

Virtual Training/Riding Review *SAMPLE*



	RIDER	Susie
	HORSE	Snowflake
	VIDEO LINK	XXXX
Sommer Strides Horse Training	DATE	7/20/2020

	VIDEO TIME FRAME	Keep it Up	Work On
1	0-.26	There is nice relaxation here in the horse. I like how he seems responsive and attentive to what you're asking. The turns through the gate were smooth and controlled.	I would like to see more softness in the horse's body when asked to back up. The horse instead tightens his back, lifting his head and becoming inverted, this causes physical tension through the whole body of the horse. The rider is also tight through the seat and legs. Try to soften yourself and the horse will soften more easily.
2	.26-.51	I really like the natural swing the gait of this horse. The rider is moving nicely too, making an obvious team. The horse moves well over the ground polls while maintaining straightness.	This horse could start to come a little more off the forehand. He has a fairly good natural balance and isn't terribly heavy in the front, but try to get him to carry a little more towards his haunches and elevating the withers especially trotting over the ground polls. Use a half halt before to help rebalance and shift the weight backwards.
3	.58-1.03	The turn on the haunches shows the horse's responsiveness and the rider is balanced properly over the horse's back.	To maintain proper balance in a true turn on the haunches (TOH) the horse should balance more on the inside (right) hind. The horse instead stepped backwards and turned more on the outside hind (left). To encourage the proper balance, maintain more forwardness and use the outside rein/aids to keep the horse from over bending in body, throwing the left shoulder out.
4	1.24	This transition was beautiful! I really liked the softness of your aids. The horse responded through his whole body while maintaining great forwardness. Very smooth and maintained rhythm. The position and balance of the rider was lovely here as well.	
5	1.48-1.54		The rider here should have shorter reins, instead the response is to lift the hands too high. Riding with a shorter rein can actually give you more adjustability.
6	2.19-2.24	Great relaxation in the horse here and I love the swinging walk. Very natural and free.	You can really see the tenseness on the rider's legs here. The feet are pressed hard into the stirrups causing a stiff leg and the toes to go out. The leg of the rider should be soft and have a light contact just like you do with your reins. Think of giving a soft hug of the barrel with your legs. A stiff leg will cause stiffness to travel up into the entire seat of the rider.

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7	2.45		There are other moments in this video where this happens as well, but watch your turns, support more with your outside rein. The horse tends to push out on the loutside shoulder through turns. Support the shoulder and don't ask for too much bend in the neck.
8	3.38-3.55	Again this horse is showing really nice relaxation and is being very obedient. I really like how this horse is so intuned with the rider.	The trot on this circle shows some stiffness most likely caused by the horse's lack of forwardness. The rider seems to be holding the horse back and a little upright. Simply ask the horse to engage the trot through the haunches more and the horse will flow more naturally.
9	4.03-4.06	The trot to halt transition was right on mark and obedient.	The rider should try to keep the heels in line beneath the hip, instead the rider here pushes their heels forward to the horse's shoulder. This casues more weight to push forward to the horse's shoulder and forehand. Insteand we want the horse to remain more in balance be shifting more weight to the hauches.
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Horse's Gaits, Movements, and Balance	I think you're at a really good starting place with this horse's balance. His gaits are steady which is great, try to keep more energy and forward engagement. I would also try to encourage more swing in his movements and gaits, especially be cautious of his back and whole topline remaining soft. The swing of the back is more evident at the walk but all 4 gaits should have a natural swing.
Rider's Position and Balance	You have a nice "correct" position but it appears that you're trying too hard, try to loosen up. Be more relaxed and make your position look and feel more natural. As I said, Try not to be so restricted to "proper" position. Your hands are nicely steady but show some tension some times, because it looks like you're trying to keep them in place. Your lower back also seems tense, there should be a more disconnection from your upper body and lower body, use your abs more. Your balance looks nice.
Overall Remarks	Overall, this is some nice riding. Try to work on loosening up more in your body and flow and follow with your horse. When riding horses in their early balance stages, we need to try to help them find their natural balance and instead try not to interfere with them. We become overly focused on riding "correct" and getting our horse into the "correct" position and movements. Balance and softness needs to come first and then you will find the balance and correct carriage coming naturally.
Goals to Work Toward	Really work on relaxation in yourself. Forget about "proper". Be relaxed and let your focus simply be on helping your horse find his balance while maintaining relaxed himself. Balance can't be forced and correct position cannot be created, it's something that has to come to you on its own.
Exercises to Try	Spend some rides really focusing on your horse moving free and loose but riding forward. Experiment riding on a very loose rein, with a droop, and just move out. Feel your horse move beneight you, try closing your eyes if you feel safe doing so. Feel the movement and try to ride while "staying out of his way". Feel for the back to swing to the right and to the left, then follow that movement with your seat. Like a dancing partnership, let him lead and you follow. Travel back and forth from a working trot to a medium trot with the tranisition coming from the hind.
Positive Encouragement	You are doing a great job and there are really a lot of things I see in this video that I like. Keep up the good work!

Thank you!

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