

ISSUE 1: March/April 2005

In this first issue we bring you:

FLYING SOLO !

Nicole Park tells how she helped her flighty Arab by riding more confidently

RWYM – what's in it for you ?

Anna Gordon-Redmond gives you a taster of the RWYM approach:

For the Good of the Horse:

Headshaking ... how to track and manage the triggers

For the Good of the Rider:

An introduction to Thought Field Therapy plus Feldenkrais exercises for riders

How SCARY !

Katie Loker tells about her experience as a demo rider !

Plus Reviews, Course Dates, Humour and more !



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Mary welcomes you all

Welcome to the first edition of the new Network News magazine. I am pleased to be writing the introduction, and hope that this will become a useful learning tool that will help to inspire you, whilst also offering a lively forum for discussion. *I shall be giving the team all the back-up I can, and hope that you will too.*

We hope that your contribution might go beyond just reading to the written word. Your ideas, questions, and responses to articles will help to make it far richer than it will be if only a small number of people are contributing. Please do write or email us and let us have your ideas.

You may have been handed this because of interest you have shown at the end of one of the lecture demonstration evenings. In this case I hope that the evening gave you some new understandings of the patterns that really underpin skilful riding, and gave you practical ideas that you can go away and work with.

I also hope that I have been able to demonstrate that getting your body organised well whilst riding is by far the most effective way of organising the horse underneath you.

*If bearing down is the only change you take away from the evening, it could change your life. What you have seen is only the tip of a very big iceberg... imagine the effect that a rider has when she is exactly on the correct balance point in a **piaffe/passage transition!***

After reading this we hope you will want to subscribe to the magazine (if you have not already done so), and if so you have two options. One is to send us a cheque and the form that is included with it, and the other is to log onto mary-wanless.com where you can pay by credit card. You can receive the newsletter either on paper or as a PDF file sent to your email address.

I hope you enjoy reading this, and that some snippet of information particularly grabs your attention and seems like it was put there just for you!

Enjoy and goodbye for now.

Mary Wanless



Talking of PIAFFE

A fairly accomplished dressage rider visits a well respected and accomplished trainer. At the start of the lesson the trainer asks her what she'd like to work on. She says "Can we work on our piaffe, please"

The trainer says, "Fine, if you like, we can take a look at it right now"

After some minutes of considerable exertion the rider stops and asks the trainer "So, what do you think?"

"I think," replies the trainer "that your piaffe was truly excellent.....but why was your horse standing still?"

RWYM ARTICLE

by Anna Gordon-Redmond

What IS it that talented riders really do?

What is it that talented riders really do? This is what international coach Mary Wanless set out to find out in the late 1970's and early 80's.

What she discovered was that the key pieces that make talented riders so able, tended to be things they were not consciously aware of, or couldn't explain.

It is now understood in sports coaching that the more naturally able the athlete/performer, the less likely they are to know HOW they do what they do so well. A huge amount of what makes them so good is unconscious. (They don't even have to think about it, leaving them "brainspace" for refining their skills)

But it's just those fundamental bits that most ordinary riders lack. Think of it like this. If good riding is like baking a cake, talented riders already have the cake and can work on icing it, but most riders don't need icing instructions (yet), they need the basic recipe for making the cake... how much flour? Do they need eggs? etc.

The result of Mary's research is RIDE WITH YOUR MIND, a constantly evolving way of coaching riders the key pieces that underpin riding, and coaching them in *bite-sized chunks* that riders can assimilate.

On RWYM clinics riders learn that HOW THEY ORGANISE THEIR BODY IS THE PRIMARY WAY IN WHICH THEY CAN INFLUENCE THE HORSE.

Nearly all instructors agree about the importance of having a *good position*, but many aren't consciously aware of how critically this influences the horse, or of how to convey the complex ingredients that go together to make up that "position".

A RWYM coach will help you to organise your body in a very precise, conscious way (hence Ride With Your MIND). Piece by piece, the coach will help you to use your primary communication toolkit (that's your body) to enable you to influence your horse's carriage in an apparently talented way.

Each rider has their own body disorganisation to deal with, which unbalances the horse and sends him conflicting signals, making the rider part of the problem, rather than part of the solution. But as the rider

learns to maintain the correct mechanics, the effect on the horse is to have him lift his back and reach into the rein, in classically correct carriage. (As opposed to the horrible experience, of creating a hollow-backed horse with his head pulled in. Without correct mechanics riders and horses are doomed to this, and never get to experience the magic of being so in place that the horse **chooses to carry himself** with freedom and lightness)

Much of the traditional riding lore, presupposes that you as a rider already have your basic pieces in place, and that you are already able to organise your body in the right ways, so you can go on to organise and *school* the horse.

If you are taught by an instructor who is a talented rider, (and many of them are), they may struggle to convey to you HOW to do it, because in their body a lot of what makes it work just happens. If they got on and did what they were telling you to do it would work. But, and it is a huge but, most riders' body organisation skills are nothing like their instructors. -- Yet

RWYM sets out to fill this gap.

Imagine that good riding is a wonderful place, a place people want to get to, like Paris in France. The directions they will require to get there will depend upon where they start from. It is no good giving someone from Jo'burg the same directions as someone from London or Tokyo. Conventional instruction tends to assume that because everybody is aiming for the same place, they need the same instructions. RWYM coaches help riders to map the territory that THEY need to cross to get to good riding wherever their start point is.

Of course some riders start much closer to the goal, and that's wonderful, but RWYM doesn't believe that starting from along way away should mean that you can't make the trip.

RWYM coaches will also respect you enough not to lie to you about the distance you need to travel!

People who come on RWYM clinics do ridden work, dismounted workshops, and watch video feedback. They say that the degree to which they need to be able to control their own



bodies in order to ride is far more precise than they ever realised.

They will also tell you just how weird it feels to organise themselves in the right way when that wasn't their usual body pattern. They rave about the way they have been coached and shown **how** to achieve a result, rather than just being told to do a particular action., They also rave about the amazing difference they can make in a horse when they get themselves in place.

More advanced riders are equally amazed that with even better body organisation they can overcome persistent training problems, and develop the quality of their horse's work.

Riders come out of clinics with an awareness of what an organisational challenge it is to ride well, and the pieces that they need to begin the journey towards good riding - should they choose to accept that challenge. They are often realising for the first time the gap between their "toolkit" and what is required of them by a horse if he is to perform well.

However, they are usually very excited that they can close that gap, and that good riding is attainable if they practice and build on the pieces they have learned. Many feel that they are no longer doomed to the scrapheap of seemingly untalented riders, or to unhappily pulling a horse's head in, in an attempt to get it *on the bit*.

