

The CAROLINAS EQUETRIAN®

Vol. 4, No. 1
Spring 2017

Heart of the Carolinas:
SOUTHERN
8THS
FARM

Polo

A Way of Life for
WESLEY BRYAN

Eye on Tryon:
TR&HC Kicks Off
92nd Year





Healthy Tips for the High-Performance Equestrian

By Steve Heinecke

At the start of every new year, the most popular resolutions usually pertain to health and fitness. However, the majority of these resolutions are simply a phase and don't last. Yet, as the spring season quickly approaches, I would like to inspire and instill motivation to those who have such goals for 2017, particularly in the equestrian industry.

This year, while showing at the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, there are more horses and riders competing than ever it seems. The best barns, grooms and horses are turned out in the most beautiful and over-the-top clothes and gear. More than ever, I feel as though we, as equestrian athletes, rely on material possessions to justify and establish ourselves as professionals or experts within the sport. As a result, I feel as though our own personal health and fitness is frequently overlooked as a way to achieve athletic goals. Most riders will read this and may not feel that it relates to them, or they will have a reason for why they can't improve their own fitness. I'm not saying that everyone has to be in impeccable shape but we are athletes and competitors and should make it a priority to strive to improve the quality of our health.

In a general sense, health should be a priority for everyone, but especially equestrian athletes. No matter your training regime, you will not see the progress you desire unless your diet is well balanced. Breakfast is vital to kick-start the day and I recommend eating oatmeal, eggs and fruit. When riders go out to dinner, it is tempting to order a meal rich in calories, however lighter options such as salads and lean protein such as fish or chicken are guilt-free and equally as delicious! Another tip is to bring a reusable water bottle to the barn or show so you are not tempted to purchase sodas, and if you are feeling adventurous, drink daily protein shakes consisting of kale, spinach, protein powder, flax seed, chia seeds and hemp.

If you are not a member of a local gym, grab a friend to help stay motivated and workout a few times a week to improve your strength and cardio. At horse shows, do not rely on a golf cart to get you everywhere. Instead, choose to walk around the showgrounds.

As equestrians, even though we might train and compete at odd hours of the day, getting a proper amount of sleep is very important in

order for your body to rejuvenate and your mind to refresh. I personally plan out my day to ensure that I go to bed early enough to get eight hours of sleep each night, if possible.

I am closer to this topic on a personal level, but I have not always been healthy. Changing my lifestyle as it relates to my health has transformed my life for the better. I don't know for sure if it will increase

my life expectancy, but it has increased the quality of my life. Making these changes is not as hard as you would think and it gets easier as it becomes habit. However, life is all about balance so do not feel you should deprive yourself completely from your favorite treats.

Two years ago, the first step I took to a healthier lifestyle was to remove soda, fried food and bread as well as pasta from my diet. As a replacement, I added water, salads and vitamins. I also started running and exercising outside of the barn. In a short period of time I lost over 20 pounds and I feel stronger while riding. I treat my body and myself as an athlete, just as I do my horses. We focus so much on developing our horses and their nutrient intake so why would we not do the same for ourselves?

Sometimes you need the right inspiration or a different perspective to motivate you to take that first step in a new direction. The reason could be personal or it could be to simply become a better competitor or athlete. I started my journey from personal experiences but eventually a healthier lifestyle evolved and grew into something that positively impacted all aspects of my life and I hope these tips can help do the same for you!

To learn more about Sock Inc. and Steve Heinecke, visit www.steveheinecke.com and like Sock Inc. on Facebook at www.facebook.com/sockincequestrian.

Sock Inc. is a hunter, jumper and equitation training operation located directly outside Charlotte, North Carolina, catering to riders of all levels. Owned by world-class professional hunter rider, trainer and judge, Steve Heinecke, Sock Inc. is known for producing top quality horses and riders while enforcing a high standard of professionalism and understanding of proper horsemanship in all its students so as to continue to better the sport for future generations to come.



In a general sense, health should be a priority for everyone, but especially equestrian athletes.



SOCK

and
Steve Heinecke
at *Robindale Farm*



Hercules VD Vromboutshoeve
- FOR SALE -



- SALES
- JUDGING
- PONIES
- CLINICS
- TRAINING
- BOARDING



561-254-2223 | 7414 Broomes Old Mill Rd., Waxhaw, NC
sockinc@gmail.com | www.steveheinecke.com | facebook.com/sockequestrian
Robindale Boarding or Facility Inquiries: Carolyn Rechkemmer at 704-618-7474 or robindalefarm@gmail.com

DECISIONS

SELECTING WHICH TRAINER IS RIGHT FOR YOU

DECISIONS

By The Carolinas Equestrian

Regardless of your age, skill level or goals, trainer selection plays a significant role in determining your learning experiences in the equestrian sport. We asked several of the area's top hunter/jumper trainers, who also have their United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) 'R' judging credentials, to share their perspectives on the trainer selection process.

What steps should one take in selecting his/her trainer?

Mike Rosser: If possible, one should go to a show in their area and observe trainers in action. One could then see which style of teaching and training would best suit them and their horse. If you are parents of a younger beginner, I suggest searching for a good solid up/down program to get them started. Oftentimes, those situations are spread by word of mouth.

Jack Towell: In choosing a trainer, the main thing to check is the person's credentials. No. 1, is to review his or her resume, and No. 2 ask for a price list. If you can't afford to ride with that trainer, you don't want to waste anyone's time.

I have two granddaughters now, and if I were looking for a trainer I'd want someone who has been there and done that and had a resume to prove it. I would look at that trainer's record closely to ensure that the person has the experience and to know I'm getting the best trainer for the money.

