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Horse and rider in the balance

By Johann Riegler

The Courbette is one of the most difficult exercises of the Advanced Dressage and is, therefore, for horse and rider in view of the perfect seat also in the Spanish Riding School the ultimate benchmark. This high demand was the reason for the central meaning of the "seat school" – not only for the beginners but also for the experts – particularly in view of the right coordination and interplay of the aids and the schooling of the horses.

The legendary director of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna, Alois Podhajsky, had once written about that as follows:

„A smooth and supple, besides, straight and deep seat is necessary to be able to give the right aids and not to disturb the balance of the horse. However, the seat is also necessary for aesthetic reasons. Already in the form of expression the horse riding should reveal itself as an art. In the Spanish Riding School the riders are trained as long at the lunge, as the correct seat is reached and also is consolidated. In the majority of cases it requires a period of three to five years. However, even an advanced rider has often to repeat the work on the lunge, in order to eradicate the crept mistakes.“

Also today nothing can be added to this subject.

Text and photos of the following double page from the book of Johann Riegler: Head of riding instructor.

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Learn to sit

The beginner rides with stirrups and may hold on the saddle, in order to get a feeling of safety.

Learn to feel

The horse riding without stirrups, in connection with exercises, schools the balance and brings the rider deeper in the saddle.

Learn to have an influence

Learning of an independent influence with weight, leg and rein aids. Precondition for the rider and horse communication.

The practical schooling of the beginners starts with the "sitting practise at the lunge". The

lungeing of the beginners is cut into three phases:

1. Learn to sit
2. Learn to feel
3. Learn to have an influence

Without mastering of the both first steps the learning of the „language is not imaginable between rider and horse“.

The aim is suppleness in the seat. Without suppleness there is no balance – every physical and also mental tension of the rider prevents a safe balance seat. Provided the rider mounts on a well schooled and also supple horse, then the suppleness of the rider will become apparent:

- If he follows in trot and canter with his pelvis easily, softly and comfortably with the horse's motion.

- If he can keep his seat without special physical strain and his legs lie without force at the horse body.

- If his natural position of head up to the feet is without stiffness or a cramped body tension, so that the whole body can swing with the horse's motion.

If the rider sits in balance, he does not disturb his horse in his movements. Then the rider will also feel the willingness of his horse to remain in the common balance. A considerable valuable test for the rider's seat and position is the horse riding with one hand.

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The classical training of horses: Base for the long-term satisfaction of the buyer

Recommendations for the evaluation of dressage horses by buyers' contract conclusions from the perspective of the tournament judge (1)

By Dr. Sascha Brückner and Dr. Christoph Kochhan

Introduction

The buying of a horse is not easy. This already begins with the fact that one can select from a group of horses. Which horse fits to me, does comply with my sportive aims and does meet my personal taste? Everybody which has already bought a horse themselves is confronted with many questions and has then started the extensive search, near or far. And everybody knows that the buying of an animal is not comparable with the choice of an article as for example a car. The buying of horses is

not at all predictable. Therefore it is so difficult to find the suitable partner with whom one would like to work together in the long term.

Certainly it is most important that the horse is healthy. This is a central condition for a satisfied buyer. In order to have fun in the daily training and to achieve progress, the actual qualification of the horse must be discovered before buying the horse. Only with a correct schooling according to the regulations of the classical training scale the buyer can assume that he will acquire a correct trained horse with attainable goals as sports partner horse in future.

(1) Special thanks are for Stefan Seyfarth, graduated in the course of horse studies sciences in the Vetmeduni Vienna who has enriched this contribution by comprehensive literature searches and critical suggestions.

The value of a correct training becomes the most important if one looks the legal situation with deficits in schooling. This is a subject which will be discussed in the first segment of this contribution. In addition it will be contemplated the training components of the phase of familiarisation, as rhythm, suppleness, and contact. In the magazine 2/2011 the contribution is continued with the components impulsion, straightness and collection which are important in the further schooling of the horse for a professional judgement. Although we check the horse again and again from the perspective of the tournament judge in order to give recommendations for the buyer and his competent adviser to select the right horse.

I. The legal situation with deficits in schooling

With the abolition of the imperial order of 1899 which regulated the legal situation with latent defects, a flood of new orders was predicted by the horse experts. Indeed, the restructuring of the buyers' right by 1st of January, 2002 led to the fact that the volume of expert orders increased. Nevertheless, the expectation that numerous new equestrian experts are required has not been confirmed. Equestrian lawyers have profited far more from the new buyers rights: Above all during the first five years after the imperial acts were going out of force it seemed as if buyers and sellers longed almost for principle decisions. A certain legal security has meanwhile arrived by numerous judgments. In large parts the horse buyers' mandates can be settled extrajudicial.

Health defects are the majority of complaints against the seller; but, at least, every fifth buyer complains of deficits in schooling and / or a deficit in horse's character (2). In these cases the following guide is valid:

Normally the buyer rides a possible horse, in order to test it. If one visualises that every ju-

ridicial relevant physical defect must be known at the time of the danger, the following possibilities are thinkable:

◆ First – the horse will be tested to the satisfaction of the buyer. A deficit in schooling is basically to be excluded with it.

(2) Harlinghausen, Stella, Actual developments by the horse purchase with the help of an evaluation of cases from the lawyer practise, baccalaureate paper, Vienna, Lübeck, in 2006, p. 22 following; and also the experiences in the talks with lawyer's colleagues which look after purchase juridical mandates from the horse riding in comparably big extent.

◆ Secondly – the buyer acquires the horse in spite of existing deficits in schooling because he is confident, for example, to be skilled enough to correct the horse. Then he can not demand any material defect rights from the buyer because of this previous knowledge (§442, 1. Alt. BGB).

◆ The same is valid for the third possibility – the buyer does not carefully test the horse and as a result of that a lack which would have had to be found on looking more carefully stays undiscovered. This overlooking shows – simplistically expressed – a roughly careless un-awareness of the buyer which excludes his material defect rights just as the positive knowledge (§442, 2. Alt. BGB).

The buyer can only put through defects in schooling, if he appropriately rests on the following three statements (3) :

1. There is a – precisely to be more described – deficit in schooling.

2. The horse has basic problems with the deficits which has or have already existed at the time of the purchase.

(To weaken the thinkable objection of the seller that deficit in schooling can appear by im-proper horse riding any time and relatively fast, so also in the sphere of the buyer, or have appeared there.)

3. The deficit could not be discovered at the time of the test horse riding.

(This is another argument to confront the other objection to be expected of the seller that the buyer has ridden the horse to his satisfaction.)

Already this short juridical overview shows the argumentative difficulties with which the buyer is confronted with deficit in schooling. His consulting solicitor must keep an eye extremely critically on the evidence prognosis: The buyer is not only in the burden of proof that the deficit exists, but that he already was there at the time of the risk. Up to now the latter is valid after prevailing opinion also for the case that a consumer products purchase is given. That means that the horse is sold by an enterpriser to a consumer. The shifting of the burden of proof⁽⁴⁾ is not applicable in this constellation. How the Federal Supreme Court will decide, has to be awaited. In spite of this burden of proof distribution the argument of the seller is almost marked: The horse has not shown the affirmed deficit in schooling during his possession times. Besides, the buyer has to reckon that the seller will appoint numerous witnesses, who confirm this statement.

(3) For deepening moreover: Brückner / Rahn, *Pferdekauf heute*, 3rd edition, Warendorf, in 2010, p. 105 following

(4) §476 BGB. If a material defect appears by a consumer goods purchase within six months, it will be supposed that this has already existed at the time of the handing over. Not then the buyer must ad-duce the evidence of the back date of the lack, but the seller must prove that this lack by the handing over has not yet existed.

A buyer has succeeded the judicial penetration of the resignation with deficit in schooling in a case which was negotiated (6) before the district court of Münster⁽⁵⁾: A seven-year-old mare was sold with the state arrangement „training dressage level: A“. The seller, a very experienced and strong rider, presented this mare at this level. She could be similarly handled by the directly following test ride of the buyer. Immediately after the

handing over of the horse the buyer finds out that the horse does not correspond to the training level of the class A. Several experienced rider's colleagues who are successful riders up to the class S confirm this after a test ride. The buyer complains about the horse and requires from the seller to school the horse up to this level. When the seller rejects this, she explains the resignation of the sales contract.

The district court of Münster rightly stresses that in the description of the training level no guarantee is to be seen for the fact that the horse can be ridden by any rider at this level. Nevertheless, a material defect is given, „if the horse does not show any performance for a certain period and at these level reproducible achievements by accordingly qualified riders“.

Beside the rider's colleague of the buyer who appeared in the process as witnesses the judicial expert also found out that the mare is not schooled according to the demands of the training level of the class A. Because of the narrow temporal connection it was also be assumed that the mare was already trained with deficit at the time of the handing over.

The buyer was also not proved in this single case no knowledge or roughly careless ignorance of this material defect (§442 BGB). During the inspection and the test ride the deficit of the horse could not become clear, because the seller has presented the horse undisputed at level A and it was not recognizable for the buyer after this preparation that the horse does not correspond to the training level class A. As the seller was the only one who was able to ride the horse at the training level class A, a divergence was ascertained by the agreed state and then it was granted an explained resignation after fruitless extension settlement to the correction of the training.

(5) LG Münster, Urt. v. 9/24/2007, file number 2 O 11/07, RdL 2008, 9 following

(6) This decision is cited in the following from: Brückner/Rahn, 3rd edition, Warendorf, in 2010, p. 108 following

Nevertheless, the outlined case is to be appreciated as an isolated case decision and can be valid as an exception to the regulations at the beginning. The buyer can only use in the rarest cases promising material defect rights with deficit in schooling. The solicitor's experience shows that many buyers underestimate these juridical problems. Also nine years after introduction of the purchase rights modernisation, many buyers feel themselves comprehensively protected by the legal provision with such problems with their new bought horse – and are already disappointed after a careful juridical check within the first legal advice.

II. The horse purchase duties of the competent adviser

It is the more important for the buyer to check intensively the schooling of the horse before the purchase contract is completed. The keyword for this is prevention. Provided that an equestrian adviser gives advices while testing the horse, he must be in consideration of the legal situation that he has a very big responsibility towards the buyer – and also the horse–. To protect him from misjudgements and on it based expensive wrong decisions, it requires a good eye and many years' experiences above all in the knowledge of the training scale which is the result of the centuries long developed classical horsemanship. Even if the training scale belongs for the equestrian experts and most riders to the „daily business“, it is worthwhile to study the profound knowledge again and again. Moreover, the adviser of the horse purchase has the difficult job to value criteria in the totality of this horse. Besides, countless factors play an important role. On the one hand, it concerns aspects which focus the horse:

- ◆ Is it possible to correct deficits in the single points of the training scale easily or is it very difficult?
- ◆ Does the mentality of the horse tolerate the necessary corrections?
- ◆ Is the horse on account of his exterior (7) enough talented to carry out any corrections?

On the other hand it is the question, about which demands and abilities disposes the rider:

- ◆ Is the buyer able enough to perform the other schooling work on account of his own abilities or does he need an (accompanying) trainer?
- ◆ Which athletic aims does the buyer have with the horse? Does the horse disposes of enough perspective as for example movement potential?

(7) Deepening moreover Brückner/Hein, Exterieurbeurteilung von Warmblutpferden, in: WF 2009, 49 following

These and other questions will stimulate the reader to think about the complexity and at the same time about the meaning of a preventive adviser's activity. Profound practical knowledge and a constantly increasing experience are to be substituted with nothing and can be provided only partly by the reading of different equestrian literature; it can only complement the practical experiences.

In the following we take a limit overview about the training scale. As the competent adviser is familiar with the training scale, we draw his attention again and again to the perspective at the judge's table and the finding of a mark in order to give him in this manner some complementary information about his job.

III. The training scale from the point of the tournament judge as assistance for the horse purchase

Every rider wishes a well schooled horse that follows obediently his aids. This is valid for the (dressage) ambitious leisure rider as well as for the tournament rider, although both possibly have differently high claims. Central aspect is the “throughness” of the horse, the result of a correct schooling work.

1. The rhythm

Elementarily for every training step and the first sight by the horse purchase under the

perspective of the training scale is the regular rhythm in which the horse must move forward. In the directives for horse riding and driving, rhythm is known as a spatial and temporal regularity in the basic gaits as well as in the transitions (8).

The walk should be diligent in a clear four beat with a swinging back. The sequence of footfalls on the same side but not in the same time can easily be remembered by thinking in terms of a large "N": The internal hind leg steps aside forwards and "pushes" the internal foreleg of the ground. For the eye of the viewer is to be recognised at this short moment a clear "V" (triangle). The more the "V" gets destroyed, the less is the regular four beat. The quality of the walk is assessed on the basis of the regularity of rhythm, the ground-cover as well as the ability to move freely enough from the shoulder: If a horse, because it is not free in the shoulder, have a relatively short step in the forehand, the hind hooves often step over quite far, but the ground-cover is actually limited as a result of the forehand problem. You normally cannot give the mark 8 for this performance. Such horses partially lose also rhythm.

(8) Directives for horse riding and driving, volume 1, 27th edition, Warendorf, in 1997, p. 170.

