



# Riding Centre Updates

## Issue #14

## March 2019

### NOT JUST ANY RIDING SCHOOL...

Spring!! It's almost here :)

When the seasons start to change, it's a great time to reflect on all of our successes and challenges over the last couple of months. What did you accomplish in the Winter? Are you closer to that 2019 goal? Our horses don't make goals but they do change over the year. They shed their coats, their muscles change and they start to feel good about moving around and playing. Have a read and think about what you are going to be focusing on for the next season.

#### NEW!

#### Helmet covers for rent

We all know that wearing something underneath your helmet will change it's fit and change the way it keeps you safe. So what about something that you can wear over your helmet?

For just **\$1.00** you can rent a helmet cover for those cold walks to/from the paddocks. Keep those ears warm while still keeping your fit secure.

Talk to Justine if you would like to rent a cover for your helmet. If you are thinking of purchasing a cover instead, we have extras. Helmet covers are \$20 when you purchase them from Alborak.



We would like to thank [The Horse Store](#) for providing us with this item at a discounted price.

#### Coaching Tip:

#### Straight Horse vs. Straight Line

Equestrians learn skills in stages or levels. We think about the basics being: position, go, whoa and steer. So when do we start thinking about how the horse is going? At what point can we start to tap into the 'feel'? Why not NOW!

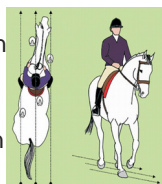
To ride a horse on a straight line takes very good planning, focus and follow through. To ride a straight horse takes it one step further.

To 'feel' the horse's body underneath us we can close our eyes or use visualization. We can see straightness, in the beginning,

by looking down at the horse's neck. We can use the mirrors to see if our horse looks straight as well. But why is this important?

Imagine that you always walked, ran or jumped with your hip out to the left. What would happen to your body over time? Would your knees start to hurt, would you develop muscles unevenly? Would you be able to build strength to jump higher or run faster? Probably, but it might result in injury or an overall unbalanced body.

So the next challenge is: can you ride a straight line with a straight horse? It's harder than you think!



#### Review: Taking off the Bridle

*Did you know...* horses are creatures of habit with amazing memories.

The Riding School horses have a very unique job. They are handled by various people with a wide range of horsemanship knowledge. They are special because of their forgiving nature and their ability to cope with our imperfections. That is what makes them priceless!

One way that we can help the horses is by using the same method of doing things. For example: we all use the word 'whoa' to make them stop.

Let's take a moment to learn a method that all rider's should be using so that the horse will know what is expected and they can stay relaxed:

1. Unfasten the noseband and the throatlatch
2. Put your left hand on the horse's face well above the nostrils. With your right hand, slip the headpiece over the ears and lower it SLOWLY allowing the horse to ease the bit out of his mouth. If the bit drops out quickly, he may throw his head and frighten himself by catching it on his teeth. OUCH!

*(info provided by Pony Club: "The manual of Horsemanship" 14<sup>th</sup> edition)*

### THINK SMART; THINK SAFE

**TIP:** Use a step stool if you have trouble reaching the head. It's better to be taller if the horse pulls his head up when unbridling. This will help prevent him from hitting his teeth with the bit.

**REMEMBER:** Asking for help is encouraged. Always seek advice from your instructor or the program coordinator if your horse is showing unusual habits. Even an older horse can develop new 'bad' habits.

#### Importance of Continuing Education: The Instructor's Side

A master horse person will never really know EVERYTHING about horses. Horses are individuals, and unique. On the other side of that coin so are riding students!

Certified horseback riding instructors must continue to learn in order to stay current. They need to read, watch and attend seminars that will help not only them but also their students.

The certified instructors at Alborak have and continue to experience various learning opportunities, such as:

- auditing other coaches during clinics and lessons
- participating in educational sessions at veterinarian clinics
- taking online courses to learn more about horse and human health
- meeting bi-monthly to discuss the successes and challenges of the Alborak Riding School program

**You see, they work just as hard as you!**

#### REMINDERS

Summer Camp registrations OPENS  
February 19, 2019

Spring Session: April 15 – June 23, 2019

The Pilot Project for Adult Lessons Starts  
April 10, 2019

Centered Riding Clinic: April 13/14, 2019  
Participating Auditors are ONLY \$10