

ATBC Newsletter

May 2011



ATBC

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This publication is the official Newsletter of the

Australian Thoroughbred Breeders Club Limited

The Club, which currently has over 200 members, was formed to assist thoroughbred breeders through the presentation of talks, seminars, stud visits and social activities as well as providing incentive schemes and a Stallion Tender Scheme. New members are always welcome and the membership can be arranged by contacting the Club Secretary. Annual membership fees are \$ 50 for a single member or \$ 70 for a joint membership, which includes families, partnerships or corporate bodies

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Wednesday 1st June, 7:30 p.m. at the Clubhouse, Hawkesbury Racecourse Dynamic Respiratory Endoscopy

Dr. Derek Major, Managing Partner of Agnes Banks Equine Clinic will demonstrate the over-ground scoping machine, whereby respiratory problems can be assessed more accurately than in a standing examination. In some cases expensive surgery may be avoided if the problem is different from the original diagnosis.

Derek will also speak about the horse virus which has emerged, especially in the Hawkesbury Area, resulting in a considerable number of deaths.

We would like a good turn up for this meeting which is open to all members, guests and especially trainers.

Please, please ring to indicate that you will be attending so that we can arrange seating etc.

Also we ask that you bring a plate for supper;

A - K - Sweet,

L - Z - Savoury.

Production Deadline: Please note that advertisements and articles must be received by the third Tuesday of Each month to guarantee their appearance in that month's Newsletter

2011 Non-Bus Trip 27th/28th August

There are some changes to the information contained in our last Newsletter. **Noahs in the Valley** has apparently changed ownership and there were some difficulties with our booking, We have, therefore, changed to **The John Hunter Motel**, also in Muswellbrook.

We have had good indications of support and have already exceeded the 20 place quota set by the studs. However, as there is always some who have to drop out for one reason or another, we are still taking stand-by bookings.

As seven Members will be coming from North of the Hunter we suggest that others car pool from Windsor. Obviously there will need to be a contribution by passengers towards petrol costs etc, but we think that this will be significantly less than the hire of a mini-bus which would work out to be in excess of \$ 70 per person.

The cost for accommodation, two course dinner and full breakfast at The John Hunter, plus lunches is \$ 130 per person. As we need to finalise arrangements with the Motel we ask that all those who have indicated their intention to come, pay as soon as possible a \$ 50 deposit to secure their place. Your cheques should be made payable to ATBC Ltd and marked for the attention of Dianne Lanham.

Christmas in July - Sunday 17th July at The Clubhouse

Please make an early note in your diaries that we are planning a festive lunch as per the very successful event last year. Certain celebrities have already been canvassed. More details in the next Newsletter.

Success for Hawkesbury Race Club

The stand-alone meeting was an unmitigated success again. I can do no better than quote Ken Callander who wrote:

While racing heads in the Eastern Suburbs might not acknowledge the business nous of Hawkesbury CEO Brian Fletcher, the movers and shakers of the Western Suburbs know he is the man in their area that gets things done.

As usual the Hawkesbury stand-alone race day on Saturday was a cracker of a meeting, vibrant with a fantastic atmosphere."

He further suggested that the ATC save the airfares to study ideas from all over the world and instead splash out \$ 80 for a taxi to Hawkesbury and learn from Brian!

...and ATBC Members

An emotional Joan Pracey struggled to hold back tears after two-year-old Upstacker scored a win for the locals at the stand alone meeting.

Joan trains on the track, but had to survive a protest from the runner-up before Upstacker was declared the winner of the Reavill Farm Inglis Bonus 2YO Handicap (1200m).

Purchased for just \$18,000 from the Widden draft at the 2010 Inglis Classic Yearling Sale, the Strategic two year-old colt broke his maiden with a lucrative win in this open juvenile event. Along with the \$42,000 first prize money, the win also carried with it a \$50,000 bonus from Inglis as well as a \$20,000 BOBS bonus.