In order to check the rhythm in the walk, it can be recommendable to build up negative tension for a short moment, at least however vary clearly the contact. On this occasion, one can see whether the horse disposes about a stabilized regular four-beat rhythm or is quickly irregular. A balanced, well schooled horse won't react less clearly to this rider's action than a tensed horse. Nevertheless, this kind of short testing should be left to the very experienced riders. Testing the horse outside on an uneven, hilly ground can also deliver explanation about the regular rhythm. From the judge's table one observes above all during young horse's competition that single riders give up nearly completely their contact, even if this is not demanded in the competition – in contrast to the end of a young horse competition which terminates with walk on long reins—. When a horse is

always presented with long reins by the seller and his trainer, the buyer should discover the reason and should test the regular four-beat rhythm with more contact. The concept (9) is as follows: A horse is walking at a „long rein“, if there is a continual, nevertheless, very soft contact between rider's hand and horse mouth. A light control of poll should be kept. On the other hand one speaks of the free walk, if there is no more contact between the rider's hand and horse mouth and the reins are held at the end.

The buyer must be careful, if the walk of the horse is irregular in the hind legs. Partially this irregular movement is not constantly, but appears only now and then. In this case a suitable tip to the veterinarian of the purchase physical examination is indispensable. The walk should always be regular in longer phases in all thinkable situations, also immediately after the transition to the walk from the canter and after difficult exercises. This should be carefully controlled by the buyer and his adviser.

Irregularities in trot point in particular to a physical (health) disorder. The trot is a movement with impulsion, because there is a suspension phase, in two-beat rhythm, whereby the regularity of rhythm has to be tested on curved tracks, in particular in the corners and in turns. The correct rhythm is not only the uppermost criterion for every successful exercise (10), but also an indicator for the physical health of the basic movements.

(9) Directives for horse riding and driving, volume 1, 27th edition, Warendorf, in 1997, p. 80 following

(10) Directives for horse riding and driving, volume 1, 27th edition, Warendorf, in 1997, p. 170.

Moreover a temporary or even lasting four-beat rhythm in canter or a clear trend leads to the question whether the horse disposes of an enough good canter quality, in particular the de-sired uphill motion. In the corners or at the short sides in counter canter this can point to a lacking balance or lacking self-carriage of the

horse; nevertheless, the basic quality of the canter is always critical with the sign of a four-beat rhythm.

Above all the correction of an irregular walk, but also the four-beat rhythm in canter, require comprehensive expert's experience, a lot of empathy and above all a lot of time. The buyer of a tournament horse should have knowledge about the evaluation criteria in dressage tests: If the horse shows generally irregular gaits, the mark must lie in the common scoring method below 5.0, this performance can not be placed. The mark for the cleanness of the gaits in the separate scoring method can amount in maximum to a 5, provided that both other basic gaits are shown regularly (11). In particular with continuing irregularities in the trot the attentive judge will finish the ride even for reasons of the protection of animals prematurely. The reason can be sufficient that the continuing irregularities are lameness on the basis of pain. Basically is valid: Irregularities in the gaits are „in the most favourable case“ a lack in schooling, provided that they are not an even clinical appearance of a health interference of the horse.

2. The suppleness

The second point of the training scale is the mental as physical suppleness (12). Obviously for the viewer is an actively swinging back of the horse, the good activity of the closed mouth, the relaxed, swinging tail as well as, a contented facial expression. Moreover this physical suppleness will be supported by the mental suppleness as: The horse is contented gentle snorting, not excited puffing and blowing under the rider. The rider feels the involvement of his body in the horse's movements, he can sit well on the horse and especially in trot he feels the smooth swinging of the horse's back and in the same time he can push the horse with an increasing thoroughness without phases of tenseness when reducing to a slower tempo. The swinging back which moves behind the saddle is appropriately called the „centre of the horse“(14).

(11) Plewa, Dietrich, Klasse M and S – Worauf kommt es an?, in: DRV magazine in 2005, p. 10, 11.

(12) Instructively moreover: Albrecht, Kurt, Dressurlehre für Reiter und Turnierrichte, Rüslikon Zurich, in 1989, p. 16 following, that the suppleness is defined as a „volle Hingabe der Kräfte eines Pferdes an den momentanen Zweck“.

(13) Directives for horse riding and driving, volume 1, 27th edition, Warendorf, in 1997, p. 170.

(14) Freely quotes after Paul Stecken.

The prospective buyer and his adviser should not be deceived by spectacular "hovering trot" which are mostly carried out with a tensed back. Signs for constraints in the back can be an extremely swishing with the tail and a kicking or fight against the pushing leg aid. Also problems in contact, especially "behind the bit", point to the fact that the horse is tensed in the back. Either there is a serious schooling deficit or an illness in the area of the back. The clear nodding movement forwards-downwards of the horse of neck and head is a clue for the sup-pleteness in walk which should appear in medium walk - as well as – at higher schooling level – in extended walk.

"To give the reins" is one of the most important test of the classical-correct schooling work – an exercise which can be used until the Grand Prix level. Only a horse which is in reliable contact, in other words well on the driving aids, stretches calmly, contentedly forwards-downwards and maintain rhythm, pace and speed. The stretch should be so far that the horse mouth is at least on height of the bug joints (15). With the help of this exercise one recognises especially well an honestly relaxed horse at which the rider needs to use more driving aids. If there is a lack in the stretch readiness or the horse plunges down abruptly against the hand, point to a (still) not enough relaxed cervical and back musculature (16). It is important that the horse must remain smooth in this stretch position on curved lines as well as in his longitudinal axis.

Concerning the examination of the mental suppleness it can make sense to test the horse in unusual, unfamiliar surroundings with distracting influences and to test whether the horse presents the same willingness to perform and free of constraints in the dressage arena as well as in the indoor riding school. It is also important to recognise, whether the horse under the usual rider (the seller or his trainer) stay supple, however, perhaps, under another rider (e.g. the buyer) has a stiff back. Besides, the buyer had to ask himself how easily he himself can make the horse supple and to school it accordingly.

(15) Directives for horse riding and driving, volume 1, 27th edition, Warendorf, in 1997, p. 97.

(16) Directives for horse riding and driving, volume 1, 27th edition, Warendorf, in 1997, p. 98.

Also in view of the suppleness of the horse the evaluation of the judge's table would be recommendable. Since the adviser by the horse purchase as well as the tournament judge have to meet the following consideration: Does it concern short moments at which the horse tenses up on account of external influence or makes a unique mistake because of a fault of the rider (this is to be valued only slightly negatively) or is the lacking in suppleness a basic deficit in the schooling of the horse? The back as "central area" gives an explanation. Unfortunately, too often one sees in lower class dressage tests, partially still at Grand Prix level, horses that do not swing not only temporarily, but generally honestly do not swing actively in the back, that is the much cited "Schenkelgänger". If this serious schooling deficit is clearly recognizable, the horse's basic gaits are all not regular and it is not swinging in the back, then the judges cannot decide hardly more than 5.0 – even if many riders often do not understand this (can or want). A horse which is basically and classically schooled will sooner or later swing in the back at every riding hour and will stretch confidently to the rider's hand. If the experienced rider succeeds in motivating the horse to swing in the back, then it will be accompanied by a clear improvement of the

movements especially in trot, as a result of this it can be nearly excluded that the horse has been worked basically wrong over a longer time and that there is a serious schooling deficit. However, the buyer should be careful with a horse that does not, without shorter disturbance and exterior influence, develops to an absolute "Rückengänger". The buyer should test the horse several times.

Anyhow the buyer and his adviser have to balance the reasons of an inattentive horse. They have to consider carefully how easily or how difficult it is to motivate the horse for concentration to the rider's aids or can it be easily distracted (17). As mentioned already at the beginning, there is an immediate connection between the mental and physical suppleness; and how does the especially inexperienced buyer get well along with a good schooled horse, if the mental state of the horse does not fit? To handle those – very often high qualified – horses particularly under show conditions, demands a lot of experiences and a suitably qualified rider to get involved without limitation in the mentality of the difficult horse. Only few riders can take up these virtues for themselves.

(17) Deepening moreover: Albrecht, Kurt, Dressurlehre für Reiter und Turnierrichter, Rüschtikon Zurich, in 1989, p. 19.

The buyer and his adviser must weigh therefore whether the horse tenses up only temporarily or permanently, whether the buyer is able enough to motivate and to achieve an absolute suppleness in a short time. If the horse is well qualified and basically suitable for the buyer, but not always supple under the buyer, the veterinary purchase diagnosis especially of the back should influence the decision. Numerous warmbloods show norm-divergent narrow states of the spinous processes according to actual studies,

without clinical relevance at normal riding "over the back". If such a radiographical diagnosis goes along with deficits of the horse in the suppleness, then it must be considered in arrangement with the veterinarian of the

purchase diagnosis, whether the horse – should be acquired above all to the demanded purchase price–. Since just as it is missed to stamp narrow states of the spinous processes in terms of Kissing-Spines as an alibi of any purchase remorse and much cited "fashionable complaint", this radiographical diagnosis may not be looked inclusively as a surmountable hurdle with an experienced horse rider. The particular case and a competent consultation by the equestrian expert and in particular the veterinarian of the trust are decisive here.

3. The contact

Contact fundamentally means the constant, soft and elastic connection between the rider's hand and the horse's mouth. Here is the third point of the training scale – the contact. The contact has the aim to achieve the desired carriage by maintaining the horse's pleasure in working with the rider, by encouraging the thrust and optimising the mutual balance together with the rider so that, with a yielding poll, the horse steps trustingly onto the bit/hand and seeks the contact (18). Never use compulsion or strength, as than the horse will move "from the front to the back". The rider needs to have balance and suppleness in order to apply his hands completely independent of this seat. The rider should offer and allow contact, but not mislead the horse in the process of the so-called fifth leg. Often horses fight against the rider's disagreeable "contact", until the inner hand fixes the head then again. No normal schooling? Negative report! Sequence errors as a stiff back are normal. Often such horses never learnt the desired diagonal aids between inner leg and outer rein; this is a schooling deficiency which makes above all the correct horse riding on curved tracks up to pirouettes nearly impossible and requires a lot of empathy with the correction.

(18) Directives for horse riding and driving, volume 1, 27th edition, Warendorf, in 1997, p. 171.

A correct contact and the repeating pushing off short of the rider's hand serve the horse also as a balance of the rider's weight and

with it the balance as well as the rhythm regularity – this is another indicator of the synergy of the single training's scale points and the complexity of correct horse schooling. Only so the rider can effectively ride with his aids and can absorb the impulsion from the back to the front with a soft contact. In general the poll of the horse must be always flexible and the highest point, unless it is ridden forwards-downwards in a stretched position.

The critical viewpoint at any "classical" mistakes in contact is very important: + Nose-line behind vertical (overbent), behind the bit, against the bit, leaning on the bit or "false bend" (19)? Moreover there are tossing of the head, dental crunching, tilted head (poll) and – especially seriously – hanging out the tongue aside.

If the horse sticks out the tongue clearly and constantly aside what often goes along with a blocking in the poll, does that mean the same as permanent irregular gaits for the common evaluation criteria in dressage tests: This competitor can not be placed, the mark must be under 5.0. If the horse does not confidently step forward to the bit, the mark can be with all the mistakes from 3 to 4 (20). With the separate evaluation criteria the single mark diminishes about 2 points, nevertheless, may amount in maximum to a 5 (21): From the mark 7 to 10, diminishes to a 5, from 6 becomes a 4, from 5 becomes a 3 etc. It is punished less seriously, but still doubtfully, (the short) showing of the tongue is between the incisors. (22) If this does not point to a deficit in the training scale, this is to be tolerated by the evaluation as to a great extent like the dental crunching (23) and the mark spectrum is exhausted in these both situations in direction with an 8, if necessary with a 9, because 10 stands for a harmonious performance and perfect in every regard. If the tongue is stuck out, nevertheless several centimetres down and strong hints arise to the fact that the horse accepts the bit not honestly, it lies in the judgement of the judge to value this negatively in the single mark as well as in the total mark for the mouth activity. More concrete recommendations cannot be given, because the fulfilment of the

criteria of the training scale is decisive. Also at this example appears how much experience in the evaluation of horses is necessary, in order to be able to deliver a profound and well-balanced evaluation about the horse and his schooling. In any case, a tongue mistake presents itself as a schooling deficit extremely hardly to be corrected.

(19) Deepening moreover: Die deutsche Reitlehre – Das Pferd, 1st edition, Warendorf, in 2002, p. 110 following

(20) Training briefcase DL / SL of the German Judge Association (DRV), October 2007, p. 21.

(21) A more moderate proposal of Plewa, a.a. O. who recommends a deduction of "at least" one point per mark for the lateral sticking out of the tongue, together with consideration in the basic mark for the mouth activity.

(22) Moreover also Plewa, a.a. O. p. 11.

(23) It can be causally for this after Putz (Putz, Michael, Riding with understanding and feeling – practical schooling for horse and rider, Warendorf, in 2004, p. 133): Problems with the teeth, inappropriate bit, faulty rein aids, however, also a bad lying saddle and lacking suppleness. If the reason is not repaired for this fast, the dental crunching can develop to an annoying habit, even if the cause has been put down long ago.

Also a tilted head (poll) (24) is a defect in the schooling which requires a lot of feeling to correct this. According to the degree of deficit the single mark is diminished about from 1 to 2 points. (25)

Any deficit in contact means that the horse fights against the rider's aids. Horses, fighting against the rein, can be more easily corrected than horses with a broken neckline, provided that they show the internal readiness to cooperate, a light neck and enough open throats. Moreover, the buyer must know which lack in contact can be corrected easily and which one is more difficult – for in any case longer period – and to what extent he is ready to undertake this intensive schooling work with a new acquired horse. All lacks in

contact often appear with a stiff back. Since only the honestly schooled horse can confidently step forward to the bit and can be presented as real "Rückengänger" without limitation.