Moreover, given time to get their body organisation established, they report that they are far more able to do what their instructor/trainer wants, and to have the effect on the horse that their teacher so wanted for them all along.

If this approach to learning appeals to you, please go to page 13 to find out how to enrol on a RWYM clinic

RWYM RIDER PROFILE

By Nicole Park

Nicole and Solo – Their Story

I am a middle aged woman with an average riding ability. I started riding lessons as an adult and purchased my own horse about eight years ago. After making the mistake of buying unsuitable horses I stuck to riding my daughters' ponies, which consisted of weekly lessons and hacking.

One day (2 Feb 02) an opportunity came my way to purchase a pure Egyptian Arab gelding of six yrs at an extremely good price, so I bought him and he's called Solo. That's when the fun really started. Looking back all I think of is the saying 'there is no such thing as a bargain'.

Solo was very nervous and flighty, he wouldn't let the farrier anywhere near him. He panicked when he saw a rug and you had to be so quiet around him. Riding him was an experience he was hollow, stiff, tense and best of all tripped and stumbled most times when he was ridden.

I spent the first year sorting out all the non-riding problems and worked hard to gain his trust but the riding if I was honest, frightened me. I grew to dread my riding lessons and we never progressed, then Solo fell over with me on board and I broke my arm. That really unsettled me and I grew more and more nervous when riding him.

In October of 02 I needed to find a new riding instructor for my daughter. I came

upon Suzanne Marshall. Now she had a funny way of teaching using this Mary Wanless technique. As the weeks progressed I saw a change develop in my daughter's riding. I could not put my finger on it but my daughter looked a more powerful rider and she looked like she was in total control, not a passenger.

As my daughter kept improving on her pony and I was still struggling on Solo I became intrigued, especially as I now was too scared to canter, because when I gave him the aid for canter he would put his ears back and put in a buck. The canter would not be going

forward but very bouncy and in each corner of the school would come a buck.

At this point I was considering giving up riding altogether. As a last resort I decided to ask Suzanne if she would give me a lesson that was in the March of 03.

I don't think I will ever forget my first lesson with Suzanne. She asked me to work in my horse for 5 minutes while she watched me. She then asked me if I thought I was vertical.

I looked at her and said "Well yes" quite indignantly. She said I was not and that I was leaning back and asked me to lean forward. I moved a bit and she kept saying a bit more, I thought I would be up Solo's neck before long, when Suzanne said now that's vertical.



I thought "I don't think so" but I'll just humour her. Then she put me in a weird position, talked about bearing down, and then expected me to ride the horse like that. At the end of my lesson I was not convinced but Suzanne asked if she could video my next lesson.

How wise of her because after my second painful lesson I watched the video and I was so embarrassed, as I saw for myself riding in my old position, leaning back with so much superfluous movement. Talk about pelvic thrust! This new position looked so much

neater and correct. I instantly realized Suzanne was onto something, so I decided to give this riding technique a go.

As the weeks progressed I began to improve and understood about having stuffing and bearing down, Solo began to improve and was less hollow. I even started to look forward to my weekly lesson instead of that feeling of dread. Mind you I must say at this point I have had my problems maintaining my posture, mainly with my left side but it is now enjoyable working with Suzanne on these problems.

I have found that Solo's improvements have been in stages. He would improve for a while and then for no reason go back a stage.

In my desperation to find out what was wrong with him I spent thousands of pounds having every thing checked, from replacing numerous saddles to having various back treatments done on him, none of which ever saw an improvement or diagnosed a definite problem.

Eventually I accepted that this was as good as I was going to achieve with my horse and my own capabilities. We had progressed to a level that Solo could give some work in an outline but he could not maintain it.

Some days when I rode him he was better than others, some days he would hollow and be stiff in the shoulder and I found myself making excuses and saying "Oh well that's Solo, this is as good as it gets".

This made me feel a bit frustrated recently, Solo seemed to be stuck on a backward stage and I was working hard and not progressing so Suzanne suggested we used the video on the next lesson. During that lesson Suzanne and I both rode Solo and while she was riding him I watched him put in a lot of resistance, then he gave in and started to work,

FLYING SOLO !

giving Suzanne movements he had never offered me.

When I watched the video I also felt that I had not improved very much in a year, so my next lesson was in the comfort of my house scrutinizing videos of my riding.

I feel that was the turning point for me because that day Suzanne really taught me the true meaning of riding with your mind.

I learnt that although my riding has improved I still would not ask for the bigger question from my horse by pushing him for more. It was easier to think that he couldn't do it but really subconsciously I was scared of the tantrum he might have if I pushed him.

Suzanne talked to me about being more confident while riding and to be more visual in your mind. To stop worrying about what might happen and to ride what is actually happening, because while I was riding I was like a radar, permanently looking for anything that might spook Solo and pre-empting his reactions. This made me tense and helped Solo to spook at objects.

In my next lesson I rode with determination and stopped looking for problems. I concentrated on myself more and visually imagined I was on a massive warm blood with an abundance of power that I have to match (this really worked for me), I also had a mental check list for all the parts of my body to help me maintain the posture and power that I require while riding.

Solo did a little tantrum but to my amazement I could ride him through it and then he started to work in the outline I was asking for. We are now on an improving stage and it feels so good.



For me the best day of the week is the day I have my lesson with Suzanne and I will be forever grateful to her for sticking with me and I cannot imagine riding using any other technique than the Mary Wanless way.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE RIDER

Awareness Through Movement; An Introduction By Karin Major

Many riders are able to describe how their horse moves, 'he goes on his forehand', 'he falls in through the shoulder to the right', 'she goes hollow in the transitions', 'she tilts her head left' etc. But how would you describe how you move, on the ground or when mounted? Do you know which leg you would naturally lead with and which you would stand on? Or, which way your head most easily turns?

Awareness Through Movement classes, using the Feldenkrais Method, can help you learn more about yourself, your posture, your movements, your character and inclinations. The more aware you become, the easier it becomes to translate verbal instructions from your riding coach to self adjustments on your horse, or to notice the subtleties of changes in your body that go with 'got it, lost it', and hence to influence the way your horse goes.

Many of the classes are done lying on the ground. This takes you out of the normal field of gravity and removes the fear of falling, allowing muscles we habitually hold in tension to be released. Rest is an important part of the learning, tired muscles only practice old habits instead of learning new options, and resting enables the body to process the information it gathers in the preceding movements. The movements are generally slow and gentle, with self-observation being more important than achievement of a move or posture.