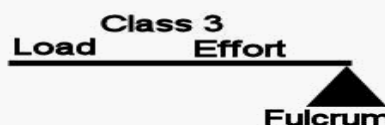
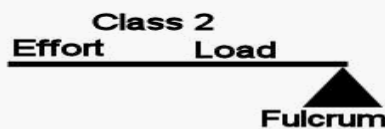
Apparently Joan had agreed with connections prior to the race that should they pick up the bonus they will head to Scone for next month's HTBA Select Yearling Sale in search of another bargain priced yearling. I note from the sale results that another Strategic was knocked down to her. Same time, same place next year perhaps.

The **Hobartville Stud** bred **Shadows In The Sun** (*Dane Shadow x Best Out West (Best Western)*) won the South Australian Derby. This is the second G1 winner, 4th stakes winner and 8 stakes wins for Dane Shadow who was in turn bred by Hobartville.

It's not all good news. Duncan Page's STS bred 8 yo **Zendi** (*Ghataas (GB) X Joy To The World (NZ) (Balmerino (NZ))*) died after collapsing having completed some light work. Zendi was a promising hurdler having won 3 from 3, including the \$100,000 Galleywood Hurdle, and was being set for the major winter races and possibly a trip to Japan.

On the importance of length of rein by Peter James

Levers



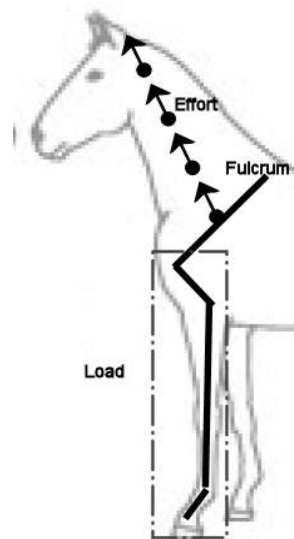
I was reading the Conformation article on the club web site and came across the reference to the length of rein being an important consideration when inspecting a horse. The article then went on to say that a good length of rein confers balance to the horse to counter the power produced by the hind quarters. So far so good, but there are other factors involved where a good length of rein adds to the performance of the athletic race-horse.

To fully understand why a good length of rein is important we must go back to basics : How does the horse move? Locomotion requires the use of muscles, tendons and bones. These are arranged in a complex manner of levers and pulleys. There are three classes of levers depending where the load, effort and fulcrum are located as in a seesaw, wheel barrow and BBQ tongs.

The reference to pulleys in horse locomotion is not your usual block and tackle but rather as a snatch block used to change direction of the force. The most obvious of these are the sesamoids which convert the upward pull of the flexor tendon to a backward pull on the hoof thus causing locomotion.

The locomotion muscles are the effort, the bone joints are the fulcrum and the bone itself and other bony attachments are the load.

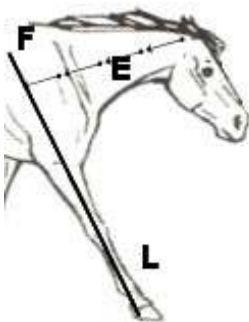
The muscles are attached to the bone by tendons either close up or at a distance. The motive power is in the muscle. Muscles work by contracting. Muscles are great at pulling, not much good at pushing. There is a limit as to how much they can contract. The longer the muscle the greater the overall contraction. The bigger the muscle the more force it can deliver. This is the important property of the length of rein. In essence the longer the length of rein, the greater the contracted length and thus the greater movement of the bone.



So back to the horse and in particular the front leg. The front legs of a horse have no bone connection with the trunk. However the shoulder is firmly held in place by muscular attachments to the vertebrae, ribs etc. so for all intents and purposes we can say that the top of the shoulder can act like a fulcrum allowing rotation of the rest of the shoulder.

In the diagram opposite the attachment of the shoulder to the vertebrae is simplified. There is not just one muscle attachment but others running down the neck line. The arrow line represents the muscle and so becomes the effort.