We save to ourselves to take up the controversially discussed – and certainly important – question after sense and nonsense or protection of animals-juridical relevance of the "Rollkur" or "hyperlexion". The uppermost premise of a qualified horse schooled after the classical principles according to the training scale in the first three points of the familiarization phase are in particular

- ◆ the obedient reaction to the driving leg aid and
- ◆ the unreserved readiness to stretch the neck in the exercise "to give the reins" confidently to the rider's hand, stretches calmly and confidently forwards-downwards (with an even convex arch in the upper neck line)
- ◆ and to remain supple in the longitudinal axis.

Provided that these three factors are given, they stand as decisive guarantors for the fact that also a horse who seems to be on the wrong way is a "Rückengänger" and no "Schenkelgänger". The fact that any divergences of the ideal state (thus the yielding poll and the brow-nose line is positioned slightly ahead of, or at least on the vertical) will be deducted with considerable points in the show, is beyond all questions.

Before the background of the beginning described legal situation, it appears how significant it is for the buyer and his adviser to test the horse in view of the single schooling aspects. The exact view, to what extent the possible horse has had a correct schooling according to the directives of the training scale – and this in view of the already described aspects of the familiarization phase – is a decisive guarantor for the satisfaction of the buyer. Which aspects earn a critical view within the frame of the development of driving and carrying power; show the

continuation of the contribution in the next magazine. The further points of the training scale: impulsion, straightness and collection are carefully discussed which are relevant in the advanced horse schooling and above all in view of the sport horse.

(24) On this occasion, it concerns a „schrägstellung des Kopfes, bei der ein Ohr

höher als das andere ist und die Nasenspitze auf die Seite ausweicht“ (Stodulka, Robert, Vom Reiten zur Reitkunst – Die klassische Reitlehre und die Biomechanik des Pferdes, Stuttgart, in 2008, p. 102 re. Sp. with further information to the origin and removal of deficits in schooling).

(25) Plewa, a.a.O , p. 12.

magazine page 48

Kinesiology of the Horse

By Jean-Pierre Hourdebaigt

Kinesiology is the kinetics (teaching of the movement) and the anatomical structures make this movement possible. It would help for the completion of your massage abilities if you know something about the kinesiology of the horse.

First, however, some expressions:

Protraction: The forward movement of the legs.

Retraction: The backward movement of the legs.

Adduction: The inward movement of the legs.

Abduction: The outward movement of the legs

Isometric contraction: An isometric contraction is given, if a muscle contracts without causing an evident movement. In this case a horse and a rider are the best example. The horse must carry out certain adaptations with his body, so that it can stop.

Concentric contraction: A concentric contraction is given if a muscle becomes shorter with a contraction and thereby causes a movement in the joint, as one can also see with the protraction, the retraction, the abduction and the adduction.

Agonist: A muscle whose pressure on a joint is opposed to the pressure of another muscle, as for example a concentric contraction.

Antagonist: A muscle which works against the agonist. During the concentric contraction he is extended. Often, but not always, he is responsible for an eccentric contraction.

Eccentric contraction: An eccentric contraction takes place if a contracted antagonist slowly solves the contraction, so that the muscle can be well controlled and a movement deliberately be slowed down.

This process contributes to the avoidance of jerky movements and therefore is responsible for the elegance and relaxed movements of a horse. The eccentric contraction also works as a shock absorber, what can be very important as compensation for the footing after a jump or with similar sudden movements.

Movement

The hindquarters of the horse transfer the impulsion and the strength itself, which is necessary to the complete forward movement of the body. The forelegs give the direction and carry the shock absorbance. If you want to understand the horse movement, you must be aware of the coordination between bones, joints, ligaments, tendons and muscle groups, which allows this movement. Muscles are

always located in opposite groups, which have contradicting effects. As a result of this there is the extensor group of the foreleg, which is responsible for the stretching of the leg during the protraction, while the flexor group of the foreleg bend the same leg during the retraction.

This kind of coordination allows the well-balanced, wonderful movements, which we prefer to see with our horses.

Kinesiology of the foreleg

Protraction of the foreleg

The following muscles are involved in the concentric contraction (which is the centre of the forward movement of the foreleg):

1. Arm head muscle,
2. Front part of the superficial breast muscle,
3. 2-headed arm muscle,
4. Radical extensor of the forefoot carpal bones,
5. Chest portion of the sawed muscle.

During the protraction the arm head muscle pulls the shoulder joint upwards and in this way initiates the forward movement of the foreleg. At the same time the chest portion of the sawed muscle contracts and by this means it supports the rotation (turning) in the upper part of the scapula. The 2-headed arm muscle provides for the movement of the leg in the elbow. Afterwards the extensor of the foreleg carpal bones stretches the leg as soon as the hoof touches down on the ground. In addition, the supraspinatus muscle support the chest portion of the trapezoidal muscle and the breast muscles during the protraction of the foreleg.

All muscles which are involved in the retraction of the foreleg are extended with the protraction movement and during their eccentric contraction, in order to guarantee with this the stability and the fluency of the movement.

Retraction of the foreleg

The following muscles are involved in the concentric contraction (which is the starting point of the backwards movement of the foreleg):

1. The 3-headed arm muscle,
2. The wide back muscle,
3. The deep digital flexor muscle,
4. The cervical portion of the sawed muscle,
5. The rhombic muscle,
6. The cervical portion of the trapezoidal muscle,
7. The deep breast muscle.

If the leg is in the extreme position of the protraction, primarily the wide back muscle and the 3-headed arm muscle are responsible for the next backwards movement. The deep breast muscles pull the leg to the back and in the direction of the body centre of the horse and with it contribute to the retraction movement.

Fig. 7.1 Protraction (forward movement) of the foreleg

Fig. 7.2 Retraction (backwards movement) of the foreleg

Moreover, they provide for the fact that the leg does not move sideward. The coordination between the cervical portion and the chest portion of the sawed muscle gives the scapula space for an upward and forward movement. The rhombic muscle and the cervical portion of the trapezoidal muscle provide for other push in the top edge of the scapula. The deep flexors contribute for further push, which raises and moves the horse forward during the hoof leaves the ground for the next step. All muscles, which are involved in the protraction of the foreleg, are extended in the retraction movement and during their eccentric contraction, so that the stability and the movement fluency can be guaranteed.

Abduction of the foreleg

The following muscles are responsible for the concentric contraction with the abduction of the foreleg.

1. The supraspinatus muscle and the infraspinatus muscle,
2. The deltoid muscle,
3. The rhombic muscle,
4. The trapezoidal muscle.

With the abduction of the foreleg the following muscles are extended:

5. The front part of the superficial breast muscle,
6. The caudal part of the superficial breast muscle,
7. The deep breast muscle,
8. The collarbone-scapula is part of the deep breast muscle.

These muscles are first connected with the scapula and with the foreleg bones. The coordination between these muscles initiates the abduction movement. The deltoid muscle, the supraspinatus muscle and the infraspinatus muscle pull the point of shoulder sideways and bring the leg outwards. The trapezoidal and rhombic muscles contribute to this movement, as they pull from the scapula. The breast muscle group (No. 5, 6, 7 and 8) and the 2-headed arm muscle contribute with their eccentric contraction to the stability and to the fluency of the movement.

Fig. 7.3 Abduction (outward movement) of the foreleg

Fig. 7.4 Abduction (inward movement) of the foreleg

Adduction of the foreleg

The following muscles are responsible for the adduction of the front legs:

1. The front part of the superficial breast muscle,
2. The collarbone-scapula part of the deep breast muscle,
3. The caudal part of the superficial breast muscle,
4. The deep breast muscle.

The following muscles are extended with the adduction of the foreleg:

5. The muscle under the scapula,
6. The supraspinatus muscle and the infraspinatus muscle,
7. The deltoid muscle,
8. The rhombic muscle,
9. The trapezoidal muscle.

These muscles are first connected with the scapula and with the bones of the foreleg. The coordination of these muscles initiates the adduction movement. Basically the breast muscles initiate this movement by pulling the leg to the medial, this means inwards. The antagonists (No. 5, 6, 7 and 8) contribute to the stability and to the fluency of the movement by their eccentric contraction.

Kinesiology of the hind leg

Protraction of the hind leg

The following muscles are involved in the forward movement of the hind leg:

1. The iliac bone muscle,
2. The tension adjuster, the femoral fascia,
3. The 4-headed femoral muscle (e.g., lateral femoral muscle),
4. The 2-headed femoral muscle,
5. The calf muscle,
6. The long extensor of toes

The iliac bone muscle initiates the movement by pulling the femoral leg upward and forward. This movement bends the hip joint, the knee joint and the ankle joint. The 2-headed femoral muscle and the lateral femoral muscle support this movement by pulling at the knee joint and the shinbone. The calf muscle and the deep extensor of toes support the stretching of the hock (in the last phase of the protraction by stretching the toe shortly before the touch-down of the foot on the ground).

Every joined muscle with the retraction of the hind leg is extended during the protraction movement and guarantees the stability and the fluency of the movement by his eccentric contraction.

Retraction of the hind leg

The following muscles are involved in the backwards movement of the hind leg:

1. The croup muscles (particularly the middle croup muscle),
2. The heel muscles (sinewy and half-membranous muscles and 2-headed femoral muscle),
3. The lateral femoral muscle,
4. The 2-headed femoral muscle,
5. The calf muscle,
6. The deep extensor.

The big middle croup muscle starts behind at the femoral leg. He initiates the retraction movement.

Fig. 7.5 Protraction (forward movement) of the hind leg

The muscle group of the heel muscles initiates the greatest part of the strength for the retraction; the adductor muscles support this leg movement. The lateral femoral muscle allows a certain stretching in the knee, so that the ankle joint and fetlock can stretch themselves. The 2-headed femoral muscle, the calf muscle and the deep flexor support

the bending of the knee and the fetlock. All joined muscles in the protraction of the hind legs are extended during the retraction movement and guarantee the stability and the fluency of the movement by their eccentric contraction.

Fig. 7.6 Retraction (backwards movement) of the hind leg

Fig. 7.7 Abduction (outward movement) of the hind leg

Abduction of the hind leg

The following muscles are responsible for the abduction of the hind leg.

1. The middle croup muscle,
2. The deep croup muscle,
3. The superficial croup muscle,
4. The 2-headed femoral muscle,
5. The lateral femoral muscle,
6. The tension adjuster of the femoral fascia.

The following muscles are extended with the abduction of the hind leg:

7. The muscle group of the great adductors,
8. The iliac bone muscle.

These muscles are first connected with the bone of the hind leg. The coordination among these muscles initiates the abduction movement. The lateral femoral muscle (which belongs to the 4-headed femoral muscle) pulls the knee sideways that means outwards. Besides, he is supported of the 2-headed femoral muscle and from the tension adjuster of the femoral fascia which pulls sideward the femoral (that means outwards). The antagonists (No. 7 and 8) contribute with their eccentric contraction to the fluency of the movement.

7.7 Abduction (outwards movement) of the hind leg

7.8 Adduction (inwards movement) of the hind leg

Adduction of the hind leg

The following muscles are responsible for the adduction of the hind leg:

1. The muscle groups of the great adductors,
2. The iliac bone muscle.

The following muscles are extended with the adduction of the hind leg:

3. The deep croup muscle
4. The superficial one and the middle croup muscle,
5. The 2-headed femoral muscle,
6. The lateral femoral muscle,
7. The tension adjuster of the femoral fascia.

These muscles are connected with the bone of the hind leg. The coordination between these muscles initiates the adduction movement. Primarily the muscle group of the great adductors is responsible for this movement by pulling the hind leg to the medial that means inwards. The antagonists (No. 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7) contribute by their eccentric contraction to the fluency of the movement.

The spinal column

Apart from the protection of the spinal cord the spine provides with his stable bones, his thick ligaments and muscles for a kind of frame which bridges the distance between front and hind limbs. It is charged to offer a starting point to strong muscle groups and to oppose a resistance to the downwards movement of the main focus which is positioned in the middle of the chest. Moreover, in most of the horse sports disciplines the spine must support the weight of the rider.

7.9 Extension (stretching) of the back

Extension (stretching)

The agonist muscles which are responsible for the stretching of the spine are positioned above the spine. The following muscles belong to the group of these extensors:

1. The spinous process muscle and the half spinous process muscle,
2. The longest back muscle,
3. The ilium bone-rib muscle.

Flexion (inflexion)

The agonist muscles which are responsible for the inflexion of the spine are the stomach and the intercostals' muscles. The muscles, which are concerned with the protraction, retraction, abduction and adduction of the limbs, furthermore support the inflexion of the spine.

Lateral flexion (lateral inflexion)

By no means, a lateral inflexion is initiated by a certain muscle. It is more probable that such an inflexion is the result of a one-sided concentric contraction either of the flexor or the extensor of the spine. For this movement the muscles between the single vertebral bodies are important. These are small muscles which run along the spine and connect the vertebral bodies with each other.

The great transverse muscles of the abdominal muscle group, particularly the inner transverse abdominal muscle, are very important for this special movement.

The thorax

The breast muscles and the ventral sawed muscles are very important for the support and stabilisation of the thorax in proportion to the spine. The abdominal muscles support, on the one hand, the lateral inflexion and on the other hand the thorax. The intercostals muscles are responsible for the real movement of single ribs. The muscle fibres of the diaphragm are responsible for the respiration.

The neck

Muscles

The cervical muscles are very important for a horse's movement, because the horse uses his head as a counterbalance for the weight of his remaining body. One can see this more clearly in the quick canter, but also in trot or walk, how the forward movement of the horse and the downward impulsion of the head support the footing of the hind legs.

