

Mary Larcom in-hand clinic

Sunday 21st Feb 2010

The season kicked off at last with a super day at Whiddon Down. It was terrific to meet up together & share Mary Larcom's wisdom. There were 17 participants who engaged in a mixture of verbal instruction, demonstration & practice. Mary started the day with a short talk in the warmth of the canteen but soon had us outside admiring the wonderful Quarter Horse 'Jack' who lives at The Centre for Caring Horsemanship.

Mary never fails to amuse us with her stories & experiences so there were plenty of smiles as she delivered a fun presentation on showing. We learnt what the judges will be looking for from our horses & ourselves, along with useful tips to score those extra points. Jack was great at attempting to follow the directions given & won many hearts by interrupting the course of events with unexpected kisses for Mary.

One of Jane's super lunches fortified us for the next session, which involved taking our own horses into the arena. There was a good turn out & a varying mix of ability. Mary quickly assessed need & started everyone on some basic start/stop exercises. Some were better than others but it quickly demonstrated that we all would benefit from more practice to get the sharpness required for top scores. We progressed to turns & patterns, gradually mastering the ability to remember all Mary's instructions whilst dodging others working in the school. It was helpful to get personal attention as Mary moved among us, but also to pick up further knowledge by watching others. We had the chance to interpret the moves & receive valuable feedback on communicating with horses.

Thank you to all who took part & helped make the day a success. As always those without horses offered their support & we hope everyone had a good time.

