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Issue 7

Hello guys and gals!

Lately, February has felt like spring. The air outside is mild and enough snow has melted that you can see a little bit of green and yellow grass here and there. The steers that we purchased last fall, in addition with the ones we've had since last winter, have been thriving. It looks as though we'll be getting in 120 more or so by next month.



Randy came upstairs one morning, determined to use the computer on his own to do some searches on cattle. This is how he looked after 5 minutes!

As predicted, we had a wonderful time with our guests this last week.

Shayne, always coming up with new things to work on, had us all having fun while working hard on our horsemanship. One afternoon he decided to pair us up with a partner. You had to mirror

everything that your partner did. When changing directions, the person on the inside would need to wind up on the outside—meaning that you would walk/trot a half circle while the inside rider would have to get his or her horse to walk/trot an even tighter arc inside with both of us getting back to the fence with a leg yield.

We did this for a little bit and then Shayne decided it was too easy, so then we were put into teams of four people each. Each team had to ride in sync at the walk, trot, lope and the stop while going around the arena. We then had to back an arc around the arena in sync and finally, make 180° turns on the outside hinds, with each stepping crossing in front—*in sync*. We were judged not only on keeping in absolute formation, but in our abilities to transition each horse in a soft feel.

The final test, was to have each team leg yield across the arena, keeping formation and making sure our timing was such that when bumping it up to a trotting leg yield, we would still stay in time and out of the way of the other two teams that were moving at the same speed across the opposite end of the arena

as us. It was a blast! It seemed like we were laughing all afternoon. I believe Dori's "all-girl" team, consisting of her; Stephanie, Caryn and Erin took first by and large. I was on a team with Randy—I'm not sure if he's going to pick me the next time! ☺

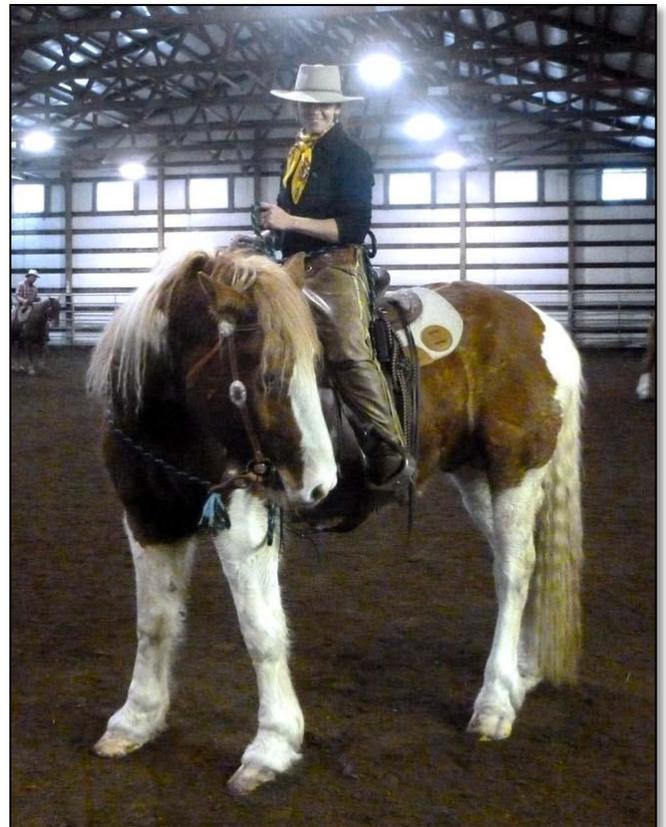
Roby, Mike, Becky and Cathy leg yielding



Chris, me, Randy and Desne

Right: Dori was the leader of the winning team, riding our Belgian/Paint cross, CHIEF

Another neat thing the guests got to see was Shayne flagging all of the colts and watching us ride them afterward. It was interesting to watch how the different horses, from different situations reacted to the flagging. Of course our three ranch colts were little angels. The other three horses took a little bit longer to find their comfort zones. Once the horses as a group were settled and gathered into the middle of the arena, we grabbed our halters, caught them up, got them bridled and climbed on. The horses and riders all did great, but special props goes out to Dori! Her colt was the only one of the bunch that decided at one moment to get to bucking! He bucked hard enough to throw Dori's hat off her head, but he couldn't throw Dori! She hung in there, rode him through it and laughed about it later. I wish someone could have got a picture, but since they didn't—here's a drawing of



about how it looked ;)

Caryn told me that one of the highlights of her week was watching Shayne work his new colt, Hickory. Hickory is the colt that Shayne brought home from the Legacy and if any of you were there to see him—he was about the touchiest one of the bunch. After everyone was finished riding on Tuesday evening, Shayne brought in Hickory to do some groundwork with him and get him comfortable with saddling. Most of the guests were there to watch as he patiently worked with Hickory and his sensitivities. Shayne spent a lot of time getting his rope all over the colt, as he was very touchy about it. It took a bit of time but Hickory got comfortable and Shayne saddled him and moved him around without incident. That was a big deal with this colt.

