



## Second Chance Ranch Newsletter V. 2-11

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### Time Management and Motivation

S. Potters

Go, go, go. These days, it seems like everything – especially in New England – is fast paced and every day is packed full. There are never enough hours in a day or enough days in a week. New Englanders have developed into a culture of driven go-getters and multi-taskers, with very little free time in their full schedule.

The average New Englander juggles a career and obligations to family and friends. These commitments consume a large amount of time during the week, which limits the available time for hobbies. And if equestrian pursuits are the hobby in question – or working with any animal, for that matter - most of the “free time” you had immediately goes towards the care of your four-legged friend.

In a rough-board or backyard situation, you may spend hours each day cleaning stalls, feeding, throwing hay bales, scrubbing buckets, raking aisles, grooming paddocks... The list goes on. And you haven't even touched your horse yet! If you are lucky enough to keep your horse in a full-board situation, you have freed up a significant amount of time, but you still have obligations to clean off your tack, groom your horse, run errands for your horse, tack-up your horse... All of these little things take precious moments out of your day, leaving less time for training and riding. It's a thought that can be pretty discouraging. After all, that's why we devote all of our resources to these animals, right? We love them, but we also want to *ride* them.

The best way to be certain you have riding time is to work out a schedule. Set aside a few hours, at least one or two days a week, and do not get distracted by the millions of other things that need to be done. Create a schedule that will work for you and stick to it! If you can manage to maintain your schedule for the first few weeks, you'll quickly find that it is an easy routine to follow. As creatures of habit, we are comfortable with established patterns – so

establish a pattern that works for you, not against you.

Sometimes, the hardest part of starting a new schedule can be motivation. You may want to ride, but life itself can be overwhelming, and it might be difficult to imagine squeezing in another activity in your already full day. In a case like that, you may want to try the “buddy system”. If you set a date to go riding with your friend, you may be more likely to stick to your plans. Your horse probably won't mind having a morning off from work, but you will be letting down your riding partner if you don't show up.

Another idea that may encourage you to stick to your schedule is to set attainable goals and keep a journal. If you can see a visible record of progress being made in your riding and training, you will be more likely to want to continue and less likely to let life get in the way of your riding. Accomplishment can be a powerful motivator.

Finally, keep in mind that variety is the spice of life. Now that you're in the routine of riding and training every week, ward off boredom for both you and your horse by keeping it fresh. Maybe flat work one day, jumping another, trails on the third? Or even some variety within one of those disciplines. For example, if you're struggling with a new exercise, perhaps a change of focus will re-energize you. Take a step back to what you're comfortable with or try something fun, like a game or a bareback ride – it will help remind you why you enjoy riding in the first place.

In this fast-paced world, finding time to do what we love – to work with the animals that we love – can be difficult. But by setting time aside to devote to your passion, and sticking to the schedule you create, you can enjoy many hours of riding time with your horse. Once you've begun the routine, you may be tempted to quit, as life throws obstacles in your way. But by staying motivated and adding variety to your routine, hopefully you'll realize what you were missing out on and find that scheduled time with your horse is an easy date to keep.

## The Winter Clip

B.P. Milo

Shorter days and colder temperatures mean it's time for your equine friend to turn into a woolly beast! Is it time to break out the body clippers, or is it a better choice to let your horse go au natural for the winter? A lot depends on what you plan on doing with your horse during the winter.

Show horses are routinely given "full body" clips to preserve their show ring appearance. A full body clip removes all of the horse's winter coat. Horses that have a full body clip must be blanketed extensively through the winter. Without their natural protection, these animals are vulnerable to the cold and rain.

Winter clipping, however, is not reserved solely for "A circuit" hunters, or Grand Prix champions. Many horse owners who ride through the winter months prefer to give their horses some sort of clip – typically some variation of the "trace clip" – to make cooling out their horse easier and faster. In some cases, a trace clip may also be healthier, as a horse with a modified trace clip may actually be less prone to chills because their coats will not remain wet for hours after a ride.

Originally the "trace clip" was used to remove the portions of the horse's heavy winter coat that followed the harness traces of carriage horses. Now, the trace clip has some variants as it was modified to the needs of riding horses. A "low trace clip" removes the fur from the belly, chest and neck. A "high trace clip" involves shaving the sides of the horse as well. Horses with trace clips will still need to be blanketed, but they can go with a lighter covering because they still retain much of their winter coat. A horse with a low trace clip can be left un-blanketed on warmer winter days. Trace clips are a great compromise between leaving your horse with some natural protection, while allowing you to allowing you to exercise your horse with minimal sweat.

When beginning your winter clip, start with sharp blades, and have a spare set handy. There is nothing worse then getting half way thru your clip job and having your blades become too dull to continue! Also, have a product such as KoolLube nearby. It should be used throughout the clipping to keep your blades lubricated and running cool. To test the temperature of the blades as you clip, periodically place the blades of the clippers flat against your hand to ensure they are not getting

too hot to use. If they are, turn them off until they cool down before continuing. Clipping with hot clipper blades is uncomfortable for your horse.

