



Dancing Horse Farm

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A premium care equine facility dedicated to providing an environment of safety, health, happiness, and education for human and horse.

"Dare to Dream"

A Blast of Bolton

In spite of the frigid temperatures, no one backed down from ride times or the thrill of a Bolton Challenge. The hot tea and cocoa warmed everyone's body and soul. On Sunday Jen and Lenny were gracious enough to turn on the heaters to keep spectators warm!

Joan's talent is in the calculation of an individual set of guidelines or program for each horse and rider to follow. She seems to do this effortlessly and indeed flawlessly.

Some of the teams had a "Cone Exercise" to implement in their training regimen. This exercise is designed for horses who like to hang on the bit, "run away" at any gate, or resist being supple. The Cone Exercise resembles a turn-on-the-shoulders/shoulder turns. While using the inside seat and leg, catching with outside seat, leg, and tricep, the rider gently moves the horse around the cone about a quarter of a turn and then walks or trots away. This allows the horse to softly come from behind in the hindquarters into the bridle. It will allow the horse to not escape through the front end but still keep him working off the hind. The horses who performed this exercise became supple and together within a few minutes. They discovered their hind legs!

Next came the "Sliding Scale", a series of intermittent half halts using the rider's thighs and triceps to regulate the horses feel on the bit and to keep the stride even. The scale is rated from one to ten (ten being the strongest half halt). When the horse responds, the rider can release to a one-two-three-or even a seven. It all depends on the day; the precise moment and can also change minute by minute. The half halts change constantly as does the scale. Again, it all depends on the horse. As all riders know, the horse is constantly changing. It only makes sense to change the intensity of the aids – in this case, the half halts and releases. This exercise will help keep consistency of gaits and roundness of the neck.

As Joan said: *"There is no one formula to go by to fix the horse. It is a combination of things. Moment by moment, Minute by minute....."*

Hope this helps your next ride. As always, ask your trainer if you need help in understanding these exercises. If you rode in the clinic, make sure to share your Aha! Moments and goals for the season. Jen will be anxiously awaiting your feedback!