Choosing a trainer also shouldn't be a quick decision or primarily based on geographic location.

Finding the right trainer is a process where you should carefully consider your goals or your child's goals and then match those with a trainer whose program emphasizes those features. If you want your child to learn horsemanship skills in the barn as well as how to ride and compete, you might want to consider a trainer who has a more hands-on approach

rather than a full-care barn where employees do most of the work. If you're an adult and you want to bring along a green horse, you might want to find a trainer who specializes in young horses or a barn that has a larger number of adults so you'll have a built-in peer and support group.

It's also important to remember that the best rider isn't necessarily the best trainer. Racecar drivers don't fix their own cars! They have professional mechanics to do that. Look for a trainer with credentials and choose one with a competent professional rider. Horses and ponies need training rides to perform at their best with most junior and amateur riders.

In the past, geography played a larger role in selecting a trainer. In today's world, with so many more ways to communicate, watch videos and share photographs, you may find your perfect trainer isn't the closest one. You might even decide that commuting from a distance to ride and show with the right person is worth the added effort because the quality of the time you spend there is worth a lot more than riding at a barn nearer to your home but with a person who isn't quite the right fit.

Cathy & Daniel Geitner: Obviously, finding a trainer that fits within your budget and locale are key, but there are many other factors that should play into your decision. You'll be spending a considerable amount of time with these people, so make sure you actually like them and enjoy being in their presence. Watch how they interact with their



Mike Rosser



Jack Towell



Cathy Geitner



Daniel Geitner



Steve Heinecke

own clients and you'll have a good idea of how they would treat you as a client. Beyond that, look at their strengths and make sure they align with your needs. If you are primarily focused on competition and want to accumulate points, you'll need to find a trainer that attends a fair amount of rated shows throughout the year. Alternatively, if you have a green horse, you might want to find a trainer that focuses on developing young horses and attending more local type shows. If you don't have a horse you'll want a program that offers lessons on school horses or in-house leases.

For parents, the trainer that is most suitable for a beginner rider might not be the same person that will take your child to the next level. There are many stables that have multiple trainers within their program that can accommodate varying levels and needs. It is important to know your own goals and convey them to potential trainers, so they can help you decide if their program is the right fit for you.

Steve Heinecke: When you are choosing a new trainer, the most important aspect to consider is your personal riding goals. Would you love to see yourself beginning to compete at a smaller show or are you dreaming of competing in an equitation final? Do you have a young horse that you need help developing? Do you have a specific division you would like to be competing in? You need to have a plan. Choose a trainer that has experience and success helping their students achieve the goals you wish to accomplish. It is also helpful to choose a trainer that can ride your horse or has a team that includes a rider to assist with training.

With the expansion of technology and circuits that are based across the country, riders are no longer limited to choosing a trainer based on locality. There are many trainers, like myself, who teach clients from a distance, which requires flying, driving and a great deal of organization. If you ride with a trainer that you meet at shows or only train with during clinics, I strongly suggest implementing a training formula that you understand and are comfortable with. In addition, finding a trainer that you mesh well with on a personal level and personality-wise is very important. As a trainer who has had many successful clients from all over the country, I've learned that a successful partnership begins with a strong level of communication between client and trainer so that everyone is on the same page and ready for action come show day.

For example, I will sit down with my clients in December or January and look toward our one-year and five-year plans. We back up to the present and from there we have a basic understanding of what shows and how many shows we need to compete at throughout the year in order to achieve our goals.

About Mike Rosser

Mike Rosser has maintained a Hunter/Jumper facility since 1978 in Southern Pines, North Carolina. He is a "R" judge and has had the honor of judging such prestigious horse shows as Devon, Washington International, Capital Challenge, Harrisburg, and International Derby Finals. He enjoys giving clinics, teaching, training, showing and foxhunting.

About Jack Towell

Jack Towell, of Camden, SC, began his career as a hunter/jumper trainer at the age of 17. After graduating from Catawba College (North Carolina), Jack returned to the horse world and became one of the most successful trainers and developers of young riding talent in the country, taking riders from the from ponies to the grand prix jumpers. Towell has trained more than 75 champions and reserve champions at the Devon Horse Show (Pennsylvania), Capital Challenge (Maryland) and the East Coast fall indoor shows, including the Pennsylvania National, the Washington (D.C.) International and the National horse shows. In addition, he trained Brunello to three USHJA International Hunter Derby Championships and two USEF National Horse of the Year titles. Towell was inducted into the National Show Hunter Hall of Fame in the Class of 2016.

About Cathy and Daniel Geitner

Cathy and Daniel Geitner are owners/operators of DFG Stables, a full service training and show facility for hunters and jumpers, in Aiken, SC. Each are seasoned hunter and jumper professional riders with an extensive resume of honors in both disciplines. Additionally they have their USEF 'R' judging credentials.

About Steve Heinecke

Steve Heinecke of Sock Inc. grew up in Connecticut and began riding at the age of six. He developed a passion for the sport almost immediately and, throughout his highly successful junior career, claimed numerous champion titles at some of the most prestigious horse shows across the country including the 1983 Connecticut Hunter & Jumper Association Junior Medal Final, the 1985 Rolex-Maclay National Equitation Championship at the National Horse Show in Madison Square Garden, the New England Equitation Championships and the Devon Horse Show. Since then, Heinecke has gone on to establish himself as a highly competitive professional hunter rider, trainer and judge. He has helped develop and produce some of the top junior and adult riders and horses in the nation under his tutelage.