For a nice looking shave, always trim against the lay of the horse's fur. For wrinkly spots, such as under the elbows and the hip area, pull the skin tight before clipping. Make sure to overlap each cut to minimize clipper marks. If you are doing a trace clip, or any type of clip that had areas to remain unclipped, it's useful to mark the areas you'll be clipping with chalk before you start. When done, make sure to thoroughly clean and lubricate your clippers before putting them away.

Winter riding can be great exercise for both you and your horse. A clip job can make cooling out quick for both of you!

### SCR UPCOMING EVENT!

**SCR will be taking part in a statewide tack sale on November 28<sup>th</sup> in Marlborough, CT. For more information, or directions to the event, contact Amy at [SCREquineRescue@yahoo.com](mailto:SCREquineRescue@yahoo.com)**

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### SCR WOULD LIKE TO GIVE THANKS TO:

- ~ JOY FOR HER SPONSORSHIP OF MAXX
- ~ DARA AND RANDY FOR THEIR SPONSORSHIP OF MAXX
- ~ KAT FOR HER GENEROUS DONATION OF SUPPLIES
- ~ LEE AND FAMILY FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATION OF TIME AND HARD WORK TO IMPROVE THE PADDOCKS AT OUR EAST GRANBY, CT BARN
- ~ JESSICA FOR HER GENEROUS DONATION OF TACK AND BLANKETS!

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**THE HOLIDAYS ARE ALMOST HERE! PLEASE VISIT OUR ONLINE STORE FOR UNIQUE GIFTS. ALL PROCEEDS GO DIRECTLY TO THE CARE OF THE ANIMALS!**

[www.cafepress.com/SCREquineRescue](http://www.cafepress.com/SCREquineRescue)

We at SCR do not promote one discipline of riding over another, however we came across this email and thought it was funny enough to share. The ironic situations it describes could easily apply to any discipline. Enjoy!

### **THE RULES OF DRESSAGE**

A dressage test is a test of your skill against another competitor's luck.

Dressage is about achieving a harmonious working relationship with your horse, whose only idea of harmony is eating grass in the field.

If you want to end a drought or dry spell, wear a new jacket and top hat to an outdoor arena.

Untalented, difficult, aggressive horses have robust health and long lives.

Talented, tractable horses are accident-prone.

You will ride the best test of your entire life just prior to being disqualified for not wearing gloves.

Horses do not improve their paces because you are wearing expensive German breeches.

If you chose a disco theme for your Freestyle test, then the judge will not be less than 90 years of age.

The less skilled the rider, the more likely they are to share their ideas and advice on riding a test.

If you fall off your horse in the arena you will have paid to have the test videoed.

If you are feeling confident before a show, then three members of the USA Dressage team and one leading eventer will turn up to give their young horses some "experience."

Your horse will perform its best piaffe ever when you ask for extended canter in the test.

It is surprisingly easy to end a test with a perfect square halt once you have failed every other movement.

### **FEATURED HORSE: Sunrise Surprise**

Sunrise Surprise (Sunny, as we like to call him) is a 19 year old chestnut American Saddlebred gelding, approximately 16 hands high. Sunny has just come back to the Ranch after 3 years in an adoptive home where he was ridden mainly on trails. Sunny has returned to our care because the adopter, who was going through a divorce, could no longer afford to care for Sunny. So, we have once again taken Sunny under our wing, and we are hoping to find him a forever home.

Sunny is a sweet guy who loves being around people. He has very good ground manners, and does well for both the farrier and the vet.

Sunny has Cushing's disease which is managed through a special diet (low starch/low sugar). SCR requires that his future forever home continue to maintain him on a low starch/low sugar diet. Unfortunately, due to his former adopter's financial difficulties, Sunny's Cushing's was mismanaged. This and his age caused him to drop weight, and he is – at this point – underweight. However, we remember Sunny to be an easy keeper – no shoes, keeps weight on easily if the diet prescribed for his Cushing's is maintained – so we hope to have him round out quickly.

The only "vices" that Sunny has, as we remember them, is that he is afraid of body clippers. Unfortunately, with it being the start of winter, we cannot see if he has gotten any better over the years, as he will need his winter coat.

Sunny is a quiet guy who is looking for a quiet life – if you or anyone you know is looking for a nice trail horse to love, contact Amy at [SCREquineRescue@yahoo.com](mailto:SCREquineRescue@yahoo.com).

**~ Paul's Corner ~**

**"Treat your animals as you would treat your friends."**

**"Today, children of six seem to know all the questions and at sixteen they know all the answers."**

**"Not everyone repeats gossip. Some improve it."**