Also for simplicity the humerus, forearm and so on down the leg represents the load for the lever. We can see that this system is a class 3 lever. In the full gallop the horse's leading leg components undergo a series of flexions from one stride to the next. As the shoulder comes forward the flexions decrease until at the maximum forward motion of the shoulder the humerus has rotated somewhat and the lower limb takes on the aspect of a straight unit.

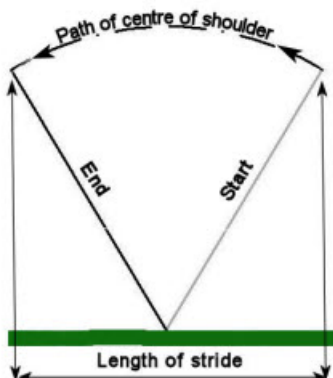


Having got so far it is time to simplify the diagrams again. Instead of the multiple array of bones for the load, these will be represented by one line only. After all we are only interested in the length of rein and what that represents.

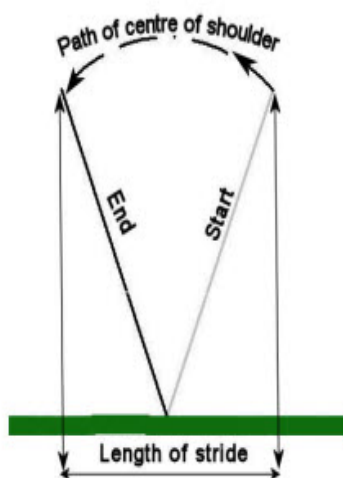
The diagram on the immediate left now shows the position of the horse when the hoof touches the ground. Notice that with the head extending forward and the neck roughly parallel to the ground, the muscle is almost at right angles to the line of the shoulder. This is the most efficient angle for the transfer of power to the lever system.

What we want to know is how far the body travels before the hoof leaves the ground again. What happens is that the body rotates around the point of contact of the hoof so that the angle between the limb and the vertical on landing and departing are roughly the same as

seen below. I say roughly because after the leg reaches the vertical, the muscles and tendon which comprise the flexion apparatus of the hoof come into play. This action provides the power impulse for the front leg. I have neglected the shock absorber effect of the flexor tendon here as this is outside the scope of this article.



Now to the nub of the matter. The adjacent schematics show the lever system of a good rein as opposed to the lever system of a short rein. Remember that the longer the muscle, the greater the contraction., the shorter the muscle the smaller the contraction.



A galloping horse with a good length of rein should have his leading hoof hitting the ground roughly below his nose. The angle between the ground and the leg approaches 45° . The forward motion caused by the impulse from the hindquarters should rotate the shoulder around the point of contact of the hoof and the ground. This rotation continues after the hoof leaves the ground. A period of suspension then follows until the other fore comes into play hitting the ground and the process repeated but in this case there is no suspension.

In the case with a horse with a poor rein, the mechanics of the stride are the same but because of the smaller rotation of the shoulder caused by a shorter muscle, the forward placement of the hoof is not as great. Thus the angle between the leg and the ground will be a lot greater than 45° , somewhat approaching 60° in this schematic. The nett result is that the length of stride is much depleted.

With all other points being equal, always choose a horse with a good length of rein.

On Racing Young Horses

In a piece in last month's Newsletter I touched on a theory that racing 2 year-olds had a positive effect on their long term racing careers. Well that theory gets a real work-over in an excellent 2008 article by Deb Bennett entitled "Timing and Rate of Skeletal Maturation in Horses".

Ms Bennett refers to the view that race condition is good for young horses bones as "a mis-application of good research, which has shown that, indeed, the distal bones of young horses in training remodel in response to whatever stresses they're faced with." i.e. the bone substance is remodelled or shifted from one wall of the of the bone to another. If left to mature for a longer term the horse would achieve **equal or better bone substance and quality**.

She considers the claim that horses are fully mature at two years as an "utter falsehood" and doesn't hold back stating that she found it hard to believe that a fellow vet who expressed such view had received a veterinary education.

