



# Mini-Neigh

Volume 1 Issue 2

Club Newsletter

September 2002

## From the Editor

Dear all,  
I realize that the showing season is winding down, but there are still a couple more and this issue concentrates on showing tips. I hope everyone has enjoyed showing this season and has managed to come home with at least a few ribbons. For those of you that didn't show this year, perhaps these articles will prompt you to try your hand next year. All the best,  
Priscilla Cox

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## CLIPPING TIPS

We all want our minis looking gorgeous for the show ring and in my opinion they must be clipped to look their best.

I've found it best to clip dark coloured horses 7-10 days before a show, with a muzzle trim the day before or the day of the show. This gives some time to get some colour back into their coat. Light coloured horses you can get away with clipping 3-5 days ahead.

When I get ready to clip, I make sure my horse is as clean as possible, dirt dulls the blades quickly. If it's too cold to bathe them, I blow off the sand and dirt with a Blow-N-Vac. B&Q have a small, inexpensive shop vac that blows as well as vacuums. The air is warm and doesn't seem to bother my horses at all. If I bathe my horse, then I spray him with Show Sheen after using a sweat scraper. I don't know what's in Show Sheen, but it sure makes clipping go smoother and faster and keeps the blades sharper longer.

Set up in a well lit area with a bit of hay in a hay bag to keep him occupied. If hay isn't enough, use a humane twitch to keep your horse calm and prevent injury. I usually leave the head and ears till last when the horse is tired and more cooperative.

Holding your clippers loosely, use a smooth motion to move the clippers against the way the hair grows. Overlap your path ½ way like mowing a lawn to reduce track lines. Keep your blades well lubricated and change them frequently to prevent overheating. Your horse will not appreciate a hot blade next to his skin.

I use a #10 blade for the body, a #15 for the head and legs and a #30 for the ears, bridle path, around the eyes and the muzzle. You can blend the hairs when using different blades by clipping with the direction of hair growth. (Be careful with the #30 blade as it cuts very close and should be used with caution.) If my horse is jumpy about me doing the muzzle with the electric clippers, I'll use a disposable razor. I sometimes use a tiny battery operated trimmer on the muzzle and/or ears, which is quiet and doesn't seem to bother my horses near as much. They're also handy to take to shows for last minute touch ups.

Clipping the bridle path and how long to make it depends on what looks best on your horse. A longer bridle path gives the neck a slimmer, longer look and draws attention to the head. A shorter bridle path does the opposite by drawing attention away from the head.

Be sure and rug your horse after clipping, even if it is warm outside, he's going to need some extra cover and besides, it will keep him clean longer. To avoid sun damage to his coat, your horse must be fully rugged when exposed to direct sunlight.

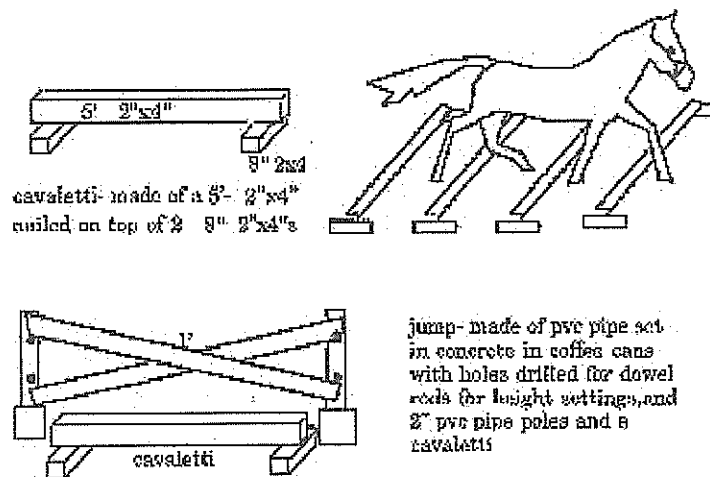
Happy Clipping!