Fig. 7.10 Extension (stretching) of the neck

The following cervical muscles are discussed:

1. The longest cervical muscle (M. longissimus nuchae)
2. Splenius muscle (head portion and cervical portion)
3. Head portion of the half spinous process muscles,
4. Rhomboidal muscle,
5. Sawed muscle (cervical portion),
6. Trapezoidal muscle (cervical portion),
7. Leading straight cervical position muscle,
8. Breastbone-head muscle,
9. Shoulder-hyoid bone muscle and breastbone-hyoid bone muscle,
10. Arm head muscle (Musculus brachio cephalicos),
11. Scalene muscle,
12. Inter vertebral muscles.

Fig. 7.11 Flexion (inflexion) of the neck

Fig. 7.12 Lateral inflexion of the neck

These muscles are connected from the basicranium to the spine, from the cervical vertebrae downwards to the thoracic vertebrae, and also connected with the upper ribs and the scapula. The coordination between these muscles produces several movements.

Cervical extension (stretching)

The following muscles are involved in the extension of the neck:

1. The splenius muscle of head
2. The head portion of the half spinal process muscle,
3. The cervical part of the longest muscle,
4. The trapezoidal muscle,
5. The rhombic muscle,
6. The front straight cervical set muscle,
7. Inter vertebral muscles.

The contraction of these muscles initiates the stretching of the arched cervical spine, so that the head is raised.

All muscles, which are involved in the inflexion of the neck, are extended with the extension movement and guarantee the stability and the fluency of the movement by their eccentric contraction.

Inflexion of the neck

The following muscles are involved in the inflexion of the neck:

1. The breastbone-head muscle,
2. The splenius muscle,
3. The arm head muscle,
4. The shoulder-hyoid bone muscle and the breastbone-hyoid bone muscle.

The contraction of these muscles initiates the inflexion and with this the forward movement of the cervical spine, so that the head goes down.

All muscles, which are involved in the extension of the neck, are extended with the inflexion movement and guarantee the stability and the fluency of the movement by their eccentric contraction.

Lateral inflexion (Lateral inflexion)

The following muscles are involved in the lateral inflexion of the neck:

1. The front straight cervical set muscle,
2. The inter vertebral muscles,
3. The cervical portion of the splenius muscle
4. The arm head muscle,

5. The breastbone-head muscle,

6. The shoulder-hyoid bone muscle and the breastbone- hyoid bone muscle.

The one-sided concentric contraction of these muscles leads to the fact that the head and cervical spine are moved to this side. All involved muscles on the other cervical side are extended with this and contribute by their eccentric contraction to the stability and to the fluency of the movement.

The judgement of schooling and movement of the horse

Judge's primer part 1

by Kurt Albrecht, Director of the Spanish Riding School

Brigadier Prof. Kurt Albrecht was a director of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna. As high-ranking equestrian expert he was an internationally well known dressage judge and an untiring advocate of the classical values also in the dressage.

The first part is dedicated to the terms of judgement, which are always mentioned at the end, but they are, however, so important in its influence that this presentation is put to the top. They are so important, because they communicate us the most profound information about the quality of horse schooling, and this is the real quality, which the dressage judge has to judge.

In the course of the time the harmful habit has become naturalized that the judges evaluate the quality of the presentation, without giving a tip to the wrong schooling. This should not lead to the final fact that judges see their major task in the enumeration of the visible mistakes, instead of recognising and expressing the invisible backgrounds.

The suppleness is the first and final aim in the training of a riding horse for the judgement of the position or movement of a horse.

Suppleness is the basic element. A horse is considered as mentally supple, if it shows pleasure in working together with the rider (freedom of anxiety) and is relaxed and at the same time concentrated in task it is performing. From a physical point of view it is the most economical use possible of the entire locomotors system without any tension or cramping, rhythmical and regular moving in every exercise in all three basic gaits, whereby

the back must always be considered the central area.

The physical suppleness has to precede the inner (mental) suppleness. An external sign for the suppleness of a horse is the „rider's comfortable sitting in the saddle“ in the sitting trot, by a calm and relaxed carried tail which is swinging rhythmically, by attentive ears and a „great eye“, which expresses ease and confidence.

Furthermore, if the posture of the neck also externally shows a line, as it is necessary for the thoroughness of the rider's aids, moreover if the horse also does not tense or tilt in the neck, and if, finally, the mouth chews with moderate activity. Who sees in the ease of the horse the most important criterion for his suppleness, will be on the right way concerning the judgement. However, suppleness may not be mistaken with a falling apart of the horse. This is always the case if for a wrong suppleness, the rider renounces to push with the appropriate leg and weight aids and to counter hold the reins with sensitive hands.

The trot-half pass: Important criterions are rhythm and impulsion, cadence and balance of the horse.

Suppleness is at any case the necessary condition for the advanced dressage level and it must be always the basis for further schooling and the following collected exercises.

Snapshot of a "Schenkelgängers" (horses moving only with their legs without a swinging back): Horse behind the rein, with a stiff back, rider with too strong hand influence and backward-leaning position.

One could circumscribe a real suppleness with „a full devotion of the horse’s strength to the momentary purpose“. The suppleness must not automatically entail a complete thoroughness, but it is an important precondition for it.

The thoroughness is intended by the ability for the locomotion of the important joints and muscle parts, in order to let directly through all riders’ aids without any resistance. It is the real key for impulsion, responsiveness, posture and, finally, activity in the haunches. The muscle network of the horse connects together all body parts in an elastic form, and by this connection every aids given to a part of the horse is transferred to all remaining ones. The better the thoroughness is achieved with a horse, the more detailed the rider’s aids can be given and then the effect of these aids are more eye-catching.

Not responsive or disobedient? Also a not sufficient supple horse can sometimes tend to the shyness.

This possibility to influence the horse with lightest aids is particularly supported by a good back activity. The schooling aim should always be the correct "Rückengänger" (horses "going over" the back!). The obedience is also anchored in the thoroughness. One can make it to an own judgement point or include him in the thoroughness.

Here we would like to draw attention to a very essential difference by the judgement of the different kinds of disobedience:

- A horse can be purely instinctive for moments out of control of the rider, because of external influences. Such a physical-conditioned behaviour should not be called at all disobedience. The most important differentiation sign to the real disobedience must be that the rider already gets back again the trust of the horse (and his suppleness) after few moments what will be possible to him, because of his correct thoroughness without too strong rider’s influence.

- Nevertheless, the real disobedience arises from a mental or physical resistance. In this

situation the horse mostly gives up the complete suppleness, and the thoroughness is also questioned by an unnatural tension. This disobedience is to be judged as a mistake and not the other disobedience mentioned above.

- And then there is still the case that a horse "plays" with his rider, without loosing his internal suppleness. In the beginnings this can be almost always caused by the weakness of the rider. Later such a bad habit can also cause problems to a good rider. Such appearances will also have to be judged as a disobedience of the horse by the judges.

Impulsive-elastic canter with good ground cover

The impulsion can only be demanded from a submissive horse. In this case it is necessary to correct also several wrong views:

A quickly going horse is sometimes called as „a horse with impulsion“. The following prerequisite for the impulsion are: the transfer of the energetic impulse from the hindquarters to the complete forwards movement of the horse. Due to good suppleness and confident the horse is coming up to the bit, or to the rider’s hand, it goes forwards in good rhythm. Due to the swinging back and uncramped interplay and functioning of the trunk flexor and extensor muscles the horse strikes off actively and energetically forwards-upwards with the hind-legs. At the same time swings through well forwards with the hind-legs and develops thrust. A clear lengthening of the frame is recognized in the extensions with a yielding poll and confident self-carriage. This is a criterion for the movements going through the horse’s entire body and the hind legs being able to swing through in an optimum way.

If the rider rides too much backwards and does not develop the horse’s ability too little in the forward movement, the horse will become increasingly tense and the rider becomes difficulties to sit. Then the problems begin.

The impulse can go either to the forward, or to the upward. The more the horse reacts to

the rider's aids, the more the impulsion will be more expressively. If the rider gives very strong aids, a part of the impulsion gets already lost by the conflict rider / horse.

The straightening is according to all famous riding masters an important pre-condition for the exploitation of the driving thrust of the hind legs, as well as denominated for the control of the horse by the control of the hind legs. However, the straightening of the horse can never be reached without considering the natural crookedness of every horse. It can only be ridden with an increased balance, a confidential step forward to the bit, without being too strong with the rein aids. It would be contra productive to forcible press together the convex formed musculature. If we watch as a judge a presentation of a horse, with whom the reshaping of the convex side was obviously not reached yet (hollow and stiff side), but nevertheless was presented as a balanced horse with a freely swinging forward to the sensitive holding up hand, and obviously relaxed and through for the rider's aids, we should not overlook the natural crookedness, but should not evaluate it too negatively. The judge will have to decide whether he judges with higher marks more

excessive rein aids against the natural asymmetry, which will be always responded by unnatural muscle tension and with it a stiffness, than a rider, who renounces on this removal and presents a supple balance (self)carriage horse. Being successful in both, in the theory, as well as in the practise only succeeds at all one far advanced rider, and these are seldom to be found!

The self carriage is quite an important criterion for the fact that a horse does not need any more an artificial support by rein and rider's hand, but also under the rider has again found his balance. Also in this case the "Rückengänger" ((horse "going over" the back!) dominates over the "Schenkelgänger" (horse moving only with their legs without a swinging back). The really working back muscles enable the horse, if the hind legs move forward in the direction of the centre of gravity to take in the same measure weight off the forehead.

This pair has written dressage history and has also released controversial discussions in judge's and expert's circles. You can read the continuation of this article in the next issue of Piaffe (September, 2011).

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Behavioural fairy tales

Nonsense & sense

Often heard – never be sceptic about

By Romo Schmidt

Decades of undesirable trends and comfort have influenced many areas in directions which affect the situation of our horses with lasting effect. In this article the current keeping practise in Germany should be discussed carefully and sceptically. The philosopher Theodor W. Adorno express this

with the words: „There is no right life in a wrong“ (Life!). This should mean: To keep the horse in a surroundings which is harmful to him as for example in a narrow and dusty box, and then to counteract the negative results by expensive immune system preparations or nervous tranquilizers. This is the same as to

tack it from the back. One cannot repeat it frequently enough: Only an appropriate habitat for horses can guarantee a permanently well-balanced psyche and physic. All the other methods in the horse keeping are fairy tales without happy end for the horse. But: What is an appropriate horse keeping surrounding?

Who has invented it?

The minimum size of a single box for a big horse is defined according to the institutional directives of many organisations as for example of the German Equestrian Federation (FN) as the „withers height multiplied by two in square“. This means for an average big horse an about ten square metres box, mostly in the dimensions of 3.00 multiplied with 3.50 metres. Today this proportion is fixed in many stables and is defined as „a standard format“. In the meantime, they have created an EU norm which indicates the minimum size of a horse box, which has to amount to three to three metres, that means even less than recommended in German directives. No one knows about the development of this standardization or who has "invented" them.

First details were found in the beginning of the 1970s in a construction journal of the committee for technology and architecture in the agriculture, Frankfurt am Main (KTBL). In these investigations, partially developed by Professor Ulrich Schnitzer "for the planning of equestrian centres", the abovementioned standard formula is presumably described for the first time.

In the future it was copied more or less by many federations. This standard has probably "grown", that means it has developed after the boom in horse keeping in the end of the 60s under cooperation of the most different lobbyists on account of rational and economic considerations and then was defined for the first time as a standard in 1970. Also the free stall barn working group (LAG) has taken over without further comment on her topical Internet site under the column „example sizes for horse keeping“ the abovementioned formula for inside boxes. Moreover they write: „Horses need a minimum size for their

boxes. The LAG asks their inspectors to apply the formulae developed by professor Schnitzer“. Also in spite of many critical voices of relevant animals' protection organisations the single horse box remains the „most common stabling in Germany“(2002) according to Dr. Heinrich Pirkelmann of the regional authorities for stockbreeding in Grub.

Dr. Pirkelmann was already attentively observed in 1993, while he preferred the inside single horse box keeping due to the following reasons: „Keeping-technical advantages for the horse's owner, the easier individual care and feeding and the more comfortable contact to the animal“. In 1995 an expert's group, which established guidelines for the judgement of horse keeping under animals' protection points of view on behalf of the Federal Ministry of consumer protection, food and agriculture, confirmed the defined standard size of inside horse boxes. Further justifications of this kind of horse keeping were published in the nineties in various publications of famous equestrian scientists. One justification was that the inside horse box allows the horse a minimum of movement which should be complemented by daily training. The minimum movement period should be at least one hour.

In the year 2000 the stable construction expert, Georg W.Fink, from Fink riding construction, Aufkirchen expressed himself a little more moderate. He thinks that the specific behaviour and the nature of the horse contradict every kind of stable keeping, but due to external circumstances horse stabling cannot be avoided. However four years before Mr. Fink was more critical in an interview of the Austrian magazine "Pferderevue": „We do not ride our horses until they are dead, but we exaggerate in keeping them until they are dead.“ There are some changes in the leisure riding sport, but in the conventional equestrian centres still exist an old-fashioned way of thinking and this is very harmful for the horses“.

Appropriate stabling for horses

The fact that stabling must be not necessarily a risk in animal protection is proved by the

Britons already for many centuries. Although their riding and driving horses were also held in single boxes, they could stay in a common group by open boxes. With it the horses could exercise their different social behaviour. At the same time their stable doors disposed of a lower and upper gull wing door. In this manner the horses could be kept in the box during bad weather, illness or other circumstances, however, they had at disposal a lot of light and air as well as visual contact with the other horses by the opened upper gull wing door. These kind of doors were the predecessors of the today's paddock box, an inside box with two doors, one to the stable area and a two wing-door to the single paddock (in some stables also to the group paddock).