The really neat thing for Caryn to see was what things looked like at the very beginning of working with a horse—then at the end of the week when she watched Shayne ride Wyatt in the two-rein, she was able to see how far a horse could progress when given a lot of time and dedication. Most guests that come here don't get the opportunity to have such a perspective—so it was a really special week in that regard.

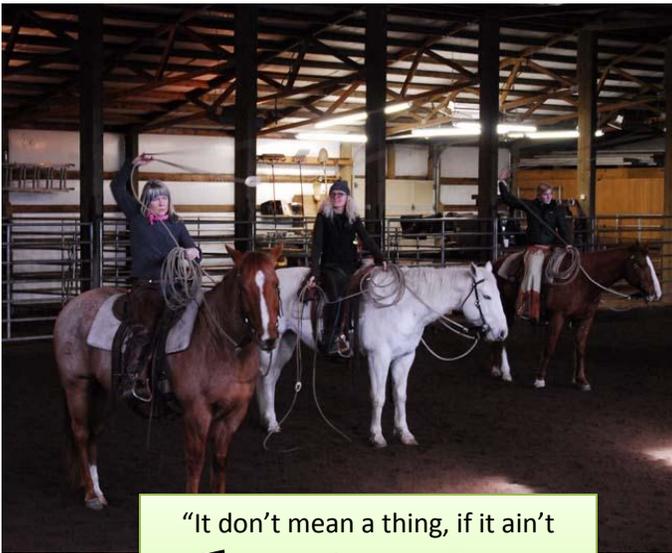


Chris, riding Clayton drug our make-shift steer around the arena for everyone to practice on before we brought in the real thing.

Becky was a new guest of ours this week. She came here from Alaska, and (I think) is the only guest on record that called to make sure she wasn't packing *too warm* for a winter week with us!

She said that she was having a hard time sleeping at night because she couldn't stop thinking of all the things she was learning and she didn't want to forget any of it! The highlight of the week for Becky was getting this roping business figured out. At one point she had her rope all tangled up in a wad and was getting a little overwhelmed trying to get everything straightened out.

Randy rode up to her and said "So now you know how it feels to be a kitten with a ball of yarn." With that kind of humor and the general lightness in which the teaching was done she got that rope figured out in no time—and was catching steers the next day!

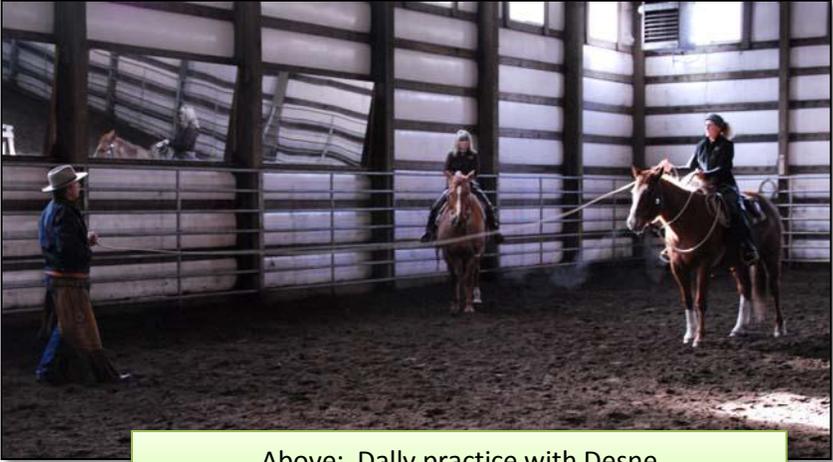


“It don’t mean a thing, if it ain’t got that swing”
🎵

Mike, Cathy and Desne all came to continue their journey, and of course, they left with lots of new tools that they could work with. Mike really started realizing the importance of getting the horse’s hind to move when roping—it could mean safety or disaster and is often dismissed in its importance.

Cathy rode her own mare for half the week and our ranch horses for the other half. It really teaches a person a lot when they can get a feel of different horses. Cathy’s horses can be very forward and high energy, which can be a really nice thing if that energy is directed and focused (Shayne’s horse Wyatt, for example has a lot of “go” and he’s a lead changing machine!) Cathy

left with some very simple, but very important exercises to work on with her horses. I’ve referred to the circle exercise in previous Highlines before, but it is of such importance. For a horse to be able to walk, trot and lope a united circle, rating to a person’s body with minimal to (ultimately) no use of the rein—well it can make a world of difference to that horse.



Above: Dally practice with Desne

Desne spent the week soaking up all she could and regaining some lost confidence. She said that working with Dori on Friday morning really brought everything together. Dori has a way of teaching things where she can break them down and make them very easy to understand.

Well that’s about all for this time around!

Have a great week folks!

Des