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This was the second week of our Buck clinics. As expected, we learned a lot! It's always a wonderful experience to get to learn from Buck and with such an awesome group of guests - this week was a blast!



Buck and Big Swede during their morning ride.

Unlike last week where the clinic was at the end of the week, this week the clinic started bright and early on Monday morning. After observing a beautiful ride by Buck on his mare, Midge, clinic participants went to work. All of the work done in the morning would be to prepare for cutting on the cutting ball and later on real cattle in the rodear.

There is so much you can learn by watching Buck's rides. Perhaps the most important is that the progressions he teaches are more than simply a series of exercises, but are a way of life. These are the things you do

with every horse at every level. The only thing that really changes is the amount of refinement in the horse and rider.

One of the coolest things Buck had everyone do was to work on getting different walk speeds using their seat. When the riders slowed their hips and rated their horses back you could just see how happy the horses were and how focused the riders had to be to walk so slow. A silence hung in the air and the atmosphere was tranquil. Focus, persistence, and



Roger and Trump working on their slow walk.



Martha and Boone

silence blended to form peace, the greatest reward we could ever give our horses.

Monday afternoon the guests got their first attempt at the cutting ball. During which they learned a lot about having a solid stop and a good back up. Backing up straight can mean the difference between having a quality turn or having your horse whirl his hind around. Sometimes riders would just back in time with the ball and not even make a turn. This simple task made so much of a difference in a lot of the horses.

Later in the clinic, guests were introduced to cutting in the rodear. This activity is one of the best for finding out how much life you really have in your horse. Needless to say, the next day everyone

was working hard to make sure they had enough life and that their horses weren't dull. Buck threatened that if your horse didn't have life he might have to get out his "jumper cables" (romel rein) and put some life in your horse for you. Luckily, no one needed Bucks help in that particular area.

On the two days following the clinic, a lot of the guests went out to graze with Stephen,



Janice and Scotch moving out!



Nathan, Brenda, and Chris. The cattle moving project was still in full swing as we moved the steers off of the McKillop, into the Elk Pasture and over to Davis Mountain. In addition to the cattle work, all week long the haying crew put in monster hours to finish up in the fields. Stephen, Jed, Nolan, John, Randy and Sue, (who learned how to drive the truck and flatbed trailer!) all played a hand in this- The crop is

Tracey and Georgie

Lauren, Mary, Martha, Phoebe, and Shea at Graze

well above last year's and they cut, baled and stored it in record time!

We also had a solid horsemanship group that worked with Shayne Thursday and Friday. We spent more time on learning to rate our horses with our seats bringing the life up and down and transitioning between a very, very slow walk to a fast walk and to a trot and then back down through all of those progressions.



Lauren and Cahill looking for cattle.

On Friday, we got to work on rolling up the canter. The lesson really emphasized how much more preparation matters than manipulation. You can't manipulate a horse with your hands in order to get a right lead – instead you need to prepare a horse at the fast walk and encourage engagement. If your fast walk isn't lively, the canter just won't happen.

After these past two weeks, we all certainly have a lot to keep us busy working towards improving our horsemanship. Peak season here at the ranch continues and we are really looking forward to sharing all of this and more, with our future guests!

*- Jessie and Janice*



Buck and Eddie.