This kind of box keeping is an absolutely satisfied alternative for the individual care demanded by Dr. Pirkelmann, the feeding as well as the comfortable access to the animal and, moreover, allow a minimum in social behaviour, light, air and climatic feeling as well as according to the size of the single paddock or technical moving (movement box stall) also admit certain movement possibilities.

Unfortunately, for Germany the British horse keeping did not serve as a model. Instead of this, in the seventies and eighties the Germans established horse stables with at most one window per inside box and build them even today. If one looks in such big and closed stable buildings, one must put to himself the question, why this spirit of the times has asserted itself and what the builder have thought about this. Since, in the meantime, it is proved unquestionably by many investigations of the most respectable behaviourists and veterinarians that this kind of horse keeping can make them permanently sick and disabled and, in the end, it causes a higher expense by veterinarian's treatments and other expenditures, as if one had built the stable buildings equally appropriated for horse.

Open stabling

Especially sports horses suffer particularly from cramped and dust-loaded stabling conditions; although it is academically disproved long ago many horse owners have still doubts against an open stabling with injury risks or performance losses. "A rule of thumb says that it lasts about 20 years, until a new scientific knowledge is accepted as a general knowledge among experts and other 20 years for the lay people (horse owner)", notes Dr. Barbara Schöning, the professional veterinarian for behaviour and animal protection. If one adds these forty years knowledge duration with the early ninety years in which in the science began the universal change in thinking, the realization of the stabling change would only take place in 2030. But no, the change process seems to develop faster: Since by now the old crusts open and modern stable keeping starts to establish.

Before the structuring of such systems is indicated and is discussed critically, the essential advantages of the open stabling should once again be outlined shortly as decision support to beginner and experienced rider/horse owner. On this occasion, it is not a fairy tale, but there are academically reasoned facts. No matter, whether it is an open stable, free stall barn, circuit paddock with run incentives („paddock Paradise), "Race track paddock" or movement stable. They all are more or less successful with lasting effect: Rise of the basic conditions (Locomotion), active immune system by realistic environmental conditions, reliable nerves by persistent outside influence, resistant hoofs by changing qualities of the soil, stable tendons, ligaments, muscles and bones as well as free from digestion problems by continuous movement, healthy back by freely rolling and feeding from the ground, clean respiratory tract by continuous fresh air, well-balanced psyche by living according to their requirements and with nature identical feeding by a little however lasting absorption of nutrients. The latter applies particularly to "Paddock Paradise" and the movement stable (with automatic feeder).

Automating as a progress?

Currently in Germany, Switzerland and Austria roughly exist about 1,000 automated movement stables (Sources: Hit-active stable and Schauer-movement stables) with definite upwards trend. With the basic implementation the investment costs amount to 20,000 Euros (for concentrates and hay feed station of a group of 10 to 20 horses). The pension prices are normally like those in conventional equestrian centres with inside box rows and stable lane. Of course, there are differences according to additional possibilities to use as the indoor riding school, dressage arena, Round-Pen etc.).

In the beginnings of the automating in 1996, the horse keeping expert, Ingolf Bender, expressed himself in a German horse technical journal as follows: „ In newer time there has been propagated several – supposedly for a simplifying service – "feeding machines" for the keeping of leisure horses. Such systems are known from the intensive mass animal farming and there at most as a concession for purely economic reasons tolerable to the otherwise very labour-intensive hand feeding. In the horse keeping they should make the keeper chronologically independent among other things, as to simplify the dosage etc.. These arguments seemed not be convincing for the author. On the contrary, it is like a perversion of the facts, because just the feeding and observation are essential respect elements between rider/horse owner and horse. As a result of this such technical games are inappropriate in the leisure horse's keeping. The same fact is valid for the technically steered movement systems, as door automatic etc. which should "force" a horse to move more in the free stall barn and outdoor area. This could be a nice invention, but it is neither safe nor appropriate for horse. Appropriate for horse is a fairly wide stable barn with natural movement incentives– this is decisive. If these tolerable attempts are not possible, any "automatic" can be applied as alternative for horses. “

Fifteen years ago this evaluation was partly correct, because at that time the development of the movement stables was still in the beginning and essential elements as effective movement incentives, selection systems for

pasture and roughage admission, different soil conditions, structured rest and inside areas, integration areas and a lot more were not yet realised with the adequate technical standard.

One point of critique is that „just the feeding and observation is an essential relation element between human beings and horses“. Concerning this argument can be said: For the horse it makes absolutely no difference whether it takes his feed from a dosage bucket of a concentrates' machine or whether the hand of the feed master throws the ration in the feeding trough. Most important is the quality and quantity of the feed. And in which pension stables the horses are observed carefully? And what kind of "relation between man and horse" should this be? Is the distribution in hectic from less and high concentrates by partly insufficiently qualified stable staff even more the reason for subsequent illnesses like colic or gastric ulcers?

On the contrary: In the meantime with the assistance of well developed computer technique of modern feed machines can be checked at any time whether and how often a horse individually received feed (concentrate and roughage) distributed in tiny amounts over the day, or whether it does not eat due to health reasons (colic etc.).

But it still continues: In 2009 a detection system with behavioural recognition comes on the market which has functions like a GPS system. With this system it is possible to determine at any time the exact position of every single horse in a group. With the individual position recognition and his behaviour pattern one can ascertain a perhaps atypical behaviour and evaluate it automatically. With it ill animals or aggressive behaviour patterns are thereby recognised and the stable operator can be informed about such irregularities by his mobile phone.

Are these perhaps first landmarks of Aldous Huxleys „Beautiful new world“? No, but not more and also but not less we take them as highly auxiliary means which we can use to the healthy preservation of our horses and in

addition in some decades it will primarily be used with certainty.

In the truest sense of the word "dusty" romances of "traditional" horse keeping with the "stable masters who still knew everybody and everything" are soon over at least for great equestrian centres. Nevertheless, the person who calculates the daily ration, refills the feed machines and controls her function is furthermore responsible. Due to high cost this kind of automating is not possible for private small open stable barns. These feed stations are also not suitable for foal-leading mares.

Many possibilities and new knowledge

Now it should be overtaken to use wooden, sheet metal and canvas cover shelters, which are used everywhere in the eighties and nineties for the purpose of an "appropriate" horse keeping, mostly, however, because of a lack of money and a limited area. These buildings were rebuilt like mushrooms and gave a negative image to the concept "free stall barn".

However, an appropriate free stall barn is structured with lasting effect with feeding equipment without feeding jealousy (feeding construction and circle construction for hay), sleeping zones and rest areas, appropriate soil for the hoofs, enough space for rolling, outside watering places, which are frost-proof and provisional boxes. However, this kind of free stall barn does not avail in a sufficient size besides easy stable building construction, paddock, pastures, and adequate incentives for moving and special ways to pastures with less grass and feed for thick horses or those with an inclination for hoof founder. Some advocates of horses boxes argue as follows: „The horses are standing outside the same stupidly on one spot as in an inside box.“ This is partially correct, although there are many advantages as mentioned above.

In order to get more dynamism in the free stall barn, movement incentive can be created by a special order or soil conditions in the paddocks. Who owns a piece of pasture in the neighbouring of the stable, can arrange a circuit with paddock, pasture and again back

to the stable paddock (with 1 hectare of pasture it could be about 400 m long). In such a free stall barn the facilities, which has been arranged up to now in the stable building or in the paddock, will move to this circuit: straw holder, hay feeding stand, roofed mineral and salt block, nature hedges, area for rolling and a "view platform" with or without shady shelter.

A circuit paddock with incentives for moving ("Paddock Paradise") can be realised everywhere where a piece of meadow borders on a stable.

In addition, the soil conditions are also structured: sand footings on the paddock before the stable building, surface of the earth with vegetation (grass) on the circuit with a centred band consisting of a wood chips layer against the development of mud in winter, a some metres including area with coarse round pebble stones for the "reflex zone massage" of the hoofs and a water crossing (humidity penetration of the hoofs) which will be drained in winter. These different soil structures do not care only for the hoofs, but provide the horses with additional movement and train the horses on her everyday circuit.

The American keeping expert and farrier's legend, Jamie Jackson, has introduced for example a similar circuit in a more simplified form in his book "Paddock Paradise", which came on the market recently. This is also called by him as „racetrack-paddock“ (= racing distance exercise) and consists of many small hay and straw heaps, which are laid out for the horses to keep them in movement. This procedure shall imitate the natural feed ingestion of wild-living mustangs in the western federal states of the USA. He observed them a long time and came to these kinds of innovative keeping. On this occasion, these mustangs make around 6 and 17 kilometres per day.

After different investigations about the movement of domesticated horses, the following result were as follows (Sources: Zeitler-Feicht 2003, Stephanie Arnemann, „Haltung von Sportpferden unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Leistung“): Distance

covered in the single horse box was 170 metres per day (that means in total 578 steps, 39 percent at the side, 32 percent turning, 20 percent straight ahead and 9 percent backward), in a free stall barn (mixed horse group) 1.8 kilometres, movement stable (Haflinger) with 6 times daily feeding and 4.8 kilometres, movement stable (different races) and 12 times daily feeding up to 10 kilometres. There isn't any information about the kilometrage in the "racetrack paddock", as far as it could be investigated.

But once again back to the "main issue". The mechanised movement stable cannot substitute the relationship between human being and horse.

However, we are honest: Is it not rather the human being who searches this profound relationship and not the horse? And is it not possibly the absolute dependence of the horse on the rider/horse owner which the horse gives the order to be nice to them? Since the adaptation horse genius does not already exist 300 times longer than the human being, but the horse will also presumably survive them in the remote future.

The stallion's star shows the most appropriate keeping for horses, which must be held single because of different reasons.

Examples of a modern and a new kind of movement stable built in 2010

When I came for looking into and taking photos of a movement stable close to Kassel, I had admittedly resentments and prejudices. I asked myself whether the application of technical apparatuses really improves strongly the keeping comfort of the horses as it is said by the manufacturers of such products and confirmed by the stable operators of movement stables. Is it possible that a computer with transponder technology can steer in time roller blinds and a system of galvanised steel pipes the proven kind of horse group keeping, not only defy it, but even revolutionise this? After one day of observation and conversation with some horse owners in this movement stable, built in May 2010, I decided: "Yes, this is really

possible without the ifs and buts! The atmosphere in this stable was very vital without hectic rush, interrupted from rest and sleeping phases, with feeding of small portions of concentrates and roughage as well as with enough water and enough possibilities for social contacts together (social coat care of the other). The horses looked happy and balanced, were curious, but were not invasive and seemed visibly satisfied, although these 10 horses lived only two months together. They came from different kinds of stable keeping (single box, paddock box and free stall barn) and were put together at the same time without bigger adaptation support at the beginning of June. Some horses already knew themselves from the previous stables; but most did not know the others before. However, they were so distracted by the new surrounding and the variety of activities that difficulties hardly arose while settling down. On the contrary: By the fact that they only had to learn and to explore the new "technology" and how to reach to their food, they were first too occupied to clarify immediately their rank orders. This process continued bit by bit and then without bigger conflicts. In the future the movement stable near Kassel is conceived to a maximum of 24 horses. However, the operators want to limit the number to 20 horses, because every ten new horses will go through the integration programme in the generously installed integration box with a single paddock bordering the paddock of the group.

However, it has to be emphasized at this point: The operators have not saved and really have exhausted all technical and architectural possibilities. The movement stable encloses now:

- three roughage stations: two which open and close regularly in time intervals for everybody (limited in the roughage need of that horse who receives only a few because of overweight), one in the inside and one in the outside area as well as a third in the outside section, which only opens after suitable computer setting for the horses who need individual additional hay.

- A concentrate station by means of chip recognition (outside).
- A straw dispositive with several feeding areas, covered (outside).
- A sluice (big inside box) with two doors to the stable lane and to the outside through which one can get safely a single horse in and out without compulsion.
- A new indoor riding school with solar roof,
- Two big rest rooms, one for standing with a ground surface of special concrete without litter and with soft beds and horse toilet (shavings).
- The interior rooms have several entrances and are provided partly with transparent striped curtains.
- Two frost-proof drinking troughs in the outside section.
- A central roofed area in the paddock with seat opportunity for people. This will be also used as a central observation post for horse owners and operators, in order to watch the integration of newcomers and to allow a quick intervention in dangerous situations.
- An integration box (also used as a sick box for horses) with paddock, attaching to the community paddock.
- All feed areas are in some distance to each other with additional run ways by means of tree trunks and sting fences from metal.
- Floor coverings: Concrete plaster without footings, perforated mats with small gravel and sand granulates, drainage channels and a rolling area with sand.

An example for this can be found in Namibia (earlier: German South-West Africa). At the beginning of the 20th century as a result of different wars, imported warmbloods ran away in the desert, survived during the course of 80 years without any human relation and reproduced themselves. Studies according to the South African biologist, Telané Greyling, the horses have adapted themselves very

much to the dry and hot conditions of the area in the east edge of the Namib Desert. By the way, the comprehensive population about 300 animals was only discovered in the eighties.

A new roughage station of a movement stable invested.

Instead of demonising the technology, we should use it sensibly, in order to offer a maximum of vitality in the horse life in the relaxation time. However, this does not release the horse owner from his duty to work with his horse sensibly, variously and taking sufficient care. This should be fun for the rider and horse and should not be accompanied with the same permanent bad conscience as with a horse accommodated in an inside box.

Moving incentives also in the single horse keeping?