To discover more about your pelvis try this;

Start by lying on the floor, as if tipped over from standing, arms and legs long, close your eyes and study your contact with the floor, which parts touch the ground, or don't, which are the heaviest or boniest, notice your arms and legs, which limb feels the longest, which the shortest? Which parts of your pelvis touch the ground most clearly? How much space is there between the floor and your lower back? Before you move note that if you feel pain at any time do less and go slower. The moves should be pleasurable and interesting not painful.

Now, bend your knees to the ceiling and stand on your feet. Slowly and gently, push your lower back to the ground and then lift it to increase the space, feel the pelvis tilt back and forth as you hollow and round your back, and feel how far through your body the movement travels, does it reach your ribs, shoulders, head, is your weight even in both feet? How do you breathe as you make this movement? Stop and

rest with your legs long. Imagine your pelvis is lying on a clock face and you have just been tilting it between 6 and 12 o'clock.

Next, bend your knees and stand your feet again. Now slowly rock the pelvis from left to right, from the 3 o'clock position to the 9. Keep the movement slow and feel if it moves more easily one way than the other? Rest again.

Making sure you rest regularly, start to explore the other hour positions around the clock face, move from 12 to 1, then from 12 to 1 to 2, then extend the movement around the clock face to 3 o'clock, then rest, and so on until you've checked out each position on the clock face.

Observe which places are clearer than others. When an hour is unclear do you go faster or slower? Try going round the clock face clockwise and anti-clock wise, and making the clock-face larger or smaller. Is one way easier than the other? Are the same places clear and unclear in both directions, or do they vary? Are there places where you breathe out and others where you breathe in?

Each time you stop and rest, rest with your legs long and feel if your contact with the ground is changing, does the ground feel softer and more forgiving? Is the space behind your lower back decreasing or increasing?

When you've finished your exploration, come slowly to sitting. You could try the same circling movement while sitting with your legs crossed, or the soles of your feet together and the clock-face on the floor. Then come to standing and just take time to feel your contact with the floor, the shape of your back, the width of your ribs, then how you move in walk. Next time you're in the saddle try the circling movement again and feel the effect on your contact through your seat bones.

Karin Major, Move To Improve, RWYM Coach & Student Feldenkrais Teacher
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For more information visit www.feldenkrais.co.uk



LESSON REVIEW

By Anine Swart, South Africa

My first RWYM lesson

From: RWYM@yahoogroups.com

Date: Wed, 26 Jan 2005 08:39:02 +0200

Subject: **newbie. first lesson: long!**

Hi everyone, just to tell you that it was with much apprehension and a fair amount of nerves that I had my first RWYM lesson with Jenny Bayley last Friday ;)

She started off by asking me what I wanted for myself and the horse from these lessons. I said "more impulsion, better position, more effective and efficient riding, more confidence for me".

She then had us walk, trot and canter on both reins to assess how Draco goes, how I ride, what my position is like.

I felt like I was riding in front of a grand jury which beautifully highlighted everything I do wrong when I'm tensed. Draco did his best hollow-backed, chin tucked, knee-lifty trot and his canter bordered on 4-beat he was sucking back so badly.



Draco pushes Anine back into his "mantrap"

Jenny made us halt and I thought "here it comes....". She said that my basic position was good (i had consciously been trying to mimic what the people in the 'essentials' book look like) but that a few things needed tweaking. I didn't have quite enough bend in my knee so my ankle bone wasn't quite aligned with the top of my femur.

Right.. I do that and I feel like I'm going to fall over onto my nose.

Step two. my knees are nowhere near the saddle! I try and wrap my legs round Draco's very round barrel so my knees stick out like airplane wings. Jenny puts my knee and thigh into the right position and now my lower leg sticks out. I said that I felt very insecure, as if my base of support was now gone. She grinned beatifically and said "aaah, but your base of support should be your thighs, not your calves"

Right. I practice this in the walk and I feel very VERY strange..

On to trot and she immediately says I'm not rising 'forward enough'. I'm going up-down-up-down, straightening my knee. so I effectively come 'down' while Draco is still going forward, which is hampering his stride. Jenny halted us, grabbed my wrist and said 'go forward' while she pulled on my wrist. I try and go up but she had my wrist so I had to push my pelvis forward.

YES! she said..... now sit. She kept hold of my wrist so I couldn't physically move my upper body only with the pelvis. I was able to get the concept almost immediately and could re-produce it while Draco was standing still. HOWEVER, trotting was another matter. On the left rein I could do it but it took a lot of effort and she kept reminding me to go 'more forward!'.

I had Draco on a very loose contact and he immediately took longer strides. After about 10 minutes he even started offering a stretch over his back! Jenny had me describe how that felt which was extremely helpful for identifying when he's round over his back and when he's just tucking his chin.

On the right rein things went pear-shaped and I just could not get enough forward out of the rise. She halted me and explained how my seat-bones were not aligned correctly on the circle. On the left rein I do it correctly and automatically but on the right rein my seat bones stay the same.



Jenny gives Anine a briefing on steering from her seatbones

At first it just did not make sense to me why my inside seatbone should be more forward than my outside seatbone on the circle. I'd always been taught that your hips follow the horse's shoulders round the circle.

Jenny spent at least 20 minutes clarifying that, using various images until she and I were both totally sure that I grasped the concept.

I tried it very enthusiastically on the right rein and Draco went "wha???" and did a lovely leg yield. I toned it down a bit and with tremendous conscious effort I was able to keep Draco correctly bent and on the outside of the circle using only my seat.

Then she grabbed my hips and knees and showed me how to 'tighten my bolts'. I read the concept in the book but couldn't figure out how that was different from clenching my buttocks. She grabbed the tops of my hips and pressed them together. I was baffled. She then let go and I could feel what to do!



"That WOW feeling! The pay-off for good postural alignment in rider and horse"

It's more like it's the top of my inner thigh coming 'closer' to the horse. When I do the same with my thigh and knee I'm totally 'plugged in' which is a very weird but very secure feeling. I could feel his every move!

What I appreciate about Jenny is that she's inhumanly patient. She can explain things in a thousand different ways until you grasp the concept and she won't progress until we're both sure we totally understand the concept.

She's also very hands on. She'll grab, push, pull and manipulate you to illustrate a position and will then offer helpful hints on images and exercises that might help us understand. She's very lavish with praise. She'll let you know the instant you do something right.

I ached afterwards... but it was a Good Lesson :) I'll let you know how the next one goes Wish me luck ! Anine and Draco x

COURSE REVIEW

By Denise O'Reilly

Winter Back-Up for RWYM coaches .. February 2005

Ed here!

In the Winter, Mary goes off on a tour of countries offering plenty of sunshine instead of braving the Cotswold wind. Seems like a pretty damn clever strategy to me!

Luckily for us poor shivering suffering mortals there is help at hand. Anna Gordon-Redmond provides back-up and gets us out of our hibernating shells and out into the errrm ... cold!



