



The Equine Touch

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Hi everyone,
"Going the distance" seems to be the theme this issue both metaphorically & literally. Jock & Ivana have travelled long distances for many years to bring Equine Touch to this & numerous other countries; Students have travelled from interstate to complete Level 2 in Victoria and braved the cold of NZ South Island for Level 1; Victorian ET student & endurance rider has travelled to NSW to participate in a 400 km ride! - and I tagged along to work on her horse. Have you also lasted the distance of the cold wet winter?

Keep in touch.

Janis, Ed

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The Equine Touch™— Australia and New Zealand Newsletter

Volume 1 Issue 8

August 2010

Going the Distance: 30th *Shahzada* 23-27 August, 2010

by Janis Hobbs

What a drama filled week! They call it "The ultimate test". The Shahzada is a Marathon Endurance Test, founded by Halifax Hayes who passed away since the last Shahzada. It's a mammoth endurance ride. 400 kilometers in 5 days. That's 80 km per day in two legs or stages with the course open from 4.00 am to 5.00 pm daily. Not the same intensity as the 160 km in 24 hours (5 stages,) for the Tom Quilty Gold Cup Challenge but it has an atmosphere all its own. The excitement builds stage by stage, day by day over the whole 5 days. Accompanying Wendy Bootle (Vic) & Blue Bopp as a rookie strapper also offering ET & VHT support, I had the opportunity to share in this adventure. Wendy & Blue Bopp have made the 2-3 day pilgrimage to St Albans, NSW (in the hills a little north west of Sydney) several times before.

Pre-ride vetting and vetting after every stage is where the horses are assessed as to their fitness to continue. Riders collect their time slips as they return to base camp after every stage and have 30 valuable minutes to attend to their horse's needs and prepare them for presentation to the vets. In Blue Bopp's case this "strapping" often included some Equine Touch as well as him being ETed at day's end to help him rest well & restore in preparation for the next day's challenges.

Those who withdraw or vet out deal with their disappointment in a philosophical way and stick around to cheer on or assist the rest of the contenders still pitting themselves and their horses against the stunningly beautiful and rugged natural setting consisting of rough sandstone ridges covered with tenacious trees and delicate wildflowers. Enthusiastic spectators trek out to perch on rocks alongside the track and encourage riders & horses as they negotiate the tricky terrain. "Sort that out, Blue." " He's already got it sorted!"

The finale is played out in a public setting with spectators lining both sides of the area designated for the last of ten trot outs, this time before a panel of 3 vets. In a way it reminded me of the coliseum of Rome with the "life or death" ("buckle or no buckle") riding on the thumbs up or down decision of the vets, the crowd cheering and encouraging fatigued horses & riders to their very best presentation.

At last it was the turn of Wendy & Blue Bopp. They tackled the final hurdle, Blue Bopp tired (well, wouldn't you be after 400 km?) but travelling with the same characteristic long legged economical trot he had exhibited all week. Oh, the universal disappointment when there was no cheerful thumbs-up from the vets to greet their efforts!

Sadly they renewed membership of "the Friday Club", those who complete the whole five days, 400 km of the Shahzada test only to vet out at the last trot out. However with 2 out of 4 successful Shahzada completions under their belt Wendy & Blue Bopp are still champions in the eyes of many!



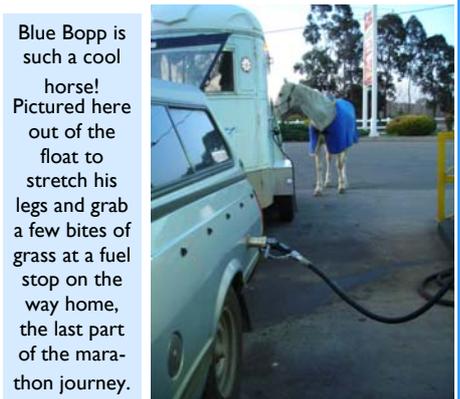
Don't look now but there's a horse in the kitchen! Just before the 4.00 AM start Wendy saddles Blue on the first morning of the five day ride to keep dry at least until mounting up time.



