



Kudzu Klinik with Danielle Herubin
January 14, 2007
Foxberry Farm



We had a wonderful day with Danielle Herubin! The weather was perfect, and there were 14 eager riders ready to get started. There were a variety of riding levels in the clinic. We had Intro level through First level. There were also a variety of breeds in the clinic. We had ponies all the way up to Dutch Warmbloods. That is the great thing about dressage. All breeds can participate in the sport.

The morning started off with first level riders. Danielle spent the first few minutes getting to know the riders and the horses. She wanted to know about past experiences from both. During this lesson, Danielle expressed the importance of the rider's position. She said that you should always be balanced during your entire ride. You should sit on both seat bones in the saddle. This was an important theme throughout the day. This is extremely important when working with young or inexperienced horses. These horses are more sensitive to your seat aids.

There was a lot of work done with downward transitions. This was true for the entire day. Danielle expressed that you can stop your horse just with your seat. You should use a lot of leg when stopping. You should use more leg when stopping than when asking for an upward transition. It was also stressed that it is important for your horse to feel your seat aids. This was said when riders were working on half-halts. It is important for riders to brace their backs when asking for a half-halt.

Throughout many of the lessons, Danielle asked the riders to flex their horses. This made the horses suppler in their necks. It also made the horses softer in their jaws. I saw this work many times with several different horses. It was amazing to see the change! The horses really started to stretch down into their bits and use their backs. Many times, this kept the horse from bracing against the rider's hands.

Danielle also had several riders work on lengthening their horse's stride at the walk. Most of this work was done without stirrups. She had the riders to concentrate on the movement of the horse's barrel at the walk. Then, she showed different techniques to encourage the horse to stretch out. You could notice an instant change!

I want to send out a big THANK YOU to Foxberry Farm. They provided the GDCTA with a wonderful facility for the Kudzu Clinic. The people were very helpful and hospitable. I considered myself very privileged to meet such a great group of people.

I also want to thank Danielle Herubin! She is a very nice person who was willing to share her time and knowledge with several riders. She had a FULL day. We went non-stop from 9am-6pm! She was gracious enough to devote a full hour to each group of riders. Many times, the lessons were longer than an hour. All of the riders were very pleased with their lessons. There are some riders that have started taking full time lessons from her. If anyone else is interested in Danielle, I can forward your information to her. Once again, I want to send a huge THANK YOU to Foxberry Farm and Danielle Herubin! I also want to thank June Brewer and Marjorie Hicks for helping me with my first Kudzu Clinic. Everything went great!