Denise reviews the latest clinic for us.

"I thought my recent course at Overdale and the learning I gained from it was so inspirational that sharing my experience would hopefully help (or at least entertain!) others. I'll begin by introducing myself ...

Hello I'm Denise and I am a chronic RWYM-holic. I can't even claim to be recovering as I think I am probably more hooked now than I was when I started this 16 years ago.

Anna's winter back-up scheme to the rescue once more. It seems ages ago that I was at Teacher Training and I really needed help (and my fix)!

In a true Bridget Jones style here is a summary of the desperate state of affairs prior to the course":

- No of recent breakthroughs in my riding - nil
- No of frustrating failures to find the right 'feel' - numerous
- No of tolerant horses - 2
- No of husbands who wish I would stop asking him for feedback - 1
- No of husbands giving useful feedback - nil (usually limited to comments on the effectiveness of modern sports underwear)

- No of 'clean' flying changes left to right - nil
- Ability to hold Piper's reach & carriage into the change - apparently also nil

Now, if we are to think about layers of the onion, relating to the layers of learning required to 'crack' one biomechanical piece, I am probably the proud owner of a really prize specimen!

I find Anna showing me another layer of line up over my feet that I think gets closer to pinning me on this ever- troublesome issue than ever before. The difference that makes the difference? This came by changing my whole leg from the hip and feeling it really plugged in to it's new position at seatbone level. New -found power is suddenly there in my usually weak back-of-knee tendons.

Vertical is also not where I thought it was- I wish the person who finds it funny to keep shifting it would leave it alone!

At home without the help of Mary's mirrors I have to feel (in Anna's words) " as if I would fall off and land on my left boob!"(Husband might find feedback of this sort more interesting).

These new feels combined gave me the required response from Piper's back. We then tested it in the changes and half-passes. Left half- pass gets me 'water-ski-ing' off to the right and Anna walked with me holding me in the new position to give me a good reference feel.

I then found that it felt much more like suctioning his rib-cage to the left than pushing him across from my right seatbone/ leg. I kept up with him then, & could keep taking him to the end of the movement.

Other highlights of the course were keeping my new leg position in sitting trot and to some degree in transitions.

I also coached a little with Sam and Lise from Overdale Equestrian Centre. This keeps my eye sharp and almost always helps my understanding of riding at the higher levels. Of course having just been nailed on my leg position I felt duty bound to help Sam experience some of the same pain..... I'm not sure he has forgiven me yet!

I've been home for a week now and holding it together pretty well. There has been a big change in the quality of the way of going on both Piper & Jay.

I feel the competition bug beginning to bite and will let you know how we get on in the next newsletter. I'll sign off by summarising:

- No of riding breakthroughs - numerous
- No of happy relaxed horses - 2
- No of clean left to right changes - more than before!
- Ability to hold Piper's carriage - increasing
- Support from friends during course - greatly appreciated

Denise x x x



P.S. feedback no longer required from husband as horse very clear on the right vs. wrong way.

(Think the former misses the underwear bit..... !)

Denise and Piper strut their stuff at minus15 degrees. Denise in short cropped top (for hubby's benefit, obviously !)

MY DEMO EXPERIENCE

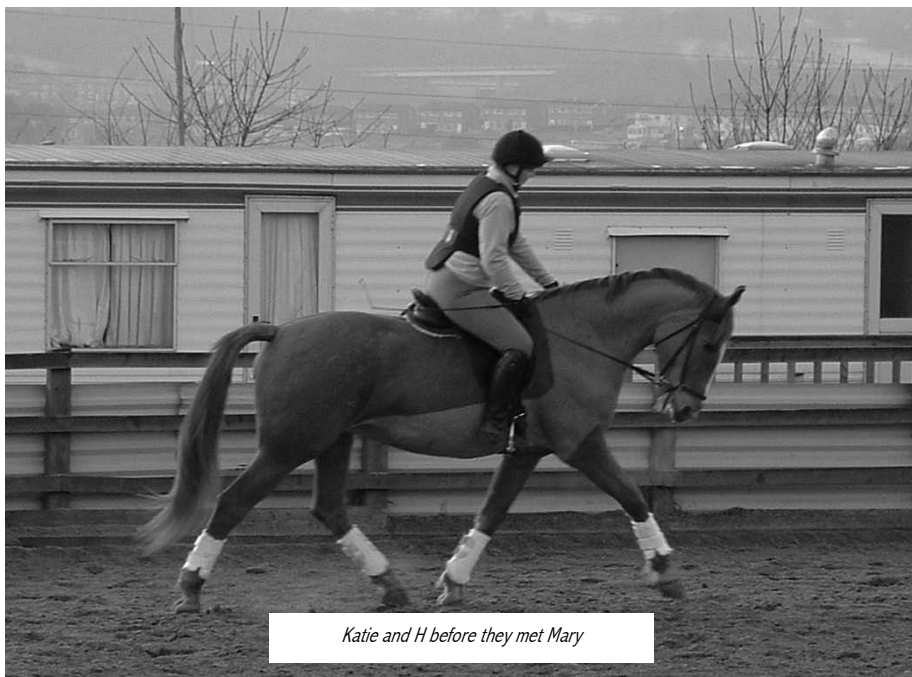
By Katie Loker

When Katie (and H) met Mary!

Have you ever considered applying to be a demo rider and just not had the courage? Read Katie's report and take heart !

However, I was soon feeling happy and relaxed and Mary, although analytical about my riding, was kind and sympathetic and her instructions came across clearly. She very quickly put me at ease.

more subtle and refined rider who was more aware of her body and how it affected the horse! Before being realigned by Mary, I was under the impression that my riding position was quite good!



Katie and H before they met Mary

Profile; Katie Loker
Riding "H" her 16.2hh Irish Sport Horse,
Chestnut Mare (10yo)

I have been an avid fan of Mary Wanless for many years and have enjoyed reading her Ride With Your Mind books. I am fortunate in that my instructor also values the RWYM theories and has actively encouraged me to train along these lines.

Being in awe of Mary as an author and trainer of top class and international riders, I was daunted when a mutual friend of myself and Mary suggested that I be a demo rider for the 2004 Tour. I knew that I had issues with my self-confidence, my mare's anxious behaviour and our relationship together, which Mary could help me with, but I was apprehensive about putting myself forward. Mary seemed so "far away" from myself as an ordinary, unaffiliated, every day rider... How wrong I was!

My experiences as a demo rider will stay with me forever. I expected to be over-awed by the audience and by riding in Mary's presence and more to the point being criticised by her.

