal as a 3 year old, where he placed 2nd. Jake has been out to many shows and dressage events since. He will be standing at stud in 2010 subject to his competition calendar!

## Stolichnaya to retire

Stoli was born in 1988 in Germany and was imported to Denmark as a 3 year old where he competed at national Medium level. He was brought to Balmoral from Denmark in 1999 as an 11 year old Medium/Advanced horse and proceeded over the next 8 years to progress through the grades winning

every major event in Victoria at Prix St Georges and Inter I level, and competed at Grand Prix for 3 seasons. His strength was always the freestyle event with his one and two time changes on a circle being a real highlight. He was always an absolute crowd favorite and even had his own fan club! Stoli retired from competition in 2006 after the World Cup competition in Melbourne and was then on "light

duties" being ridden by several working students and clients for the following 4 years. An injury (caused by his incredible ability to open his own stable door and go "visiting") finally took its toll on his soundness and he was retired on April 15th this year. He will live out his days stabled at Balmoral enjoying his role as "king of the stables"!



Janie has a new baby! Purchased from the Bloomfield Horse Auction last month, Janie has acquired the beautiful Royal Hit/Whisper colt. He is named Royal Winston.



#### POTTIES ISOGEL

Exercise can cause soreness and stiffness, as well as bruising and tender joints. Pottie's Isogel aids in reducing inflammation and swelling in joints, tendons and muscles. Isogel can be reapplied as often as required without causing any harm, however a Veterinarian should be consulted if pain persists.



Isogel works by producing a heating effect when rubbed into the sore area, stimulating circulation and promoting healing. Isogel can be used under wet or dry bandages and strapping. Do not apply Isogel to open wounds or abrasions.

## Listen to Your Body

This month I enjoyed auditing clinics by FEI coach Eddo Hoekstra and classical dressage trainer Hans Hollenbach. From the ground or from the saddle, whatever the horse's breed, age, ability or language, the same things worked. We all laugh when we see a horse 'speak' German, French, Russian or Spanish when he is spoken to by the trainer or clinician in that language- and you speak to him all the time in your language. Of course we know that horses don't spontaneously know all our human languages. We know he is reading your body and your tone. Or not. He may be 'deaf' because his focus is elsewhere momentarily.

We also know that it works (or doesn't) the other way around. Take a friend to the barn who knows nothing about horses, and you have to give them Equine Body Language 101 before you know they'll be safe standing around a barn aisle with horses moving in and out. An un-equestrian friend is at some risk, simply because they can't read or hear what the horses may be plainly saying to them before it happens. So we know that WE can be a little physically 'deaf' to our horses.

In the saddle, you are in a dynamic relationship of leading and following with your horse. Much like a pairs dance, you initiate a movement, see what he does and keep up so that you can make the next movement. There is constant adjustment and response by both of you. You are in a conversation. This efficiency and elegance of the conversation depends on your ability to 'hear' each other.

Even in moments of relative quiet, you need your conversation to be free of 'noise' so that you are ready at any time, to go into any gate, direction or move-

ment. Whether you're reining, jumping a course, doing a dressage test, or riding on trail, this state of quiet and active readiness is the ideal. Eddo called it 'functional relaxation' during his clinic. I liked that term. Particularly when he contrasted it with non-functional relaxation, like flopping on a couch. I would add, or you flopping in your saddle, or your horse just clumping along half asleep. Those examples are quiet, but not functional; quiet, but asleep: checked out, but not engaged in a conversation.

To speak effectively to your horse (apply clear direction with your body), you need to also be able to 'hear' him. Often we make the mistake of trying to do so with our eyes, looking down at parts of the horse. We're more effective when we 'hear' with feel because our language with the horse is body-language. To have good communication, it's important to eliminate noise and distraction. Noise and distraction in body language is the same as inability to move correctly, precisely and smoothly. You can create 'background noise' by nagging with constant pressure of your legs. You can create miscommunication with signals that cross each other unintentionally.

When your body is blocked because of stiffness or tension, or weakness (which becomes stiffness or rigidity in motion when the body braces to compensate for lack of muscular strength), you can't hear. If you can't feel your left seatbone moving forward, you can't feel your horse's left hind. How can you tell him precisely and elegantly when to change leads from the

hind? How can you expect him to be obedient and soft if your hips tell him one thing, and your shoulders and hands another? If you make an attempt and don't have the right timing and clarity, you'll create frustration for both of you.

Listening to your own body is a very important part of listening to your horse. You might have tight hamstrings, which make the back of your legs and seat less mobile, reducing your feeling for his back, and 'pushing' on his back muscles with tightness. You may have back pain which causes you to brace unconsciously in the saddle. Both these examples would mean your horse can't relax and move through the back. If you make him try and produce certain results anyway, you will place incorrect load somewhere in shouldn't be, like a hock. Your horse will try his best to do what you want, even if you are blocking him from doing the task in the way his body was designed to do it. Listening to your body can be pretty simple and straightforward: if you know you have tight hamstrings, you don't need someone else to tell you to stretch them regularly. Stretching them, will help you have more feel for what a more supple hip feels like. You'll have better feel for where your seatbones are. Your seatbones will be able to 'read' your horse's back better, and so on. Even if you can't get into all the 'feel' stuff, just know that your hips will move better and let your horse's back move better.

Many riders ask me if various types of fitness are good training for riders. Without the space here to go into details, you probably have a gut feeling or a good idea what your most immediate need is as far as making your body more balanced for your horse. It's probably something simple. Get started today.

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