

Johnson Equestrian

January 2011 Issue 3

News

George Morris returns

George was privileged to take part at the prestigious George Morris clinic last month at the Mt White property



of Wayne Roycroft.

Riding his World Cup horse Oz-bred, George took part in three days of training with the American showjumping guru.

George Johnson said, "As always George Morris has proved to be a tough but rewarding coach and I look forward to taking part next year".

"I picked up lots of coaching ideas from George and you'll be sure to

see them at Team J soon!"

The saddest farewell

On Friday we said goodbye to a Dad, Granddad, friend, mentor and role model.

John Higman, the Team J patriarch passed away at Norwest Private hospital after a long battle with bowel cancer.

The funeral on Wednesday was overflowing with attendees and we would like to thank everyone for their countless messages of sympathy. Granddad - we all love you.



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Picture perfect

This Christmas Chrissie received a limited edition portrait of her favourite Shitzu Jack Russell cross, Rupert.

Painted by local artist Sue Farrell - who is of course Jess' mum - the portrait now has pride of place in Team J's living room.

Sue is available for commissioned pet portraits by calling 0402778395

National Vaulting Workshop



Chrissie spent two days at the National Vaulting Workshop in Canberra this January. Eager to learn more about all things vaulting, Chrissie mingled with some of the country's top competitors, judges and coaches.

Pictured above from left to right are Chrissie, local coach Lyn Lynch, FEI International Judge Erich Breiter and local champion vaulter Krystle Lander.

The event, which was held at the Kerrabee Equestrian Centre, provided seminars, demonstrations and talks on the discipline, which Chrissie is sure to bring back to Team J.

Chrissie said: "It was a delight for me to stay with Ruth at her home, which is a haven of creativity and curious, artistic artifacts (and various creatures)- I loved it. Thanks Ruth and Tom for a wonderful meal and your hospitality."

And the winner is...Rupert

Rupert made his debut at Elizabeth McMaster's Spurway Stables much celebrated, post Christmas, Annual Dog Party! At the prestigious event he was awarded "Most Promising Young Dog".

It was Wanda & Peter Snitch's Jazzie who romped home with the major award for Iron Dog" (pictured right with Judge Mark and Wanda).



A wide array of breeds, ages and sizes enjoyed the evening in Elizabeth's indoor arena, where owners enjoyed a pleasant supper after the dogs had been put to the test in a variety of races and agility tests.



A great night.

School's out and camp is on!



Another season of school holiday summer camps have been and gone here at Team J, with great riding from all involved. The camps involve a mix of jumping, vaulting and horse management, as well as a chance to take a dip in the pool and catch up with friends.

Pictured above from left to right are Jacqui Luttrell, who is back in the saddle after three months in Germany, Natalie Hoskins vaulting and Sarah Wilton riding the beautiful Oscar.

To book your place in a camp next school holidays, contact Chrissie on 0412405079

Have You Met?

Lyn Lynch

This month's Have You Met introduces you to vaulting coach Lyn Lynch.

Occupation: Professional vaulting coach.

Riding history: Lyn got her first pony at 18 months and has never been far from horses since.

Growing up in West Pennant Hills, she was a regular at Pony Club NSW, picking up accreditations along the way. She was also a member of the Zone 26's exchange team that travelled to Gisbourne, New Zealand, in 1979. Although she used to cite dressage, jumping and sporting as her favoured disciplines, the Oakville based coach has since specialised in vaulting.

A holder of an EA NCAS level 2 Vaulting Certificate, she recently returned from the World Equestrian Games where she was supporting one of her pupils, Krystle Lander.

Lyn, who now has four horses in training, said: "Each horse teaches me new things all the time and they encourage me to draw on all of my skills that I have gained over the years, as well as making me realise I have a lot more to learn."

Lyn came to Team J two years ago to develop her coaching skills and in turn Chrissie saw the benefit that vaulting can bring to horse riders. Lyn is now a regular part of the team and vaulting is a regular part of Team J training.



George talks Training



Checklist for establishing a contact with the horse's mouth

1. Establish a straight line from your elbow to your wrist through to your horse's mouth. Most people without realising tend to get their hands too low and break the line. If the horse resists or raises its head, you must not drop your hands below that line. However, your hand can go above the line in a downward transition or if the horse needs to elevate its poll.