Initially I thought that I was quite well-aligned and that Mary would simply be helping me progress my horse and build our relationship... How wrong I was *again!*

Once I had been realigned into the correct shoulder, hip, heel alignment, I felt all wrong! It was completely strange and alien to how I usually rode and I was shocked by the extraordinary feeling.

Every-thing was explained carefully and thoroughly and the more that we worked along the principles of being responsible for my body and being still and definite with my aids, my mare simply did as she was asked beneath me. I was transformed from being a "busy" rider, always nudging, squeezing, kicking or asking, to a

Whenever I looked at myself in a school mirror, I appeared to be in ear/hip/heel position. I was far from in balanced alignment though! My position consisted of "trying to be in line" but in an attempt to get the right "standing on the floor position" I had rotated my calves out, so that the back of the calf lay against the horse, my knee was away from the horse and I was leaning backwards! Any unsettling movement and my insecure heels swung forward, my middle acted like a pivot and my shoulders went back even further!

When Mary realigned me, she transformed how I actually sat on the horse. Mary asked me to open up my hips and rotate my thighs inwards, instead of outwards. Now my knees rested against the kneepads of the saddle and my heels pointed away from the horse! I was told to bring my navel/chest forwards and not just my shoulders and to bear down in order to hold this position.

At first I thought that the new position was madness and didn't know how on earth I would hold the position when the horse moved! However, Mary asked me to describe how this position felt and to give prompt words, which would trigger my memory and thereby allow me to put myself back into position should I lose it!



My Demo Experience, plus Thought Field Therapy

How we banned those nerves !

By Katie Loker and Jo Cooper

(Continued from previous page)

It was certainly strange to begin with, but Mary soon had me walking in position around the arena.

It became apparent that H, my mare, ambled along, instead of marching forwards, with me busting a gut to keep her walking. Mary taught me the “rip the sheets off her and get her out of bed” approach to wake her up! By giving her sharp slapping kicks and then not moving, H was told in no certain terms to walk and keep on walking, else she got another sharp slap! She soon got the message that we meant business and strode out for me!

I noticed that Before Mary, I was a very busy rider, always kicking (with my kicking leg, which struggled to keep still because I was so unbalanced!) and my hands were forever correcting or asking for something and were rarely still! After Mary, I did far less, I kicked once to ask, and then remained still. It was H who did all of the work!

TFT & Me: Katie Loker

I have had to overcome major confidence issues having had a serious riding accident in the past. I have a good instructor who has helped me but for some reason, the fears kept reappearing and each time, I found it harder to overcome! I got into a downward spiral of confidence with H; the more scared I became the more she napped, the more she napped, the more scared I got... and each time it got worse and became more of an ordeal.

I had been reading about TFT (Thought Field Therapy) and had spoken to friends who had successfully had it. It all sounded like complete nonsense, but being on the verge of giving up riding, I chose to make the call to Jo Cooper to see if she could help me. TFT consists of tapping your body in sequence on special points, thinking about your fear and scoring your fear from one to ten – It is a fantastic concept, which sounds completely bizarre but it really does work!

It took a lot of delving about to discover exactly what my fears were but eventually, by discussing all aspects of riding and competing, we found them and after tapping for them, my fears simply disappeared!

After my first session, I was extremely dubious as to whether or not the tapping would have worked, however I needn't have worried, it felt like a breath of fresh air cantering around the arena the next evening!



Shoulder/Hip/Heel “Madness” ... but H most definitely approves !

I certainly couldn't have been a demo rider had I not had TFT - I know deep down that I wouldn't be riding at all!

When I was chosen to be a demo rider, the evening before the event, Jo talked me through all aspects of being a demo rider, from riding in front of a crowd, being criticised, the feeling of embarrassment, everything – and when I rode into the arena, in front of Mary and the audience, I felt proud to be there rather than apprehensive!

I am now looking forward to spending a weekend with Mary to further improve upon my position and my mare's responses. To anyone considering being a demo rider, I couldn't recommend it enough!

It is neither frightening nor humiliating, but on the contrary, it was the most fascinating and inspirational evening I have ever had! Katie xx

TFT—A new way to banish fears and boost your confidence, Jo Cooper explains

TFT (Thought Field Therapy) is so unusual that even its founder, a clinical psychologist, wrote that his initial discovery appeared ‘to make no sense whatsoever’ but went on to say that it was the most powerful therapy he had used in his forty years of practice.

Basically, TFT involves tapping yourself with your fingertips on

specific sequences of energy points on the face, hands and upper body. It is simple, painless and is done fully clothed.

Although it seems a strange way of dealing with emotional problems the results are frequently amazing as fear, trauma and phobias can disappear in one or two sessions. You can use TFT to boost your confidence and it can work very well for your horse too.

One of the myths that is present in the horse world is that ‘everyone else is a confident rider’ and that

they would not understand how anyone could be nervous, let alone terrified! If nervous riders only had the confidence to talk more openly they would find that far from being alone, many riders suffer from fears and anxieties.

Some of the most common are fears related to accidents, anxieties about canter and canter transitions, hacking, jumping, riding in specific locations such as an arena, fields, lanes, roads, and fears of spooking, bucking, rearing and bolting.

Lots of riders have anxieties about riding in front of other people, and especially about competing.

TFT can help with all of these as well as being useful to boost confidence generally. You can find out more about TFT on the internet—the founder's web site is at www.tftx.com.

I work by telephone and you can contact me on 0116 299 1081, by email at jo@jo-cooper.com and via www.jo-cooper.com.

MARY WANLESS 2005 LIVE

Wednesday 16 th March	Hadlow College EC, Kent
Thursday 17 th March	Brooksby Melton College EC, Leicester
Friday 18 th March	Solihull RC, Birmingham
Wednesday 30 th March	Merrist Wood College, Guildford
Thursday 31 st March	The Hand EC, Bristol
Friday 1 st April	Patchetts EC, Watford
Tuesday 5 th April	Bishop Burton College, East Yorkshire
Wednesday 6 th April	Osbaldeston RC, Lancs
Thursday 7 th April	Southview EC, Cheshire
Friday 8 th April	Jumps EC, Carlisle, Glasgow

VITAL – INDISPENSABLE – ESSENTIAL

Celebrated author of 5 books, Mary's pioneering techniques have proved central to riders across the globe from novice to Olympic standard.

"I feel I've been given the key that I've been searching for for years" RM

"I fully recommend Mary Wanless' teaching techniques to anyone who really wants to understand and ride with their mind" Kyra Kyrklund (Author, Olympic rider & trainer)

"I am getting the collection that has eluded me for so long" Sandy Howard (Ex Olympic Dressage rider)

Are you ready for your riding evolution?

This could be the most transformational riding lesson you will ever have!