There are a lot of advantages in the group horse keeping, but with some horses it is not still possible or only with restrictions, for example with stallions, who are covering mares or geldings with the same behaviour as stallions, not socialised horses and horses with special handicap. But also here technical and architectural innovations make an improvement of the single horse keeping possible. A nice example is the "moving box". This is a paddock box with moving incentives, in which the horse is motivated by different feed areas and by multiple times of only small feed portions over the day, in order to move more often. Although the concept "running box" as well as the often used alternative name "movement box" should provide a positive impression of this kind of single box keeping with only little area, but is not really persuasive in my opinion. This kind of stable keeping cannot offer sufficient movement. Moreover it requires other architectural changes as for example to the small paddocks bordering single paddocks.

The feeding process is evenly distributed in small quantities about 24 hours. This gets closer to the horse nature, who is a permanent eater, than feeding him by hand in the "normal" paddock box. By the way, time-steered feed machines which are installed for

every animal in the movement box are affordable, because in the meantime more and more manufacturers offer this product and the competition increases. The price of a concentrates dosing feeder (up to 30 rations per day) amounts to 500 euro. For good, stable roughage dosing feeder must be invested about 1000 euro with protection against injuries. They also offer combination equipment which is installed in the box or on

the paddock. If feed machines are installed on the paddock, as for example, Hanns Ullstein jun., LAY, recommends, in order to create more movement incentive in the movement box, this equipment has to be protected against climatic influence (roofing), otherwise a perfect function as well as life duration cannot be guaranteed.

Book tip

This was Otto Lörke (1880 – 1957)

„Otto Lörke was one of the well known riders of the pre-war time, who has also given quite determining impulses to the reconstruction of the tournament sports after the war. “ This was written by Harry Boldt, who was one of the world-best dressage riders of his time, in his book „Das Dressurpferd“, published in 1978. Moreover, he wrote: “We, as young riders, could make the experience, as his only five-year-old horses Chronist xx and Adular already showed excellent piaffe and passage, while they still participated in special ability tests at the same time. Lörke was quite 70-year-old at this time; however, he still controlled the dressage scene.”

By K. von Knobelsdorff

In contrast to many famous riders, who left records or published in lifetime, there is any biographic document about this well known rider. Beside his own performances in the saddle which were significantly important, there were his impressed results as a dressage trainer. Otto Lörke embodied a high degree of sense of duty, diligence and consistent implacability. He had a good heart which hit under the coat of his severity.

In order to keep in mind one of our best dressage riders for younger generations, I want to report below what I found out about him as his approximate contemporary during an acquaintance from more than fifty five years and partially experienced with him.

First I saw him in 1901 as a young corporal of the first guard ulan in Potsdam, where he served in the squadron of the Riding Master v. Heimbürg. His commander was the Colonel Karl v. Alten, later boss of the military-riding institute in Hannover, who had significantly promoted him, however, even more, he was promoted by v. Holzing, who was at the end of the last century in the Baden Dragoon's regiment and moved to the first guard ulan. V. Holzing attracted attention by his elegance in the saddle, his correct position and seat and the effectiveness of his aids in the whole Prussian cavalry. As a son of a grand Duke and a Baden Region Master of the Horse, Excellence v. Holzing, he had had of the

earliest youth on good trainers, who had schooled him on very well trained horses with finest riding feeling what he transmitted now to the gifted young Corporal.

However, Lörke never looked elegant in the saddle, although he was at that time pretty as a picture, a slender guy with black hair and with a good figure, but his too long legs forced him in particular with small horses to keep his thigh with open knees in the saddle flap, what was later hardly to be noticed with the high cuirassier boots of the royal stud uniform and on the heavy horses of the Emperor, but after 1918 when he worked many small horses, he often was blamed for this. He exactly knew his deficits; however, because of his build he could not change it. His inconceivable effectiveness and correctness of his aids on the horse had also never been decreased with it.

In 1904 he was commanded for a probationary year in the royal stud where he learnt exemplary schooling of the young horses for their riding under the Chief Master of the Horse, Plinzner, what he had always emphasized until to the end of his life, also the performances of Plinzner, as a special Master of the Horses of the Emperor, who rode courageously to his resignation like the youngest lieutenant and had always a nice position and seat. Schooling the horses on this level was not easy, because His Majesty had big difficulties, because of his paralyzed left

arm from his childhood as a small prince and for this attaining the necessary balance in the saddle, what was only put through by the crude energy of his educator, Dr. Hinzpeter, as the other riding instructors from the royal stud were not successful with him. A future Emperor, who would not have been able to perform official duties on a horse, was unimaginable. At around 1875, the commanded person responsible for the mounting of the Prince Wilhelm, Plinzner, came by the realisation of his difficult job to a new idea of the compulsory "horse on the bit", i.e. he put the horse noses behind the bit and, moreover, he ordered to join the reigns of the bridle and the double bridle at the end by sewing them together, so that they were gathered in a fourfold strip of belts. Several rings were sewed in, so that the Emperor could insert a hook inside, fastened in the left glove, so that he could shorten or stretch the reins. His rein fist was so strongly paralyzed that it could only be closed or be opened with the help of the right hand. Moreover, the left arm was so immobile that turns with a horse could only be reached by shifting the upper part of the body. His Majesty had acquired such a routine in this shifting of his body that one hardly noticed anything at all. Moreover, there was any indication during the loved cavalry attacks ridden by him, whom he decreased after 1904, therefore just before Pflinzners departure in 1905.

At the same time the Lörkes probationary year was finished and he was engaged as a royal saddle master, adherent with also a complete reorganization of the royal stud. The former Chief Masters of the Horse, Count Wedel, explained his solidarity with Pflinzner and asked for his dismissal.

Excellency von Reischach, the last seneschal of the emperor's mother (already died 1901) filled the vacancy. Reischach was a very skilful, more imposingly active and kind man, who had got to know the exemplary driving style of her native country by his Mistress, daughter of the Queen Viktoria of England. In order to introduce him in Berlin, he was benefitted by the painter, Benno Achenbach, who had the reputation of being the finest expert without title and authority, in this respect made his

advice easier, so that since autumn, 1905 the Emperor moved jerkily from the present quick carriage driving with grey horses to the motoring. As a result of this the approximately 60 grey horses were reduced to 20 and instead of them 40 high-stepping brown Holsteiner were bought, which corresponded to the English state coach horses. Approximately 140 black stallions of totally 326 of the royal stud for traditional representation purposes of Trakehnen and from other principal stud farms were ridden only by the suite, apart from some, which are used by the Empress for driving two-in-hand. The uncle of Lörke, Wagon Master Prigant, was in charge for the schooling of the young black horses, what was of course advantageous to him, because Prigant had the reputation of an excellent rider and driver who had always well advised him. The riding stable, existing of 126 horses, had been subordinated to the present captain posted for this, Cavalry Captain v. Holzing, who was assisted in the stable for the suite by the First Lieutenant of the regiment Garde du Corps, Count Lubbert Westphalen,. Holzing was an excellent rider, but also a brilliant performer. Because of his aversion against the system of Plinzner, he sorted out a little bit drastically several lending horses to whom the Emperor was accustomed, so that soon a noticeable shortage occurred which the Emperor disliked. Also the old Saddle Masters could not be reskilled overnight and as a result of this Holzing regarded the well known young Lörke as a rescuer in the need, by which Lörke became popular by his extraordinary ability to prepare the horses properly for their services, the Emperor again got enough mounted horses and was happy, as in the interim time noticeable gaps were evident. Consequently the Captain v. Holzing was promoted to the Major and Aide-De-Camp and was replaced by the Count Westphalen, under whom Erich Glahn finished later his three years of employment as Marshal. For him, Lörke was an often uncomfortable subordinate, as, by the way, also for other superiors, because he was aware of his indispensability and his sense of responsibility and self conviction and did not accept any advices in his work. One typical example in one military exercise is as follows:

During a stop, Lörke took care of the obviously hindering holsters at the saddle of His Majesty. Excellency v. Reischach was very annoyed and sharply expressed that this was his job. Lörke promptly replied: „ Excellency, yes Excellency, but Excellency did not seem to note the obstructive disturbance of His Majesty, therefore I thought to have to remove it as soon as possible. “ As Reischach’s jealousy was known, the suite softly smiled.

Lörke also put through that the greeting duty of the Saddle Masters was cancelled towards the officers, who did not belong to the imperial suite.

Because of the low distance between Dessau and Potsdam or Berlin and my good relations with the men of the royal stud, I was often invited there and learnt to know about their local difficulties there, which I exactly knew in a smaller frame. Although the Prussian main stable was big enough to provide special horses for every special purpose, while we had to be content with average horses, there were, nevertheless, breakdowns, who could not temporarily be completely handled, because living beings remain unpredictable, although everything was well prepared. The well schooled parade horse, gelding and already tested 1000-times, Herzog, suddenly had e.g. the idea, to canter in front instead of behind the second point for the announcement during the Emperor presented on him a regiment. Under Lörke the bay horse did not even try it with given reins, wherein he repeated it under the Emperor, so that he had to leave the Emperor’s stable and was accommodated in the suite stable. In addition, in March, 1913 the favourite black horse of the Emperor, Tilly, unexpectedly got excited during the centenary of the „call to my people“ by King Friedrich Wilhelm III, as in snow flurry the Emperor rode along the fronts from the castle up to the Brandenburg Gate by the guard of honour of the guard-infantry-regiment. Tilly remained relaxed on the way out, in contrast on the way back he put up the short tail and walked very tensed that the behind riding Lörke expected any minute, he would get out of control with a negative end. The Emperor did not say anything about this

incident and maybe had not noticed the danger.

But there also were pleasant disappointments in this relation. In Wilhelmshöhe His Majesty loved to try riding unknown horses. One day he mounted the usual absolutely reliable gelding, Parthenon, who was only afraid of car’s running engine. But where should such a car come from in the park? Surprisingly, it came! It was Count Arnim-Boitzenburg, who stopped of course immediately and was very surprised about the meeting. He forgot to put down the engine. The Emperor gave him the hand from the saddle and talked to him a quarter of an hour. Parthenon remained relaxed, although he had always tensed under Lörke under similar conditions. Maybe this can be explained with the fact that the horse was on long reins and absolutely relaxed in front of a disagreeable thing, Partho remained relaxed as the rider did the same and did not reined him back. Lörke and my humble self discussed intensively about this and similar cases. In the course of the time during my visits in Potsdam, I had had many opportunities to ride horses of him. All horses were well schooled, very comfortable in riding and obedient to the aids, and, besides, showed absolutely responsiveness during long rides with only double bridle. Lörke was a master in correct riding equipment, in contrast to many other riders also today, and had a lot of experience in selecting suitable bits.

Generally he was a universal genius. He could sole shoes, alter suits, repair saddles and piece of furniture, he was very careful in the treatment of ill or lame horses and in their judgement, in contrast to the most other professional riders. In the saddle he schooled his horses independently and individually. He was so talented in the training of his pupils together with their horses that both parts made inconceivable progress. He anticipated fulgurous every coordination and interplay of the aids and then developed a sort of paroxysmal eruption (special discretion), because his commands could not often be executed as fast as he wanted it. As a result of this training, units often were martyrdom for the pupils, but they learnt a lot and also that

the outbursts of rage were spontaneous and that the strict master became immediately afterwards their best friend again. Heinz Pollay, Ida v. Nail, Liselott Linsenhoff and Anneliese Küppers were his famous pupils and also his well known pupil, Schultheis. They all had probably recognised that only his fanaticism for the art could bring him partially out of control, whereas he remained always pleasant in his private life. In the training he rode increasingly forward and brought very quickly his horses to a complete self carriage. I almost never saw him pulling at the bit. If a horse became tensed and/or disobedient, he corrected him very energetically and mostly completely. In 1931 he bought from the school stable in Hannover the "incorrect ridden" brown gelding, Amtmann, who was as meek as a lamb after approximately 8 days, so that Dr. v. Becker, preferential customer of Lörkes at that time, participated with him without problems in a quadrille. Shortly afterwards he sold the sinner as a dressage horse to Vienna, where he still succeeded very often on tournaments.

In spite of his great abilities, after 1918 Lörke had to struggle hard for his existence. In the first post-war years he schooled the brown gelding, Alberich, on the property Wanzleben in the Magdeburg Börde of the passionate married couple Schäfer, with whom he soon became winner on a Berlin tournament what had been discussed very controversially in the press, so that the horse got the byname "the mystery Alberich". As he was judged by his former Senior General v. Holzing and the former Vice-Chief-Master of the Horse, Count Lubbert Westphalen, one believed in partiality, but these old practitioners had judged him quite properly. They recognised the honest basic schooling of the horse. Mounting on him Lörke could change canter's speed with crossed arms, with pushers pushed back in the neck of the double bridle, reins arbitrarily long, and push to medium canter on the diagonals. I only saw him later performing this stunt on Kronos, and never again I had seen another rider doing the same. His horses preserved incredibly self carriage.

He always remained fair in his judgment about other riders. In 1930 in New Year I got to ride

the nearly four-year-old grey-amurath, Schalk, with whom I participated in front after relatively short time in the Quadrille of Albert Rother. Mr. Rother expressed himself very appreciatively about the horse. On the objection of an expert that these horses are only a cloth he said in his distinctive nature: „ It is better to make horses from clothes, than vice versa. “ By the way, Schalk went to the stable Sonnenberg, which exported Brückner's well known Zigeunerbaron to the USA approximately 20 years later.