2. Rein length. You need to make sure reins are short enough so that you can have a contact with the horse's mouth and that your hands are above the horse's wither.

3. Closing of the fingers and hands. If the horse resists, close your fingers and squeeze the reins but don't 'jiggle' your hands. When softening the feel on the horse's mouth you should begin to soften through your elbow instead of throwing your hands – because that loses the contact.

4. Soft giving elbows but a closed hand. Most people when they close their fist, tighten their forearm. You have to have the feeling of a closed non-allowing hand

but with a giving elbow.

As riders we have to keep reminding ourselves that the contact on the horse's mouth doesn't necessarily mean the horse has to have its head down. Before trying to

'If the horse resists, close your fingers'

drop the head, establish contact by following the bullet-points above, keeping in mind that you must always try and keep the horse's poll as the highest point. Also remember you are riding or pushing the horse's body to its head – not the other way round.

You keep this feel of pushing the body to the head in your cool-down where the poll can drop lower as the horse stretches its neck – but it's still pushing towards the head and you don't have to push your hands down. This lowering of the poll should mainly be saved for cooling-down and isn't essential in the warm-up for most horses. The priority should be the steady feel from the elbow, wrist and bit in the warm-up.

GEORGE JOHNSON

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Chrissie's column



This month Chrissie explores training - a lifelong process.

My dad used to tell me “The trained man wins” (Robert Le Tourneau, the author of “Mover of Men and Mountains”). But as Australians we can sometimes take a “fly by the seat of our pants” approach and live by our “she’ll be right mate policy”.

While this characteristic of Australian nature can be very helpful, when it comes to riding, a sound basic understanding of the principles of horse and rider mechanics and consistent aids and how to apply them are

‘having fun doesn’t preclude a sound grounding...’

essential.

George Morris, the much acclaimed master of modern showjumping says “when the training is slow, progress is fast, but when the training is fast, progress is slow”.

Young riders need always to have fun, but having fun doesn’t preclude a sound grounding in riding principles. In my role as a coach educator, I come across many trainee coaches (often experienced riders themselves) who have never been students of riding theory and principles and are amazed when they need to learn how to explain riding to students, they are in fact learning themselves. An example of this is the explanation of the

rein aids. See George Talks Training.

While many students are familiar with the correct grip on the rein and the principle of contact through a straight line, elbow, wrist to bit, the understanding and execution of the various rein aids, eg, opening rein, indirect rein, indirect rein of opposition, pulley rein and neck rein, are often vague and sometimes non existent.

Because riding for many people is their hobby there often seems to be an expectation that there’s no need for study and learning to be associated with it. But whether you’re a hobbyist or an inspiring professional rider, learning should be a life-long objective. Access to information on every aspect of training and horse management is so easy now that there is really no excuse.

Outside of regular instruction with the coach of your choice, the internet, books, videos and other resources should be your next port of call. This is of course not withstanding our greatest learning avenue, which is of course the horse itself. So long associated with magic and mythology, horses are our greatest teachers. Take the time to observe, sense, feel and listen to your horse and see what you can learn from them today.

If you would like to enhance your learning as a rider, or join in on one of our coach training programs held here every Wednesday, get in contact today on 0412405079.

The tail end

The *tail* end

Final bits and pieces from Team J



Christmas party a success

The second annual Team J Christmas party was a roaring success - thanks to a great turnout and a fantastic spread.

The weather held out and there was a festive spirit in the air as you all reflected on a fantastic year and looked forward to a new one.

Thankyou all for coming!



Kohnke's own products

Johnson Equestrian uses and happily recommends Kohnke's Own Horse Care Products. Over the last 30 years, Dr John Kohnke has become the most well known Australian veterinarian as an adviser on the nutrition and practical health care of horses. For more information take a look at their website



Have you seen this dog?

As we all know, training is an ongoing process. Rupert Johnson, our latest canine candidate, is a prime example of this. Lately he has been mistaking some of the Nelson fauna as a play toy. If anyone sees this, feel free to step in with a firm smack and a 'No!'

TEAM JOHNSON
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from beginner to advanced.

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For bookings call George on 0431 212 661 or Chrissie 0412 405 079
Riding centre located at 44 Nelson Rd Nelson NSW 2765