Priscilla Cox

# Teaching The Miniature Horse To Hunt & Jump With Style

by Jan Easter

Jumping is a natural movement for a horse and when trained properly you and your horse can enjoy and excel at the sport. It is important to teach the basics so that you will have correct posture and maintain the correct positions as your horse advances to larger jumps. First we start off with a cavaletti ( pole ) on the ground and walk the horse over it, going with him so he crosses the cavaletti in the center. The cavaletti should be made of a heavy enough material so that if he clicks it with his foot it will be uncomfortable. When he crosses the cavaletti without tipping it, praise him and let him know he has done the job right. Then lead him with about 2' of lead so that you walk beside the cavaletti, while he crosses at the center of the cavaletti. When he gets this down place 4 cavaletti in a row with about 14" apart ( you will have to gauge this by your own horses stride). Walk him through these poles on a 2' lead so that he crosses these cavaletti in the center. He should be able to step over these cavaletti comfortably without tipping or touching them. Do this several times until he keeps consistent speed, always crossing in the center. This is an exercise to teach the horse to raise his feet and gauge the distance of an obstacle on his own. Make sure the horse maintains the same speed beginning, through and after walking over the cavaletti. This is very important to insist on in these early stages.



Next you need to spread the cavaletti about 24" apart and trot him over the cavaletti. Be sure and maintain the same speed until you ask for a halt several feet away from the obstacle. Do not continue on to another phase until he is crossing the obstacles at an even pace without touching or tipping the obstacles every time. Don't forget to praise when it is done right. Do this 5-10 times daily for a week, and as a warm up to all jumping sessions in the future.

Now you will place 3 cavaletti on the ground about 24" apart, after the third cavaletti leave a space of about 4 foot then place the fourth cavaletti on the ground about 4" in front of a jump of one foot. Use the crosspoles on the one foot jump as illustrated so it teaches the horse to take the jump in the center. The jump should be one foot high at the center of the jump. Trot him through at an even paced trot. He should trot the poles and jump over the one foot jump. Yes, place the poles on the side of the jump you are coming from so that it will be uncomfortable if the horse tips the jump poles and learns that it will be easier not to knock the jump down. It is lightweight enough to fall apart if you have a problem, but difficult enough to be uncomfortable to knock down. Now is when he will learn the lesson not to knock down the jump. When in practice, substantial jumps should be used. Try this, it should take about a week or so to get to the jump and next time we will learn the higher jumps.

*Hint:* this is also the way I train my horse to go over the poles for the halter obstacle classes, I would paint the cavaletti white as it is easier for the horse to see and will represent the pvc pipe to him. I use schedule 40 pvc 2" as it doesn't warp as readily and store the cross rails flat to prevent warping.

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Email: [estracrs@flash.net](mailto:estracrs@flash.net) Website: [www.flash.net/~estracrs](http://www.flash.net/~estracrs)

**Note from the editor.** Young horses may be schooled over cavaletti and this is a good way to lengthen a horses stride, but remember only mature horses of 3 years and over should be working over jumps.

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[www.geocities.com/mhcgb/](http://www.geocities.com/mhcgb/)

Members, please email any photographs you would like posted on the page to [mhcgb@aol.com](mailto:mhcgb@aol.com). Your horses at shows, at home, driving, jumping, anything you like to show the versatility of your miniature horse!

## UPCOMING MINIATURE HORSE EVENTS

Sep 7 & 8	BMHS Int'l Champion of Champions	Wiltshire
Sarah Hampton, 9 Hobury Street, Chelsea, London SW10 0JB		Entries Closed
Sep 21	Miniature Horse Club Europe	Belgium
Ann De Weerd	Tel: 0032 2361 4647	
Sep 28 & 29	All Miniature International Breed Show	Doncaster
Jane Davenport, Ramor House, North Street, Owston Ferry, Doncaster, DN9 1AE		Entries Close 14/09/02
Sep 28 & 29	Miniature Horse of the Year Show/ Royal London	Befordshire
Angie Allison	Tel: 01353 720 797	

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## NOTICE

### ALL MINIATURE HORSE OWNERS

The Miniature Horse Club of Great Britain will be approaching shows to host classes for us next year. If you have a show in your area, which you think would be willing to host classes for us, please contact Claire King at 01945 774 312. Please provide her with the name of the show and show secretary details, if possible. Claire will make all arrangements for the classes. We would like to have 3 classes each for draft (cob/hunter type) and refined (arab/thoroughbred type) horses, plus a championship at each show.

Horses may be from any miniature horse registry. The top 2 places in each class will qualify for a Championship Show to be held early next fall, venue to be determined

Remember, your support of these shows will be crucial to having them the following year!

