

SHERYL LYNDE & RICK HOFFMAN FOUNDATION TO FINISH TRAINING

Hello Everyone

JIGGING ON THE TRAIL



My horse Lil Joe was the best at this - He would jig if he couldn't be in front, he would jig if he couldn't see the other horses, he would jig if we were pointed home - He would jig, jig, jig. Didn't always know where he was going but he just knew he had to get there in a hurry.

We've spent a lot of riding hours working on this and it does pay off in the end. The work doesn't start on the trail but in the arena.

I think the trail is a great place to get your horse broke - stepping over logs, crossing water, overcoming fear of things popping out on the trail - etc. I've spent a lot of time on Lil Joe in the mountains of Colorado and that had a huge impact on his training. However, I think the arena is just as important in shaping the skills of the rider. In the arena you have to use your seat and legs - instead of the trail guiding your horse - you have to do the work.

So I start in the arena - I make sure I have a soft and responsive horse - that I have control of the 5 body parts, the head, neck, shoulder, barrel and hindquarters with no resistance. I can lope on each lead at the speed I have asked for and I can stop by using my seat and legs. He gives to the bit without throwing his head, I can move his shoulders over and disengage his hips at a walk, trot and lope and I have a nice back up without them dragging their feet.

Now its time for trail. We pick a trail that is wide open with plenty of room to work. If your horse starts to jig, instead of just getting greedy with the reins and holding on to his mouth - let go - allow that energy to move - just put it to work. You need to change his mind from wanting to jig to wanting to walk and to do that - you have to make jigging a lot of work. Work him around bushes and trees - ask him to put that energy into backing up and then roll him out of it - always giving him back the reins - allow him to make the mistake. If he takes off jigging again - put him back to work - do 1-2-3 stops - go three paces and stop - 3 paces and stop - and again and again. The stop is only for a second or so. If he wants to be up front - drive him up front and make him work then take him back behind the other horses and let him walk - if he starts to jig again - drive him up front again. The work has to be work - there has to be a noticeable difference in energy spent from walking to work. He has to think about jigging - then change his mind because he knows it would be way toooooo much work - its easier just to walk.

JIGGING ON THE TRAIL CONTINUED.....

Upcoming Events

Rider Confidence Clinic

Limited to 8 riders

Sept 3, 4, and 5

Trailhead Ranch - Anza



Here is Rick on Indy - a 3 year old gelding that came to us for training. We started him and now its time for his first trail ride. This is a lot of horse with a lot of energy - so Rick is taking that energy and working him up and down the ledges of the river bed, around bushes and trees - as well as working him around the other horses he wants to be around - he is putting him to work. When he is ready to rest - Rick will let him rest and think about it. By the time we were headed back to the trailer - he was walking. Notice the loose reins.

In the case of Lil Joe - there were times that when we headed back to the trailer he was still full of energy - soooo - when we loaded up and got home - I took him back to the arena and worked him there - we loped and loped and loped until he wanted to walk. This made a huge difference. It got to the point when we were out on trail and we were headed home - he was walking so slow I thought we'd never get home. Depending on how strong the behavior is will depend on the amount of maintenance needed to keep it in check.

When we were invited to Reed Valley Ranch to help with the Best of American by Horseback Ride - I took Lil Joe for a couple of the rides. There were about 40 riders. I worked him in the arena prior to the first ride - he was a peach that day. The last ride - I skipped the work out before we left and the jigging surfaced again. So I took him away from the riders and worked him all the way back - we backed up and did roll backs, we sidepassed - I worked on getting his head low - he was wanting to throw it - we worked all the way back and when we got back I worked him again in the arena. I changed out bits to see if that was why he was throwing his head and the tossing stopped. His training is a priority to me - it takes extra time but it pays off. With a bigger ride like this with so many riders - a little extra time in preparation makes for a great ride. Practice doesn't make perfect - Perfect Practice makes perfect.



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