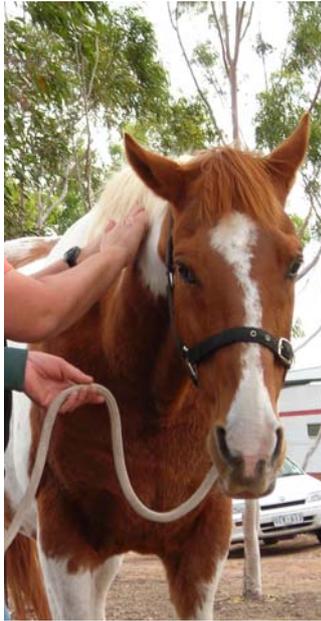
Collecting time slip at the end of Stage two, Day 4, known as Pajama Day



After every stage heart rate & temperature are checked by TPRs before presentation to the vet



Blue Bopp is such a cool horse! Pictured here out of the float to stretch his legs and grab a few bites of grass at a fuel stop on the way home, the last part of the marathon journey.



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT
Change of plans -Compulsory Slowdown,
Regretted Cancellations

Jock has repeatedly said, “We will be cutting down our activities this year”. The Equine Touch came into being in 1997. Since 1999 Jock & Ivana Ruddock have had a relentless schedule of world travel and teaching.

Unfortunately due to Jock’s recent illness, and the need for rest & recovery time, Jock & Ivana have decided to curb their travel & cancel their teaching engagements for the next six months primarily to recuperate and later to catch up on all those items on the “to do“ list.

For us “Down Under” this means that they will not be attending Equitana Asia Pacific in November in Melbourne and courses scheduled for November and December 2010 have been cancelled.

Disappointed as many of you may well be having anticipated the wonderful opportunity to further your ET education with the ETF Founders I am sure you will join with the Australian & New Zealand instructors in wishing Jock & Ivana well in their much deserved time out from their busy schedule.

THE EQUINE TOUCH
 FOUNDATION
 MISSION
 STATEMENT

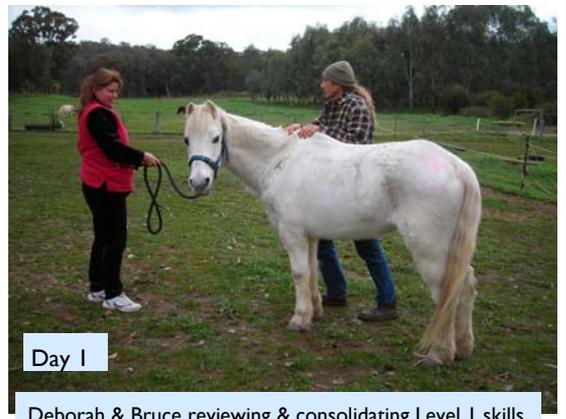
“TO HELP HORSES
 BY EDUCATING
 HUMANS”

Course
 Report

Going the distance ... Level 2 interstaters

Level 2 Bendigo, Vic 13-15 August, 2010 Instructor: Janis Hobbs

Dedication & commitment means doing “whatever it takes” to get something done. These qualities were demonstrated by Bruce from South Australia and Deborah from NSW who both travelled long distances (& hours) to brave Victorian wet & cold weather & attend this Level two course. They both exhibited good feel for the horse & sound Equine Touch skills despite only completing their Level 1 course in July & June respectively. Well done!



Day 1

Deborah & Bruce reviewing & consolidating Level 1 skills.



Day 2 Deborah with Quinny safely out of the weather in the shed.



Day 3 Bruce completing the Advanced Body Balance on Mary Poppins — we jumped at the opportunity to work outside in the sunshine between rain showers.

Course
Report

Rugged Up Down South

Level 1, Balclutha July, 2010 Instructor: Karen Burrows

NZ News

Hi everyone,
We're starting to see signs of spring here in the south of New Zealand; soon will start the season of scraping horse hair off clothing, out of the car and usually out of my mouth at some point! I thought I would alter my schedule and maybe work on grey horses on Mondays, bays on Tuesdays, chestnuts on Wednesdays. Then at least I won't look like a multi-coloured hair covered monster at the end of each day!