# Featured Stud

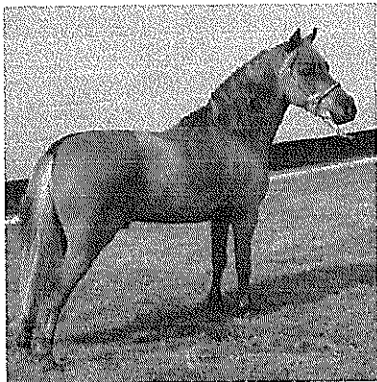
## New Close Farm

Having grown up a Pony Clubber, moved on to be a show jumper, moved into show horses and then breeding horses, I have pretty much been around horses all my life.

I first became interested in Miniature Horses about four years ago, having seen them competing at the county shows I attended with my hacks and riding horses. It wasn't long before I was completely smitten with these beautiful little horses and needed one (!) of my own.

I wanted a miniature horse that resembled the refined horses I was riding, I'd seen glimpses of some resemblance to my horses but I wanted an ultimate show horse in miniature, so the search for my first miniature horse began on the internet there I found... THE AMERICAN MINIATURE HORSE.

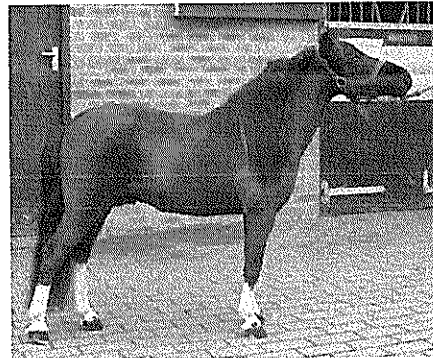
Using the family holiday to Florida as an excuse I began my search of the American Miniature Horse Studs. It was a real eye opener. Some studs had as many as 200 horses to view!! Eventually we settled on a yearling filly and colt for me to begin showing and then to breed from. CASCADES MAGIC CHARM and CASCADES TOP CATS MISS KITTY.



Cascades Magic Charm

The colt, Magic Charm, was 2001 Reserve Supreme Champion of Champions with BMHS and 2001 Reserve Supreme Champion with IMPHS. Miss Kitty was Junior Champion mare in the European championships in Belgium.

Magic Charm covered one mare last year and has produced a truly outstanding black colt foal. One horse led to another and another because with miniature horses one is never enough!!



Dell Teras Dellas Joe Berry

Going back to the US last year we were on the stud trail yet again. Buying two weanlings, I then spotted the stallion Dell Teras Dellas Joe Berry. The stud was unsure whether to let Berry go or not, so we left it with them to decide and we carried on our holiday. One morning I checked my boys into the kids club, signing them in I noticed the example to copy on the form named the child as 'Joe Berry' I got back to our hotel room to receive a call from the stud saying they had decided to sell Joe Berry. I think that was fate!

My aim now is to breed a champion miniature horse from my stock.

I have found in a very short space of time what wonderful friends and pets these little horses make, everyone who comes into contact with them falls in love with them, and rightly so. My boys Alex 9 and Lewis 5 are now starting to show the horses, which proves the wide range of people that can become interested and manage these super little horses.

Travelling around the shows we have made lots of new friends in the 'mini' world. I think the MHCGB will bring the fun back into showing, giving us lots of new classes to try out, classes for everyone. You'd don't have to have the best looking horse in the world to teach him to jump or drive or be a star in the obstacle ring.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the shows next year.

Jill Robinson

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Back wed -

# Show Grooming

Now that your miniature horse is conditioned, fit and clipped, how do you prepare him to show?

Trim hooves a week or so before the show. The hooves should be level with the floor with the pasterns at approx a 45 degree angle.

Minis are always shown with full, natural manes and tails. To keep your horse looking like it's full size counterpart, their mane and tails should be pulled. A horse stepping on it's tail in the ring looks ridiculous, not to mention uncomfortable and an overly heavy mane can break the crest. The tail should be pulled to taper into a soft point just below the hock and the mane should be pulled to the point of the shoulder where it finishes in a gentle triangular shape. The forelock should be neatly pulled to taper into a soft point.

Bathe your horse the day before the show and apply conditioner to the mane and tail. There are all types of equine shampoos and conditioners on the market for all colours of horses. Use the shampoo that suits your horse's colour. Be sure and rinse all soap and conditioner out as residue can lead to scurf. While your bathing him, use a stiff brush and scrub the hooves with soap and water. Use a sweat scraper to remove the excess water from the coat and spray with Show Sheen or other coat conditioner/brightener.

Plait the tail loosely and tie up just below the dock. Comb out the mane and forelock and put a "mane tamer" on the mane. (I personally use a lycra hood and body suit.) Put a clean blanket on the horse and tie him up, out of the wind to dry. Shipping boots or leg wraps on white legs will help keep them clean.