Now and again Lörke suffered under setbacks. In 1929 in the Berlin tournament in the Green Week a quadrille, ridden by eight generals, brought him again in the first field of vision. Mr. v. Holzing rode in front, followed by the Generals v. Seefried, v. Graberg, two brothers Hasse, v. Horn, Keller and v. Posek, who rode excellently prepared horses by him. The men were closed with dark green tails, top hats and white breeches in which they looked great with their tall and slender bodies. Lörke had schooled them so carefully that they rode with an excellent seat and position. As a result of this there should have been a lively protest that the older men were not more accustomed, but, however, after the gigantic popular success everybody seemed to be very happy. At any case, it was a great performance of Lörke that he could provide the riders with eight of these horses who belonged concerning their build and schooling to the top class, and exerted a dominated influence on eight spoilt, high-ranking men that everything went with a great precision

During the Green Week in Berlin only some years later, Gustav Rau improvised a quadrille, with Lörke on Artus, Brückner on Caracalla, Staeck on Draufgänger and Gerhard on Fels and showed brilliantly parts of the Olympic programme with their whole routine. Probably this quartet of riders and horses will remain unique in the dressage history. The transitions, the flying changes with good forward fluency, straightened and striding uphill were showed particularly by Artus which was very determining at that time, and the exactness with which these four famous experts always remained vis à vis of their partners will probably remain deep in all

competent spectators' memory. Two participants rode the Trakehner Artus and Fels, who stemmed both from Floral. This stallion was brought shortly after the First World War from the Württemberg national stud farm Marbach to Trakehnen by the initiative of Gustav Rau. However, he had to disappear after only one covering period on initiative of the East Prussian breeders, although he bequeathed himself well and delivered another two further good dressage horses, namely Pike and Heinitz, who looked like their Trakehner mother, just as Artus, while Fels inherited the mass of the Normans.

Since approximately 1930, however, heavy horses, as for example Donner, Wotan, Kaiser Nero, Fledermaus etc. were not liked any more. This was the reason, why 1931 Lörke bought from Dr. Rothe-Tolmingkehnen the father of our eventing Olympic athlete Otto Rothe for Miss Braun's Absinth and 1932 Kronos in East Prussian, which had been bred from the Trakehnen black stallion, Karol (the mother called Eule), respectively of a daughter of her. The mare Eule was an extremely wiry, medium-sized dark brown horse that Dr. Rothe rode a lot on hunts and successfully in tournament hunt jumping. In 1920 she was the first horse whom I saw jumping with Major Wölki on the Lengkeningker Platz near Insterburg in an up to now unknown lightness and energy. At this time Miss Braun from Weimar lived as a widowed Mrs. Werther in Bremen. She was a favourite pupil of Lörke. The change to lighter horse was not easy for him, as he had always trained heavy horses during his royal stud time and afterwards, but generally he astonishingly accepted well the change, in spite of his overweight. I often admired his ability to seem weightlessly on elegant Trakehnen breeds, as Prenzlau of Ararad and Eilfracht of the in Argentina bought thoroughbred, Pretal, so that these horses neither suffered in the back nor in the development of their basic gaits. There were only breakdowns with horses whose back was overestimated by him concerning the lightness of the forehead. The road to success began for him with the buying of Absinth and Kronos.

In 1936, after First Lieutenant Pollay on Kronos and Major Gerhard on Absinthe had acquired the golden and silver dressage medals on the Olympic Games, his position as a dressage expert for Olympic horses was profoundly stabilized.

During the relaxation exercises in Hannover Lörke knew how to dominate. As the commander of the cavalry school, General v. Dalwigk, did not keep on time an appointment for the inspection of the Olympia's candidates, Lörke simply went away. Contacted afterwards, he argued correctly that he did not wear a uniform and would not be under military authority. He acted as civil adviser and asked for keeping the appointment or to cancel it on time. This was probably accepted, because this case did not happen again.

After the Olympic Games he came with his horses to the new-built stable (Tattersall) in Berlin, where we again worked together till 1938, in the same cooperation as we did from 1930-1932 in the stable (Tattersall) of the west. In this whole time we were a perfect team, whereas I had to particularly emphasise that he did not show any prima donna behaviour and was always rooted to the soil.

During his two last years in Berlin, the stable (Tattersall) apprentice, Willi Schultheis, was distributed to him, as Lörke took him after transference of the apprentice contract to himself in his new position at the cavalry school to Hannover in 1938. In spring 1937, he bought in Trakehnen the very tall and strong dark chestnut, Dorffrieden, and in the next winter, he arranged in the stable (Tattersall) a meeting of the still living first guard ulans for whom we worked out a joined programme for riding presentations.

Here is Otto Lörke with his ladies of the dressage team Liselott Linsenhoff, Anneliese Küppers and Hannelore Wiegand (from the left to the right) after the silver medal winning at the Olympic Games in Stockholm in 1956.

The horses Wätjen, Stecken and Czerannowski were also accommodated in this stable (Tattersall), joined by approximately 20 of the best tournament horses, who should be

shown as a group and Lörke wished me to ride in front his mighty four-year-old thoroughbred, Strachur, on which I had an excellent feeling, because he was very well schooled.

In 1938 on the spring auction in Trakehnen he bought Fanal, with whom he was very successful and in 1957 the 24-year-old horse old horse was led behind his coffin.

In 1938 Lörke again organised the training for Olympia at the cavalry school of Hannover. It was established the Olympia stable respectively school stable II beside Colonel Gerhard's school stable 1. In 1940 the following horses and riders are designated for the Olympic Games as Strachur and Dorffrieden (First lieutenant Robert Wilcke), the thoroughbred Inca and Nonne (First Lieutenant Stachenbacher), Absinth and Altgold (Captain Gustav Menke). Beside the dressage training for the Olympic Games 1940 in Tokyo of these three men with their six horses, Lörke also trained the three-day-event horses in the discipline dressage. The riders were as follows: First Lieutenant von der Groeben, First Lieutenant Nette, First Lieutenant von Busse, and First Lieutenant Max Habel with a total of 20 horses. Although Lörke was quite 59 years old, he had burdened himself with an immense quantity of work.

In 1939 in late autumn the whole cavalry school moved with a number of approx. 60 jumping horses, 45 of them are S-class jumping horses, 65 three-day-event horses, from which 40 horses were trained enough for a long cross country and a school stable of 65 horses, with 40 S-class dressage horses, to Krampnitz near Potsdam. In Krampnitz Lörke got a unique and first challenge as riding instructor, as it never was offered to anybody else. Under the protectorate of General Weingart and the boss of the 3rd infantry division, Colonel M. Stein, Lörke had received all possibilities to get the best horses and riders to Krampnitz. Colonel M. Stein had the military authority about the riders. The riders were as follows: Fritz Tiedemann, Bubi Günther, Robert Schmidtke, Walter Rumstich, Walter Körner, Gerhard Bork, Fritz Stecken, Kurt Laabs, W. Schultheis, Harry Geisler, First

Lieutenant Heinz Seidel, Gerhard Röhler, Willi Rudat. All of these riders were subordinated to Lörke, and each of the riders submitted with pleasure to the authority of Otto Lörkes. Under the commanders Colonel Felix Bürkner and later Colonel Harald Momm, who themselves worked daily in the school stable under Lörke, this community of riders was a wonderful and harmonising team. Lörke instructed in the school stable three quadrilles with twelve riders – a chestnut quadrille, one with brown and a mixed black and chestnut quadrille – in total 36 horses who participated in the "German school quadrille" which was built up on the Olympia's programme for 1940. The quadrille was guided by the respective commander, at first from Felix Brückner on Herder, later from Harald Momm on Fanal.

With the invasion of the Russians the whole cavalry school of Krampnitz trekked to Wolfenbüttel, where they were taken into English captivity. Until 1947 Lörke staid in Wolfenbüttel, afterwards Baron v. Nail brought him to Vornholz, where Schultheis had already been active as trainer for six months.

In 1948 the dressage stable of the stud Vornholz again participated in tournaments with five S-class dressage horses; these were the old Trakehner Fanal and Dorffrieden, as well as Chronist, Pernod and Lodi. Three other ones participated in L to M-class dressage competitions. These horses were Africa, Cyrenaika and Adonis. At that time Lörke was 69 years old. He was 70 years old, when he got the four-year-old Adular and he was 72 years old, when he also started to train the four-year-old Malteser.

Under the training of Lörke, Heinz Pollay participated with the only 6-year-old, Adular, in Helsinki. Adular won the excellent 6th place with his youth. Afrika under Baroness Ida von Nagel had got a heavy jaundice on the cruise to Helsinki, was not ridden at all and then was presented, filled up with vaccine, in the Olympic dressage tests. Chronicler was ridden from another suitable amateur jumping rider, by Fritz Thiedemann. It was a masterly performance of "Fritze", who normally rode

the "heavy" Meteor. Fritz Tiedemann won two bronze medals in Helsinki, one with Meteor and one with Chronist xx, because the dressage team became third in the team classification. Lörke sent me an enthusiastic, detailed description of his seventies birthday, celebrated in Vornholz and closed with the following words: "Any other field marshal could not have been offered higher honour than I got it!"

In 1953 I was a witness of the leasing of Fanal to the stud Asta – tournament stable Kronberg. In 1954 Lörke rode his last public dressage competitions with Adular in Hamburg, where he won both S-class dressage tests.

He always wrote very contently from Kronberg as well, as far as it did not concern the progressive illness of his wife. His last letter, dated 21/02/1955, expressed his pleasure about the awarded Federal Cross of Merit.

In 1955 the first signs of age cancer appeared. He went through a heavy kidney operation.

In 1956 he again sat in the saddle, but it was not any more comfortable for him. The Senator, Adolf Schindling, was in the riding arena in Kronberg, when Otto Lörke tried to trot Fanal, but although he strongly clenched his teeth he was not successful. Finally, he walked to Mr. Schindling and said to him: „Mr. Schindling, please look at me! You will experience now that an old rider will dismount for ever, it is nice that we two old people are alone.“ In silence with tears in the eyes, walking beside Fanal, both men left the riding arena by foot. Then his work continued at the lunge for the Olympic Games in 1956 in Stockholm.

In 1956 I saw him the last time in Nörten-Hardenberg. There he grew very thin like

„In the training he rode increasingly forward and brought very quickly his horses to a complete self carriage. I almost never saw him pulling at the bit.“

The strolling death, however, he still had kept the old humour. In the same year he still had

the great pleasure that Liselott Linsenhoff won the bronze medal in Stockholm on Adular, who was schooled by him, and saved the team's silver medal together with Anneliese Küppers, now Mrs. Schaurte jr. on Afrika, as well as Hannelore Wiegand on Perkunos. Lörke would have preferred it if Miss Weygand had participated with Chronist xx, who was schooled by him, but became lame shortly before, so that his rider changed to the reserve horse Perkunos, with whom she saved the team's silver medal. Lörke could not to be influenced in matters like this. His point of view was fixing: „Either I deliver all horses or not any.“

In November 1957 when I received a contract in the Frankfurt park hotel, I had hoped for his arrival. Mrs. Linsenhoff informed me that he was dying and did not recognise anybody. Shortly afterwards he died.

His death was an irreplaceable loss, because he left no system, but only pupils and horses.

From the latter still remained Monarchist xx in the field of vision, and his pupils had to keep on this what they watched and listened from him, because he disapproved every firm principles in the equestrian sport and counted from case to case on his unusual empathy. He boasted with the fact that he had neither read any riding book nor published anything, because he would have to describe every character, horse build, level of schooling etc., in order to describe the appropriated dressage training for each horse, which is hardly usable for the normal rider. Nevertheless, he remains one of the greatest experts in the dressage discipline concerning schooling of rider and horse and their joint influence. He had a very good character with slight weak sides and thus he left not only a big reputation as a rider, but he also lives on in the memory of his many friends as an excellent companion.

The article was published in the rider and driver magazine, magazine 3, in 1962, the magazine of the German Rider and Driver Federation.

magazine page 94

Harmony - From the basis up to the advanced dressage

Process of learning theoretical knowledge and realizing it practically

By Claudia Ronsöhr (Federation for the promotion of the classical horsemanship)

Classical schooling of a horse means that the rider has to train himself as well. It is important to train his own body consciousness, to build up further body control, to give clear aids, to be well grounded in theoretical knowledge and to be able to influence the horse. Basically the rider should be sceptic with himself first, before he criticises the performance of the horse. This means to master a lot of requirements, which are sometimes too excessive. It is preferable for the character to discuss matters with like-minded people, in order to learn and to be glad together. Our Federation for the promotion of the classical horsemanship in Germany inc. would like to offer a platform for this. It is our job to take care and to teach the theoretical knowledge of the classical horsemanship and with this aim we would like to provide everybody with this sound knowledge in theory and practise. A harmonious teamwork between horse and rider from the basis up to the advanced dressage is an expression of classical horsemanship for us.

School individually your horse according to his built, his mind and his basic gaits

It is not decisive, whether you prefer to go riding or to train in a dressage arena, or riding on a warmblood or a baroque horse. The philosophy of the classical horsemanship is the only important directive. The criterions empathy, harmony and motivation in the training are the principles in the teamwork between rider and horse. The long healthy preservation of the horses should be the

ultimate ambition in the training. Horses need time for learning and for the stepwise muscle formation. Only with a certain basis they are able to be schooled on an advanced level. It depends on the rider to preserve the natural basic gaits under the saddle and to cultivate and promote them individually. On this occasion, it is essential to be able to judge with experience the quality of the horse, because it should neither be worked physically and psychically beneath nor below its capabilities.