HOW TO BUY YOUR TICKETS

Advance Ticket Prices: Adult Tickets £17.50, Junior Tickets £12.50

Tickets, if available, will be sold on the door, at £20. Sorry no credit cards.

Please write with details of **which demonstration** you wish to attend and the number of tickets you require. Make cheques payable to **Mary Wanless Demos** and send with an **SAE to Postal**

Address: MWD @ Dido Fisher, 5 Albert Mansions, Church Rd, Hove, BN3 2FS

Doors open at 7pm and demonstrations start at 7.30pm.

If you would like to be a **demonstration rider**, send recent photo & phone number & sae to: Mary Wanless, 1 Burtons Bank, Church Westcote, Nr. Chipping Norton, Oxon, OX7 6SE.

For ticket sales enquiries please call 01273 736083 (sorry no credit cards)

or visit www.mary-wanless.com

ELITE RIDER PROFILE

By Mary Wanless and Heather Blitz

Heather Blitz, international dressage rider

No mistaking it! Top riders also apply RWYM to their training philosophies. In this edition we asked Mary Wanless and Heather Blitz from USA to tell us more about how they work together.



Heather and her stallion Rambo

Mary Wanless explains how she met Heather. "Heather Blitz is probably the most accomplished rider I have taught, or at least the person who is currently the most highly rated as a rider. Heather is a rider with gold, silver and bronze USDF medals and Grand Prix champion several years running in the USA. We have worked together now for about ten years, with her attending one or two clinics per year in Louisiana.

Heather and I first met after her pupil Leslie (who is a far-sighted, go-getting, lots-of-fun kind of person) organised for a bunch of Heather's pupils to send her to a teacher training course in California. On that course I noticed an attractive young woman who sat at the back and said nothing (which is rare for Americans!).

I tell the story of her first lesson in "For the Good of the Rider" on page 46, under the heading 'Hunt the right feeling'. Heather is called Jackie, and it was Leslie (of course) who added the comment 'And may all your rides be weird.' From that beginning Heather and I have gone from strength to strength, and now when I go into an arena for her lesson, I always say a prayer that I will still have something to offer her. But as she says, the flaws I see now may be slight, but the fixes are fantastically far reaching. They are just as profound as those original changes that stopped her growing up tall.

Heather tells how it all started; I started riding at the age of 5 and can't remember ever stopping. I grew up in the heartland of the US where western was by far the prevalent style of riding.

Although I was influenced by my mother who had English riding in her back ground, I resorted to barrel racing, pole bending and other western events as a way to go out and do something with my horses.

When I went off to college at Colorado State University, I began to take dressage lessons on my western horse. That was a limited endeavor as you might imagine, so I ended up with Gershwin, my first warmblood soon thereafter. He was a mess and half price because of it. A talented horse who could be fancy and do movements but with no basics or quality. So we progressed through lessons with various instructors and made moderate progress.

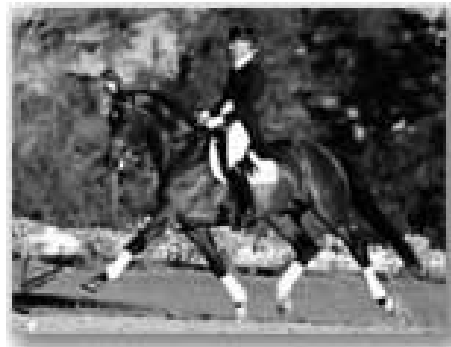
After graduating from college, I took a job managing a barn for someone who had some very nice dressage horses. They competed on the major show circuit in south Florida, and one of them went to the Olympics at Barcelona soon after I started. It was quite an experience being exposed to that quality and intensity. After a couple years there, I moved to Louisiana.

There, I gathered quite a following of faithful students and one of them saw Mary Wanless in St. Louis, Missouri giving a lecture at one of our dressage conventions. My student was very impressed and wanted more! So she and about 15 of my students pooled together enough money to fund a trip for me to attend a teacher training course.

After that, I had huge amounts of new success in my teaching that I had not attained before meeting Mary. I taught for at least another year before I got to ride with her myself. I figured I had things sorted out for myself as I had done for my students but boy was I wrong! Mary shortened my stirrups, compacted my stretched upper body, toned up my thighs and had me bearing down like crazy all in one half hour! From that point on, it has just gotten better and better.

I give Mary so much of the credit for me getting where I am today. I honestly feel I never would have gotten here without her or if I did, it would have been when I was 80!

I have become successful in highly competitive dressage in the US. My BCM world ranking has been as high as 84th with the stallion Rambo, and we were on the Olympic long list for two years.



Heather in action, elegant and effective

Last summer I qualified Arabella, a horse that I both backed and trained, for the US Intermediare championships in California. Only the top 12 horses in the country are invited. We ended up fifth overall and Arabella was one of the only two 8 year olds there. Arabella and I are now placed on the United States Equestrian Federation Developing Horse and Rider List which means we are invited to training sessions given by our Olympic team coach Klaus Balkenhol.



The gorgeous Arabella!

The higher I get in my riding, the more useful Mary's research on biomechanics becomes. It is one thing to get things sorted out for lower levels but a much more difficult thing to have it all right enough to do Grand Prix. With out her, I know I would have been just another rider.

Heather Blitz www.heatherblitzdressage.com

FOR THE GOOD OF THE HORSE

Why does my horse ...shake his head?

By Belinda Murphey

Osteomyology: the solution for Headshakers and other Problem horses?



Belinda Murphey is an Osteomyologist with a Biochemistry/Toxicology degree and numerous diplomas in Complementary therapies, including Osteopathy and Cranial Osteopathy.

Belinda has been successfully treating headshakers for eighteen years.

“There is a myriad of factors contributing to the Headshaking Phenomenon”, declares Belinda, “

However, the cornerstone of it all is the diet; digestion is closely linked to immune function and viability. It is therefore imperative to get the diet right. The one thing they all have in common is that they are all talented, generous and intelligent (OK three things) and are demonstrating to their caretakers that something is fundamentally wrong, in the least antisocial way possible”.

Headshaking is often considered an allergy-related problem, however, this is just a symptom and indicative of a fundamental breakdown in the immune system. The Headshaking Phenomenon is extremely distressing for both horse and caretaker alike.

The horse becomes completely obsessed with the irritation in his/her nose and/or face, wanting to constantly rub the nose and face on the leg or the ground and often bringing the knee up to meet the nose, which often unbalances the horse to the point of falling over.

Some horses will bury their heads in water troughs, some are only seasonal, others are affected by the weather or amount of sunshine. Other horses may desist entirely when moved to a different part of the country or to different owners!