On the day of the show remove the blanket and leg wraps, let down his tail and groom completely 1/2-3/4 hour prior to his class. Clean out his hooves, give them a quick wipe with a damp rag and let dry. After they're dry, coat with a clear or black hoof polish depending on the natural hoof colour. Normally a clear polish is used on a white legged horse and black is used for other colours. Be sure and stand your horse on a clean, hard surface when applying hoof polish so as not to pick up dirt and debris while the polish is drying. Always remove the polish following the show to help maintain a healthy hoof.

Apply a coat brightener all over including his mane & tail. Clean the muzzle and ears and trim his whiskers with a disposable razor, if needed. Apply a little petroleum jelly to his muzzle and eyelids to give a little extra shine.

Fit him with a show halter suited to his head shape and colour. A beautiful shaped head with lots of colour needs a plain halter while a pretty shaped head of a solid colour might suit a more ornate halter. A plain head is more suited to a plain halter the colour of the horse. Gold fittings look better on sorrels and skewbalds while silver fittings enhance silver dapples, black or piebald horses.

Make sure you dress yourself to compliment your horse with boots, gloves and hat to match your outfit. A tidy handler is as important as a tidy horse. You and your horse are now ready for the ring. It doesn't matter whether showing in-hand or performance classes, have fun! Don't forget to take your camera and use it! You'll love having pictures to show your friends and family.

Priscilla Cox

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# SHOW ESSENTIALS

When travelling to a show the distances we have to in the UK, you must make sure you pack all the essentials. Here's a list of items I can't live without.

- 10 Gallon water jugs, 2 or more depending on the number of horses I'm taking. Some horses will not drink strange water and even if I'm staying overnight, I take my own.
- Bedding
- Hay, usually a bit more than I feed normally so they can have some to munch on during the day.
- Grain, the normal amount for each horse
- Equine First Aid Kit
  - Thermometer
  - Lubricating gel
  - Vet wrap
  - Antiseptic cleanser
  - Antiseptic cream
  - Gamgee
  - Cotton wool
  - Wound powder
  - Probiotic paste
  - Humane twitch
  - Safety scissors
  - Kool packs
  - Disposable gloves
- Fly repellent
- Baby wipes
- Waterless shampoo
- Towels and rags
- Sponges
- Extra rugs
- Extra halters and lead ropes
- Show halters and leads
- Hay bags
- Buckets
- Bucket brush
- Grooming Case
  - Dandy brush
  - Body brush
  - Hoof pick
  - Mane/tail combs
  - Hoof polish (Clear & Black)
  - Covered hair ties (small)
  - Show Sheen hair polish
  - Petroleum jelly
  - Diaper pins
- Show clothes with extra outfit, just in case!
- Overnight bag

Luckily, there's usually a tack stand on the grounds where you can pick up those bits you forgot to pack. And I always seem to forget something!

## Attention Club Members!

Next Club meeting is scheduled for Saturday evening 7:00pm at Moorhouse Arena cafeteria, following the Saturday classes of the All Miniature Breeds International Show. Come and support this new concept in miniature horse showing! Contact Jane Davenport at 01427 728 266 for further details. Hurry, entries close on Sep 14 and no entries will be allowed on the day.

# HORSE FREUD

by Larry Ross, Scott Creek

Prior to Joanne and I hitching up, I had essentially no experience with horses. So after 20 years of being around these critters, it has been personally interesting to look back at how my attitudes toward and interaction with horses has changed since Joanne took me on that first "romantic???" ride as we were courting. As a result of this close association with horses over a period of time I have seen my total outlook and manner of dealing with horses change as I have gone through a lot of trial and error experiences and observed their behaviour. Now when I add in a dose of "Psychology Today" to this, look out. Here comes Horse Freud. There are a couple of observations that seem to jump out and may be of use to consider.

If we go back to our basic biology class, we remember about the food chain. Plants are the bottom of this chain. The energy that plants capture is passed on to the animals on the upper links of this chain. The next link up the chain is the herbivores (plant eaters). We all know the horses fit into this group. The links in the chain after this point are the predators (meat eaters) that kill plant eaters for their food. Of course our dogs and cats fit into this category. So what does all of this have to do with horse psychology? Well, if you take a look at horses in the field you see a number of things. First of all horses usually tend to stay in a group. If a foal falls asleep in the field and the herd moves away, the foal will immediately run back to the herd when it wakes up. Frequently horses that are kept isolated from others develop habits such as pacing the fence, weaving, cribbing, etc. They have a need to be in the herd. When horses are separated from each other, they call (whinny) incessantly for one another. Cats and dogs, on the other hand, being predators are more solitary animals. They lay by themselves and do not necessarily have the desire to be with others of their own kind all of the time.

