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Hey guys!

This was Shayne and my first week back at the ranch after our long vacation in Costa Rica. Let me tell you, we had a lot of fun but I was ready to come home and ride horses!

Unfortunately, the day I came home, a nasty "tropical" cold/flu set in and lasted all week. It was a little bit harder to get into the swing of things but I managed to stay horseback each day. I've gotta tell you though... It was a really strange feeling being back on my horses after being gone for so long! I almost forgot how BIG



Chupa and Buzz at breakfast



Missy getting some kisses from Buzz!

they are. And when I got horseback again, it felt like my equilibrium was off for a bit (that might have been partly due to being sick) and I felt like I had totally forgotten how to use my reins and my legs. To my great relief, everything started coming back to me in short order. I feel like I'm almost where I was at before I left on vacation! It made me appreciate how it must feel to come here as a guest who is a green rider or who has never ridden before.

I got to ride with our intern Sue for the first time since she started. And Brooke is a new intern that started this week with us. She's been a guest here several times before so I've ridden with her a bunch. Both gals are AWESOME students, hard workers and

are just plain nice to have around.

Melissa with Rowdy

We had three brand new guests—Melissa, Missy and Hannah (who came here to try out the ranch for a week before committing to an internship this summer.) They were a blast to ride with! All three gals were riding newer horses in the guest string and they rode them about as good as we've seen. In addition to teaching us all different exercises, Shayne also spent a bit of time each day doing some demonstrations. One day he



showed us all the proper way to get on from the fence. On another day he showed us how he would work a pushy horse from horseback, and then with the flag on the ground. He also spent a bit of time showing us how he would bridle a touchier horse. I think the guests got a LOT out of this—they told us the week was everything they hoped it would be!

Hannah is being taken over by Charlie and Trouble!



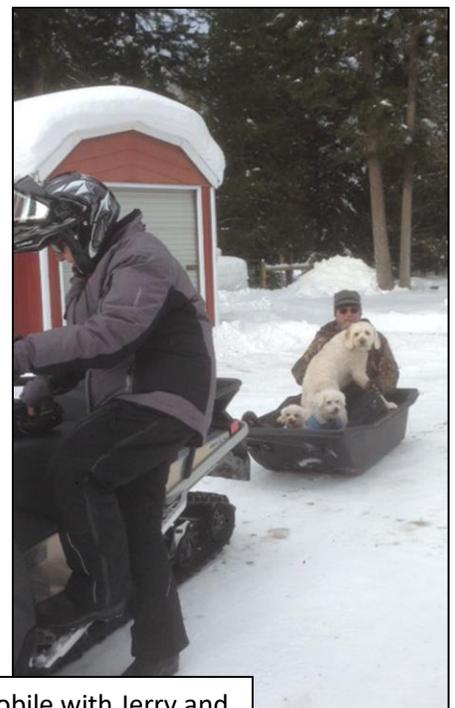
In other ranch news, Nathan and Stephen's house is officially DONE! Shayne and I headed over on Saturday to check it out and DANG

it's nice! Nathan, John, Randy and Stephen did a spectacular job. I'll have to show you guys pics of it next week as Nathan wants to finish decorating before I show everyone the final product ;)

Today we headed out for our first cross-country ski of the winter out in the backcountry behind the ranch. The day was sunny and relatively warm, in the mid 30s. I can't even begin to describe how beautiful it was, how nice it felt to have the fresh air on my face. I am SOOOOO happy to be home!

Till next week,

Des



Sue on the snowmobile with Jerry and the dogs in tow behind her!!! Just another day at the ranch!