Similarly, horses that have never exhibited before may suddenly start when moved. Caretakers are aware that they have a very special horse and are perplexed as to a way forward as reprimanding makes it worse and being soothing has no effect whatsoever!

Belinda's 17.2hh thoroughbred, E.T., who is now 25 years old, has been her R&D man for the last 18 years. “One handful of the wrong food would set him off headshaking again and would take 10 days to clear”.

It became apparent for ET and other headshakers that a combination of Simple System's unmolassed alfalfa, Partial Eclipse and Multigerm supplied the condition and energy without the spookiness and moreover helped to eliminate the headshaking”.

Belinda has been successfully treating headshakers individually up and down the country and also abroad but has found the distances restrictive in relation to how many horses can be seen. Finally she has found a yard that is sympathetic and complementary to her needs and not too far from home.

Suzanne Marshall of Friday Fields, whose yard was winner of the 2002 Livery Yard of the Year for the South East, holds the Monty Roberts Preliminary Certificate of Horsemanship and is a Recommended Associate for Kelly Marks Intelligent Horsemanship. Belinda and Suzanne have joined forces to enable horses suffering from Headshaking Syndrome. Their system allows the horses to be treated on a continual basis yet sent home with a regime that will enable these horses to achieve their true potential.

As well as changing the diet, other factors include intolerance to various pharmacological products, musculoskeletal lesions, foot imbalances, tack problems, hormonal and emotional challenges, digestive disturbances and dental difficulties.

Each headshaker may involve several or all of these factors in varying degrees. Therefore by having the horse on site each factor can be dealt with more efficiently and quickly.

If you have a horse displaying similar symptoms and would like to get help, please contact either

Suzanne Marshall c/o
fridayfield@hotmail.com T: 01634 386 801
or Belinda Murphey c/o
Belinda@beldomane.co.uk

READERS POSTBAG



WHAT IS A SAFE HORSE?

At the Association of British Riding Schools Conference in 2003 I asked the question "What is a safe horse?" in the hope of engendering some debate.

Riding school proprietors are under pressure from their insurance companies to make riding as 'safe' as possible, But we have the only sport where the equipment (the horse) must somehow make up or overlook the deficiencies of the participant. Imagine 'safe' skis or a 'safe' bicycle-stabilisers perhaps?

'Safe' is a difficult concept since over-worked, under-fed, weak or arthritic animals may appear to be 'safe'. However they are, at best, faulty equipment (beyond the ethical considerations).

My question was a difficult one -but I intended it to be. As a Riding School proprietor and teacher of 30 years experience I am increasingly exasperated by the number of experienced beginners I encounter. They have learned nothing of the skill of riding but have many horse hours under their belts and any horse that behaves in a normal way terrifies them! WHA T have they been riding?

Through the work of people like Mary Wanless, we can now 'Fast Track' riders to higher skill levels but because of fear of litigation we are under pressure to 'Dumb Down' our sport! ~ What do the other R WYM Coaches/Riders think?

p .s I still haven't got an answer from the ABRS !
Carol Boulton
RWYM Coach and RidingSchool Proprietor

WINTER BACKUP TEACHER TRAINING .

I would like to say a heart felt thank you to Anna Gordon-Redmond for setting up the Winter Backup Teacher Training over the last few years. They have given me a wealth of knowledge from Equine/Human Anatomy to being able to ride and coach late:ral work. The WBTT also gives me inspiration at the hardest time of year, a 'reality check' of where I am at in my riding/coaching and where I go from there. I am grateful for the extra opportunities to learn more about subjects that interest me and subjects that I would not normally have the chance to break into. I know that I am not the only person who is grateful to Anna for the work that she puts into the courses and the experience that she has provided.

THANKS ANNA! !

Verity Tidmarsh.

LAUGH OUT LOUD !

Editor's Choice

Top exercises (from TOP EXPERTS) to become a better horseperson

1. Drop a heavy steel object on your foot. Don't pick it up right away. Shout, "Get off, Stupid, GET OFF!"
2. Leap out of a moving vehicle and practice "relaxing into the fall." Roll lithely into a ball and spring to your feet.
3. Learn to grab your chequebook out of your purse and write out a £200 cheque without even looking down.
4. Jog long distances carrying a head collar and a carrot. Go ahead and tell the neighbours what you are doing - they might as well know now.
5. Affix a pair of reins to a moving train and practice pulling to a halt. Smile as if you are having fun.
6. Hone your fibbing skills: "See darling, moving hay bales is FUN!" and "No, really, I'm glad your lucky performance and multi-million pound horse won the blue ribbon. I am just thankful that my hard work and actual ability won me second place." "No sweetie, I didn't buy a thing at the tack shop sale".
7. Practice dialling your chiropractor's number with both arms paralysed to the shoulder and one foot anchoring the lead rope of a frisky horse.
8. Lie face down in a puddle of mud in your most expensive riding clothes and repeat to yourself, "This is a learning experience, this is a learning experience, this is ..."
9. When all else fails, marry money!

Thought for the Day;

"LIFE IS NOT A JOURNEY TO THE GRAVE WITH THE INTENTION OF ARRIVING SAFELY IN A PRETTY AND WELL PRESERVED BODY, BUT RATHER TO SKID IN BROADSIDE, THOROUGHLY USED UP, TOTALLY WORN OUT, AND LOUDLY PROCLAIMING:

....WOW.... WHAT A RIDE !!!"

"Bombproof Your Horse" wins title fight

John Ezard , Friday January 21, 2005
The Guardian

Rick Pelicano and Lauren Tjaden's extremely serious manual on how to *Bombproof Your Horse* is today hailed as runaway winner of the prize for the oddest book title of the past year.

It takes what the Bookseller magazine describes as a staggering 46% of the vote in a poll of publishers and booksellers.

Runners-up in a shortlisted international field of six are *Detecting Foreign Bodies in Food*, with 27%, followed by *The Aesthetics of the Japanese Lunchbox*, with 15%.

The British-based Diagram prize - a magnum of champagne awarded by the Bookseller since 1978 - reflects the book trade's unceasing bafflement and delight at the highly specialised titles which some of its members in Britain and further afield produce.

The winner's dustjacket says it teaches riders how to stop horses bucking, baulking, bolting or wheeling around when sudden noises or sights frighten them. Regarded as a "solid" title selling about 400 copies a month, it is published by the equestrian publisher JA Allen.

Detecting Foreign Bodies in Food comes from the British firm of Woodhead Publishing in Cambridge and *The Aesthetics of the Japanese Lunchbox* from the US MIT Press.

Also on the 2004 shortlist were *Applications of High Tech Squids* (VCH Verlagsgesellschaft), *Equids in Time and Space* (Oxbow Books) and *Sexual Health at Your Fingertips* (Class Publishing).