Permanent interplay of stress condition

It is not only the horse which needs time to learn. It is also a long way for every rider and finally it will become a never ending process, because there are always new situations. Horse riding is a permanent interplay of stress conditions with rider and horse. As a result of this it is important for the rider to have or to develop good body awareness; it is a change of exertion and relaxation. Nobody would like to have tensions. Unfortunately, just this appears automatically. It is sometimes difficult to leave the everyday stress behind and to take care of the horse with the necessary patience. If we start to ride the horse, we will transfer our negative tension on the animal and this will again cause stress.

Nevertheless, a harmonious horse riding with sensitive aids is only possible if rider and horse are both balanced. Conversations with other riders would help. A small relaxation exercise, a nice conversation or common laughter can remove or at least reduce the stress. It makes sense to have competent support during the process of balancing rider and horse.

Classical horse riding

We would like to build up a network with our Federation. Like-minded people should receive assistance in communications, in further trainings and with the aim of having pleasure in handling their horses. We organise our days of "classical horse riding", in order to realize our aims. In a relaxed atmosphere every rider can train his horse in different levels of qualification. The different levels are: beginner, medium, advanced and the advanced dressage. Every rider decides himself on which level he would like to compete. Instead of marks experts communicate their opinion of the horse / rider training state and recommend tips for the further training. The judgement will be given according to the schooling criteria of the classical horsemanship. Particular movements of the breeds are considered. For example, we differentiate among different kind of canter from warmbloods, baroque horses, iceland or arabian horses. On these special days there will be always enough time for questions, personal talks and discussions. Moreover, on these events you can meet a lot of people and build up new contacts.

Planning in 2011

Together with some experts and the experiences collected in practice exercises we will still work over our existing catalogue with dressage and freestyle tests. For 2011 we have already planned days of classical horsemanship on the Friesenhof Steinberg near Soltau, on the Paulinenhof in Gohlitz, on the Rittergut Oberg near Peine, on the Gutshof Simoneit-Barum in Einbeck and in the baroque stable Falkenhagen near Göttingen. If you are interested in our training, please contact our homepage with the update appointments. If you intend to organise a one day classical horsemanship in your riding centre, please contact us, we would be very glad to hear from you.

Energetic treatment methods

Of course, we also organise courses and seminars from the beginnings up to the advanced dressage as well as other subjects all

around the horse. On this occasion, we work together with quite different experts and instructors. We would like to support you and your horse. Besides the practical riding we introduce you to different variations of the ground work as for example handwork or with the double lunging rein. The long rein is also an alternative for further qualified horses. Nevertheless, the long rein is only suited for absolutely reliable horses, otherwise the risk for the person is too high. Further seminar subjects 2010 were offered as „energetic methods of treatment“ by back and meridian massages and treatment of the lymphatic drainage with demonstration at the horse in the riding arena "or" horses as a heart opener in the psychotherapy“. We would appreciate further proposals of you as well.

For the realisation of these seminars with certified experts, we are in contact with approved experts of the classical horsemanship, the veterinary medicine and other special departments. At the moment, we have discussions concerning how and with whom we build up a system to the further schooling of our examiners and instructors.

Common travel abroad

Every year for promoting the group spirit, we would like to offer to our members and also other enthusiasts a travel to fascinating places and people of the equestrian sport. We have already visited the imposing black and white kladubers in their studs in Czechoslovakia. In 2011 our travel will go to Vienna. The programme is organized around the Spanish Riding School, Vienna.

The night of the black pearls

As we are a very young Federation, we are still in a development process and therefore we are always glad about support, suggestions and new ideas. We need even more people who support engaged the Federation in their different regions. The Federation also takes over with pleasure the patronage in various events. This and last year the traditional show of the Ostseequadrille „The night of the black pearls“ in the Graf-von Lindenau indoor riding school with the Brandenburg major and stud

farm in Neustadt an der Dosse are and were held under our patronage. Besides, in 2011 there still is a special year for all partners, as the ten-year-old jubilee of this event is celebrated. Our Federation will also be again represented with a show picture. Besides, we increase the presence of our Federation on fairs and other events. We would like to increase for you our availability at different events and locations.

Our main focus lies on the welfare of the horse

As a literary guide the following books accompany us as Francois Robichon de la Guérinière "Ecole de cavalerie", Alois Podhajsky „The classical horsemanship“ and Egon von Neindorff „Die reine Lehre der Klassischen Reitkunst“. We follow of course the guidelines of international approved institutions of the classical horsemanship, which are suitable for all horse breeds, partially for centuries. The work at the base is our main focus. We would like to assist and support many people with their horses. On this occasion, our main focus lies on the welfare of the horses. However, we would also like to help to improve the

communication between rider and horse, as many problems result from a misunderstood communication between both sides. Horses need for an uncomplicated contact with the person clear and proper instructions. It is not sufficient if the person has respect for the horse or the horse has respect for the person. For a harmonious cooperation a mutual respect is necessary.

Some mistakes are also made, because riders have a bad theoretical knowledge. Therefore, it is urgently necessary to dispose of a sufficient, horse theoretical base knowledge in dealing with the charismatic living being and to be able to realize this also practically.

Alois Podhajsky said once: „The theory is the knowledge, the practise is the ability. However, the knowledge should move ahead of the action. “

This is a statement to which we feel obliged as a Federation for the promotion of the classical horsemanship as well as a single person standing behind the Federation. You receive further information about the Federation for the promotion of the classical horsemanship under www.Die-Kunst-des-Reitens.de

Sonntag's ideas

The publisher, Isabella Sonntag, meets Manolo Rodriguez Gonzales (on a 6-year-old lusitano stallion) joint with Gonzalo Diaz Garcia in Finca El Tesorillo, in Arcos de la Frontera.

For her eyes the best just feels well enough

By Isabella Sonntag

The bells ring – I hear the sound from my hotel room in the Place de l'Horloge in Avignon. In a few minutes I will leave, in order to visit the fair "Cheval passion" (nearly the same size as the Eurocheval, Offenburg) and to meet there together with Mrs. Gabriele Boiselle Frédéric Pignon and Magali Delgado. We would like to publish jointly a high quality book with emotional photos and a fascinating text with the title: „Only with love the harmony succeeds“.

Last year my journey led me to different places in France, Portugal and Spain, where horses were professionally schooled. Among other things I visited the family Pignon/Delgado at home close to Marseille for two days, in order to get an idea of their training behind the scenery. Only for your information in the beginning – what I had seen and felt belonged with to the best what I might ever experience between rider and horse.

Such a nice ease of horse handling – such a harmonious life with horses – nearly the feeling of being on another planet. After Cavalia the Pignons are just planning a new show and I can only recommend to everybody to visit this show – no matter how far the distance should be. I was really inspired about their harmonious training. It should indicate to everybody a very positive schooling alternative and how it should feel if the work with horses makes "sense" for both sides. This also proves that one can earn money with fair horse training – it must not always end with negative consequences for the horses. Therefore I am very happy that I created with two books and a film with the title: „The history of a passion“ a guideline for a better

harmonious cooperation between horse and person.

From the right to the left: Kathrin Roida, Nicole Künzel, Isabella Sonntag, Familie Pignon/Delgado.

Isabella Sonntag with the corbie of Pignon

During the residence with the Pignons I unexpectedly found my counterpart in the Luis Valencas' Centro Equestre da Leziria Grande in Portugal / Vila Franca de Xira.

Under the cooperation of Gonzalo Oliveira, the grandson of Nuno Oliveira, I watched the training with a caprioleur and with a three year-old lusitano stallion. Then Valenca's daughter presented the horse riding in the side saddle and the schooling of a lusitano for tournaments. This kind of schooling of this lusitano represented for me the selling-off of the horsemanship. The pull back noseband was much tightened, the head of the horse was pulled deeply to the breast, and with the spurs the rider pushed against the hand. We were allowed to admire spectacular walking and trotting steps – in a time period of 15 minutes. Therefore these photos were no snapshots. The fact that Valenca partly participates in the Appassionata presentation makes the thing even more badly. Gonzalo Oliveira replied mealy-mouthed to a question of us concerning the schooling of lusitanos that he does not want to express himself to the schooling methods of other instructors. I personally felt as if I am on a bad German tournament practise area: Many officials, participants and others look away and nobody says something. At the same time in Valenca's equestrian centre a group of members of the development association was joined by Egon von Neindorff and under the direction of Mrs.

Ursel Hoss – who courageously asked Mr. Valenca directly to the new schooling pictures. His answer was that people has to awake from the long sleep – nowadays the dressage needs other pictures – the horses need a specific individual schooling, we have to adapt ourselves to the respective nature. Some horses would probably prefer such kind of training ... the lusitano ridden by the daughter is 19 years old – therefore the concept would bear fruits... Mrs. Hoss and me moved voiceless away ... also here the commerce has pitilessly entered. The welfare of the animals does not come first. The visitors are open for everything – the central issue are the spectacular pictures. We have missed horsemanship and traditional values. Horses have to earn money for their riders/owners without receiving enough sympathy for their performance. During an important tournament our Chief Federal dressage trainer even explained loudly and clearly: We must initiate a modification of the classical training scale, in order to be able to keep up in the international sport.

If this is the official requirement – the modern wording for our orientation – then we must probably take responsibility for the welfare of our horses ourselves and adhere to even old and proven values. We have to become mature riders and to critically improve the schooling ourselves. Well known, famous names and institutions reduce themselves to absurdity. This process is underlined during my next journey to Spain as well.

Because of the excellent organisation of Mrs. Micaela Cojocarú (www.arte-ecuestre.com) and the competent management of Mr. Gonzalo Diaz Garcia (former assistant instructor in the Spanish Riding School, Jerez), I visited famous instructors between Madrid and Jerez as for example Juan Rubio (30 years assistant instructor in the Spanish Riding School) and Manolo Rodriguez Gonzales (several times Spanish Champion of the Doma Vaquera).

Juan Rubio and Isabella Sonntag in the Royal Riding School, Jerez

The best of this itinerary should represent the training without audience in the Fundacion Real Escuela Andaluza del Arte Ecuestre Jerez – as title for this part of my trip I choose: Visit of a modern torture chamber with artistic external painting. For sensitive people it is difficult to tolerate – the eye cannot enjoy this – the mind is maltreated ... Here you can find many brutal and hard equipment for horses – no way of dancing Andalusian horses – here you can find blue tongues, bloody noses, hard unyielding hands – without rhythm and ridden too fast – extension posture, given reins? – Never heard! Never seen!

Jerez has a beautiful landscape – the stables are impressively cleaned and well tended – completely equipped with modern technology – only the bad upholstered shining Serreta is an old instrument, but still in use.

It is frustrating if I envisage how many credulous tourists think after a show of having seen the crown of horsemanship.

I only met very friendly people during my trip – it was not even possible to express an open critical word – in any case no people would understand me? Without the necessary feeling for horses, without sufficient respect and biomechanical knowledge ... Therefore I simply suggested a biomechanics – seminar with Gerd Heuschmann – I did not want to leave without being active and suggesting something constructive – Mrs. Cojocarú, the Spanish publisher of „finger in the wound“ and my humble self will continue watching this process.

However! I have brought one gleam of hope from Madrid: Gonzalo Diaz. You have with him the possibility to enjoy your vacation in the Club Hipico Coronado on his well schooled horses in all classes.

If the trip is too wide abroad, I recommend you to look on page 106 in my event list. Here you will find a selection of courses in Germany.

Chief of the Escuela Portuguesa de Arte Ecuestre in Queluz: Dr. Filipe Graciosa and Isabella Sonntag

Another gleam of hope I would like to share with you: the friendly corpulent man here on the photo – he is the chief of the Escuela Portuguesa de Arte Equestre in Queluz: Dr. Filipe Graciosa.

At this place the equipment of the assistant instructors is very poor – partially even dirty and torn – these conditions would be certainly

inconceivable in Austria and even in Spain – but I felt a heart hitting for the horses; the riders are often smiling during the horse training – this can't be taken for granted!

I greet you in the service of horse and rider

magazine page 114

Crime scene: Munich Indoors, 6th November 2010

By Jürgen Kemmler

German Kreditbank AG Championship, international jumping competition with jump-off, a total of 54 participants, as last participant in the round and in the jump-off, the Australian jumping rider, Chris Chugg, with his 12-year-old stallion, Vivant 3, bred in Belgium, rides in the course. The Australian rider and his stallion are a perfect team: Winner of the Championships in Munich in 2010 with zero penalties in the jump-off and finalist in the World Equestrian Games in Kentucky / USA.

His presentation in Munich, but also in other jumping tournaments, is always finished with a spectacular "exclamation mark", a so-called multiple "canter-pirouette". It serves as an extra for the spectators. The public darling from "Downunder", for whom the term "Jumping-dressage" does not mean any foreign concept, demonstrates with this exercise the responsiveness and thoroughness of his stallion, which is an important basis not only in the training, but also in the jumping competitions. None less than Kurt Albrecht, from 1975 to 1985 manager of the Spanish Riding School, characterises the canter-pirouette „as an exercise with special significance for the schooling qualification of a horse. If it is perfectly ridden, we have with certainty a well schooled horse. This exercise

had once been developed with the aim to profit in the fight of agility and later it became an important criterion for the schooling“.

As one can learn from a letter to the editor in the magazine "Reiter Revue" 1/2011, the concept "Horsemanship" is very important for Chris Chugg: „His training between calculatingly about 1.6 tournaments with often only two competitions (possibly with double box) per month, primarily exists of normal dressage training and to go riding. He only jumps very little in general and on the practise area. If horses had a penalty at international level, Vivant might lie in the number of the jumps far under the standard“– this is a citation from Guido Klatte, who is the author of the letter to the editor.

cool & easy going = thoroughly