She points out that horses have more than one growth plate and there are multiple ossification centres to every bone of the body, except the scull, and growth plate closure extends until the sixth year of the horses life. The article contains a schedule of growth-plate conversation to bone and makes the general observation that this occurs from the bottom of the horse, upwards, so that the vertebral column is last and doesn't finally fuse until at least 5 1/2 years old and for a tall, long necked, thoroughbred gelding as late as eight.

It's an excellent article, not least because it is so passionately argued that "...a three year old is not a mature horse and that two year olds have absolutely no business whatsoever at the racetrack". She points out that in days of old you simple couldn't race an immature horse. In the 17th century when the Thoroughbred was invented, the test was to run three, four mile races in a single day, carrying more than 70 kgs over undulating grass surfaces.

When so-called futurities were introduced in the late 19th century, the distances were intro-

duced because it was understood that a young 3 year old couldn't cope with such a test. The purpose of the futurity was to give an insight as to what was coming up for the future-races when these youngsters matured, but they proved so popular that they replaced the 'standard' races. And thus the flight from soundness and stamina to pure speed had begun.

An interesting point is that of those horses that raced as two or three year olds and continued until the age of six or order, only a handful ever posted faster times as young guns as they did as six year olds.

For the full article see: http://www.equinestudies.org/ranger_2008_ranger_piece_2008_pdf1.pdf

Eadweard Muybridge

This photographer has to go down as one of the stand out characters of the 18th century. He was born Edward Muggeridge and his tomb identifies him as Eadweard Maybridge. He seems to have changed his name more often than most people change their underwear, Eadweard Muybridge seems the one he used for the longest time and the one he is best known as.

Born in England he did most of his work in America and he was the first to demonstrate the various actions of racehorses in motion. I am sure that many of you would have seen the films and silhouette-like photographs and be aware of his seminal work ***The Horse in Motion***. A single photograph in 1877 was the first scientific proof that a horse became airborne in mid gallop, which had been hotly debated until then. It shows that the hooves do all leave the ground, although not with the legs fully extended forward and back, as contemporary illustrators tended to imagine, but rather at the moment when all the hooves are tucked under the horse, as it switches from "pushing" with the back legs to "pulling" with the front legs.

This 'proof' landed a \$25,000 wager for Leland Stanford, which he probably put towards founding Stanford University. The technology used was a forerunner of motion picture technology and Edison gave Muybridge credit for the germ of an idea that led to his motion picture machine invention. All this because people could not agree whether a galloping horse becomes airborne.

Prior to this he had gained 'fame' of sorts when he shot and killed his wife's lover and became the first person in U.S. legal history to plead insanity as a defense. It wasn't successful, but he got off anyway on the grounds of justifiable homicide.

Equestrian Supplies

Norm Tattersall reports that **Sydney Equestrian Supplies** at Ebenezer have a very good range of feeds & supplies required by the horse breeder. Orders over \$ 30 can be delivered free in the local area and Frank (02) 4579 9275 has agreed to give a discount to ATBC Members.

Norm also wants to draw attention to the **Yardeco** mulcher chipper machine. The machine comes in sizes 2000, 3000 and 4000. The basic 2000 model is powered by a Honda 51/2 H.P. motor and sells for around \$1,700. These machines are excellent for chaffing both lucerne and oaten hay as they are fitted with 18 hammer blades. The chaff produced is of

good quality.

The average breeder can save around \$1,000 a year by doing their own chaff. Anyone interested should goggle the machines at Yardeco.com. The Sydney sales office is at 4/610 Great Western Highway, Girraween, Phone 9896 5590 and speak to Don.

Members' Horses

Colleen Goth sent in an update on the progress of 'Lucy' (Assafa x Our Thalia (also below))



Free Mare.

8yo bay mare Eagles

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Her first living foal is a weanling Bite the Bullet colt.

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Contact John Holloman 45 721177.

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