Another publication, "*When Horses Reveal Themselves*" was a likely contender for glory



The Bookseller discloses that another JA Allen title advertised before publication, *When Horses Reveal Themselves*, was a likely contender for glory.

Sadly, at the last minute, the title was changed to the slightly less odd *What Horses Reveal*.

Bombproof Your Horse joins a gallery of past winners which ranges from *Proceedings of the Second International Workshop on Nude Mice*, *Oral Sadism* and *the Vegetarian Personality*, *How to Avoid Huge Ships*, *227 Secrets Your Snake Wants You to Know*, *Celtic Sex Magic: For Couples, Groups and Solitary Practitioners*, *Design for Impact: 50 Years of Airline Safety Cards*, and *Hot Topics in Urology*.

With nominations from all over the world, the contest is so popular that publishers have started choosing titles in the hope of winning it. The magazine rebukes them with the words, "There were too many self-consciously titled entries - presumably in a bid to emulate the 2003 champion, *Big Book of Lesbian Horse Stories*".

A horse walks into a bar, orders an orange juice, sits down at one of the tables, and starts reading his paper.

The waiter is a bit shocked by all this, but pours the orange juice, and brings it over to the horse, who hands him a ten pound note for it. Now the barman figures the horse isn't that bright, so he decides to pull the old 'short-change' trick on him. He duly goes back to the horse with one pound. The horse doesn't say a word. The horse eventually finishes his drink and goes up to the bar to order another. Says the bartender to him, "Y'know, we don't get many talking and reading horses in here."

To which the horse replies, "At nine pounds for an orange juice I'm not surprised!"

And finally the Cheesiest Joke of the Day goes to ... Which TV Soap would your horse prefer to watch ... ? well, NEIGHBOURS, of course !!

COMPETITIONS and OFFERS

D'ye geddit?

Attention all you budding journalists out there ...

A beautiful polo shirt is being offered as a prize for the best article submitted to the next issue of Network News.

The article must be based around a riding insight/experience of 'getting it' at any level. It should be between 500-1000 words.

- 1st Prize, polo shirt with embroidered RWYM logo
- Runner-up prize RWYM baseball cap

Please send your contributions to:
The Editor, "Getting It Competition", Network News, Appletree Cottage, Cat Street, East Hendred, Wantage, Oxon OX12 8JT
Email:
Elaine.butler1@btinternet.com

Free Business Advertising for Members

A further advantage of subscribing to the full version of Network News (apart from all the great articles and offers etc.) is that you can have free personal classified advertising.

For a limited period only we are also offering one free business advert for every member who writes a short feature article for the newsletter.

What you write about must be equestrian-related and either a) newsworthy b) practical or c) inspiring!

It could be a story about you, your horse, an experience, a review. Tell us about your progress, your business, your challenges, your solutions, we want to hear from you!

Please send your contributions together with your advertisement to

The Editor, "Contributions and Classifieds", address as before (see left).

FUN CAPTION COMPETITION



Hmmm, I wonder Could this be a horse-whisperer in the making ?

Send your wittiest captions to the Editor, the best ones will be published in the next newsletter.

Answers on a postcard or in an email please !

STOP PRESS....

Members also receive £5 off RWYM polo shirts purchased during April!

MARY WANLESS 2005 - UK CLINICS

RWYM CLINIC DATES UK		
INTENSIVE MOUNTED 2005	2 Day Weekend	4 Day
Arrive 5-6pm:	Friday Evening	Monday Evening
Leave Approx 5pm:	Sunday Evening	Friday Evening
Cost with Own Horse	£210	£380
Cost without Own Horse	£250	£470
Extra Night of Stabling if doing 6 days		£20
Dates:		11th – 15th April
		25th – 29th April
These dates are consecutive, and can	27th – 29th May	30th May – 3rd June
be combined to give a six day course.	24th – 26th June	27th June – 1st July
	22nd – 24th July	25th – 29th July
	19th – 21st August	23rd – 26th August
		5th – 9th September
		19th – 23rd September

Extra lessons are sometimes available on the Friday or Monday of arrival:

45min private £50, pairs for one hour £40.

If we provide a horse, add £8.00 to each of the above.

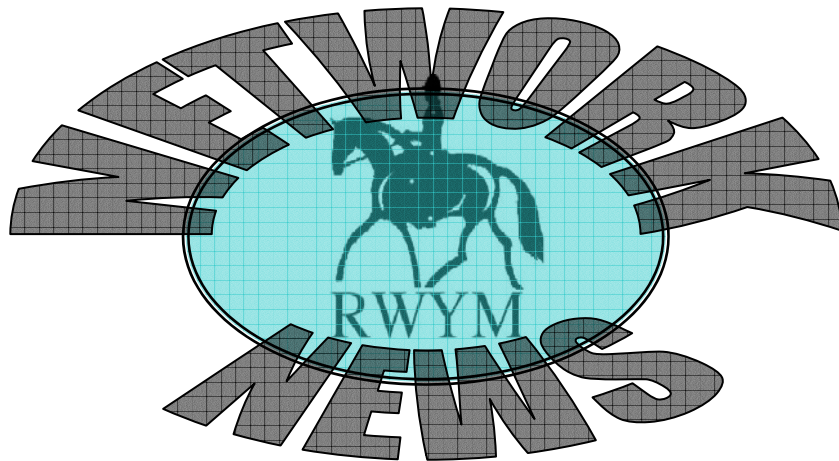
DISMOUNTED WORKSHOP	Basic Weekend (£130)	23rd – 24th April
10am-5pm Sat, 9am-4pm Sun	Advanced Weekend (£130)	17th – 18th September

TEACHER TRAINING	Orientation Day for New-comers (£65)	27th September
9am-5.30pm	Basic Course (£195)	28th – 30th September
Same price with/without horse	Advanced Course (£195)	3rd – 5th October
See separate notes	Professional Peer Group (Invite Only)	6th October

Please note; this Newsletter is an extract from the more comprehensive Network News which is subscription only.

The expanded version has *even more* articles, features, fun and offers.

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- Free advertising for members... and some good jokes!
-
- Be part of an expanding network that can support you, encourage you, add some additional learning, and keep you abreast of the latest developments in the field!



Special Offer for 2005....

By post £16 p.a.

By email (PDF file) £12 p.a.

Membership entitles you to:

Ride With Your Mind Network News, sent to you on paper or by e-mail (as a pdf file) 4 times/year.

This includes:

- Articles by the leading coaches in this and related fields.
- Letters and tips from learning riders at all stages.
- Equestrian Book/DVD/video reviews.
- Profiles of the leading thinkers in the horse world, clinic reviews, etc.

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