Late last month we bravely ran a Level 1 course in Balclutha, about half way between Invercargill and Dunedin, we huddled near Rebecca's log fire in the mornings and wrapped up very well for the afternoon sessions in the stables. It was really nice to bury your fingers into woolly horse coats to warm them up.
Cheers,
Karen



Here's my four great students:- Rebecca Scott, Pam Doig, Robyn Burgess and Carolyn Upstan.

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YOUR SAY:

Kylie's Question "When's my turn?"

Hi Janis

I am so excited because whilst I was practising ET on my 21 month old colt, Jenni (the lady I agist the boys with) came over and asked what I was doing so I explained that I had done Level 1 of The Equine Touch and needed to practice and produce paperwork for horse assessments on 10 horses before moving on to Level 2.* After watching for a while and asking questions, she then went on to offer me her Eventing horses to work on which is just wonderful as I now have more than enough horses and various levels of fitness to work with.

Whilst working on my aged TB gelding, my wild caught Waler (Kylie, whom I took to the ET course for Level 1) was in the paddock and made her way up behind me and repeatedly poked me in the shoulder, to the point my daughter took a photo of this behaviour. I am sure she was letting me know that she wanted to have her turn.

Cheers

Deborah Kelly, Level 1 (just now completed Level 2)



Kylie, Deborah's Waler, wants to know when it is her turn again as Deborah works on another of her horses, an aged TB gelding.

*Horse Owners who just want to learn as much as possible in order to help their own horses may complete all levels of The Equine Touch without fulfilling the written requirements. However completion of the home-study written requirements is mandatory for students who have elected to take the Practitioner track. Ed.

Your Say:



Tahni



Just wondering if this photo of the cows in alignment was taken AFTER the BT sessions? Janis, Ed.

"Bovine Touch"? No bull!

Hi Janis

Forgot to tell you that I have been doing some BT lately, otherwise known as Bovine Touch and our cows just love it! Our pet cow will stand there for a full BBB with her nose nearly on the ground, just loving it!

As promised, here are some photo's of my BT (Bovine Touch) clients. The dark Jersey is the one that I mostly work on which is Tahni (9yo). Tammie (9yo) is the black cow and Serenity - Reni or Walpy for short, is the lighter jersey (11 yo and Tahni's mum!).

We've raised them all since calves and they will be buried with the horses when they die - damn having big pets! These cows are the reason we bought our farm, so we could feed them during the drought! They are all rideable - although we don't anymore now they are old and Reni loves getting milked out in the paddock! They are just gorgeous and all our little visitors love to go out and pat or sit on the cows - more of a highlight than doing the same with the horses usually.

Lyndal Metcalf, Level 3



"Why is my horse nipping at me during ET?"

My mare who is due to foal in 10 weeks just got laminitis, so while she's annoyed and being cooped up in the shed I have been doing some ET on her. She frequently bites at me—just little snaps of her head to give me a nip with most moves that I do on her up near her chest and neck. She doesn't actually nip me but they look like reflexes, although she does do a pre-move nip in anticipation when I am going to do her "pecs". I am not using much pressure, but when I go back and do some of the moves again, she doesn't nip the second time around?? Any insights? I think she may be telling me to use less pressure, but she is not trying to move away from me and she is loose in the stall. I sometimes do it leaning over the gate into her stall so she can easily move away. Lyndal Metcalf, Level 3

Two scenarios are possible here - I have run across the problem with several horses. One is that every single move you do on the horse elicits a nip reaction – not at you, but just in the air. I have not figured that out yet. Seems to be some strange thing that one horse in a thousand does. Because it is so rare I have just accepted it and worked around it. Often the nip motion can be accompanied by a mare shriek. Quite off putting but the work still gets done. The second is simply your horse communicating with you. She is picking up your Intent, knows where you are going to and is warning you that it could hurt in the only way she knows how. Once she realizes it does not hurt then you are ok. Hence the second time round she is fine. Try clearing your mind of Intent then just allow your hand to rest there for a little longer when you do the Branding. However, keep in that neutral place. Then before you go to do the chest move allow your hand just to sit there again before actually doing the move. Remember, you can have the best Intention in the world but if it goes out in front of your Integrity the horse will pick it up and if there is pain or memory of pain it may react in anticipation. Hope that helps. *Jock*