As you well know, herbivores such as cattle, sheep, and horses are all herd animals. They have the instinct to gather in a group for protection. Herd animals also share the same defence mechanism when they "perceive" a threat to their welfare. They attempt to escape. In its simplest form this is the classic flight response. If they escape they run away to safety. If they don't, they normally thrash about wildly in an attempt to escape until either subdued in some manner or they become exhausted. The word "perceived" is important since horses tend to jump to conclusions on what is a threat. We're probably giving the horse a bit of credit talking in this manner. It is highly questionable whether the horse has the reasoning power I am talking about. Anyway, assuming a horse perceives it is about to be eaten, probably the best thing to do is run away now and think about it later. Predatory animals such as dogs and cats do one of two things if they perceive a threat. They either become submissive by laying down and cowering or they raise the hair on their back and turn to fight.

Due to the major differences in behaviour patterns, it is important to realize that horses have to be treated differently than dogs if we are going to get along with them effectively. Consider the differences between a puppy and a young foal. Puppies are real rough-housers. They love to play chase, they wrestle with children on the floor, they do all sorts of aggressive behaviours. Dogs like to be jumped at, patted roughly or scratched in an vigorous manner. If a person got down on the barn floor with a foal in the same manner as with the young dog, the foal would be doing everything possible to escape from the situation. Once again, the foal perceives a threat and therefore uses the only tools it has available. It either shies from the situation in the first place or runs away if at all possible.

It used to really gripe me when Joanne would tell me to go out in the field and get so-and-so horse. I would dutifully get a halter and lead rope, head purposefully into the field to bring back my "quarry". Obviously, the horse usually figured out that it was "quarry" also and most often headed off to the high country. Then the chase was on. "I'll corner that nag." You know the rest. I would wildly chase the horse around the pasture, wear myself out, get really irritated and finally admit defeat and head back to the barn empty handed. Then, Joanne would pour salt into the wounded ego. She would just walk out and "catch" the horse. I couldn't figure it out. I thought it must be one of those female things.

(continued on page 8)

Finally one day I must admit, "The sun rose over Marble Head". There was a lot more going on when Joanne went to "catch" a horse than I had noticed. It occurred to me that she was dealing with her horses idea of "perceived threat". When Joanne goes into the field, she does a number of things to convince the horses that she was not a threat. She is effectively meeting the horses on their terms and in their timeframe. She walks about the field slowly. She tries not to look or walk directly toward the horse. She takes a soft rather than erect body posture, sometimes bending to one knee. She talks softly to the horse. Frequently she stops short of the horse and extends a hand full of grain. Normally after a few seconds the horse walks up to her. If the horse doesn't move I've seen her back a couple of steps away and the horse then moves toward her to the grain. It is a rare occasion that Joanne does not come back with the horse she wants. Looking back on this, the horses obviously "perceived" a threat from me but not Joanne's approach.

Certainly there are some hardcore cases. We have had a few. One mare we purchased more or less ran to the other end of the pasture for a long time but after a time of hand feeding vitamins to the mares out of a bucket in the pasture, she finally came around. At first she was very wary about eating out of the bucket. It took a long time to win her confidence. When she finally started taking her first tentative nibbles we made sure to not react to her and move on to feed the other mares. Believe it or not, this mare became one of the biggest pests. Obviously she was initially attracted to the prospect of food. Later on she spent much time pushing others out of the way to get her share of scratching when we went out to the field to see the horses.

In conclusion, I guess the biggest lesson that I have learned about interacting effectively with horses is that everything seems to work out better if they have a sense of trust in us humans. Realizing that they are, by nature, highly suspicious and easily rattled, it seems the best approach that I have found is to give the appearance of gentleness with slow deliberate movement. Restraining a young foal terrorizes it unless this difficult lesson is approached carefully and with patience on the part of the handler. The bottom line is that we all know horses are not dogs. It should be just as apparent due to their major differences, we (theoretically being more intelligent) need to make sure we understand these major differences and use our knowledge of them to effectively work with our animals so that both man and horse end up with positive experiences and trusting relationships.

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