



In Stride w/ Coventry Report #156
www.CoventryEquestrianCenter.com



The weather outside is delightful and, my horse has been out every day and is happyyyy. Sixty degrees all week and sunny. Wow...

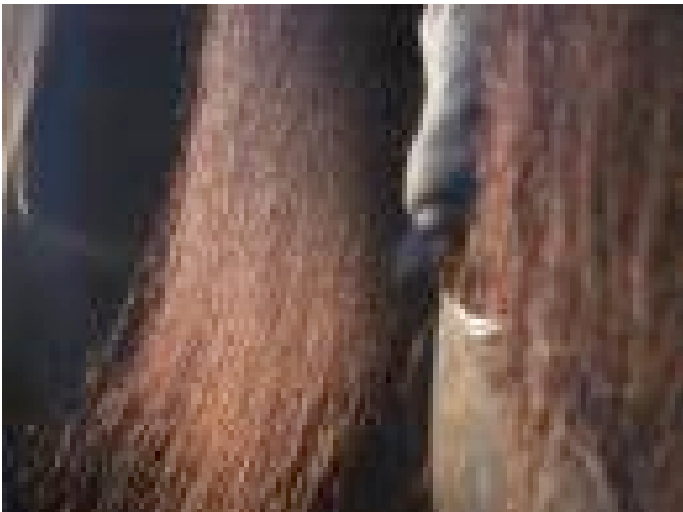
A dressage clinic at Coventry November 21 with Diana Miller. Riding times still available.. Lessons are 75 for a private and 40 for a semi private.

Please let me know if you are interested with a check to sign up and a preferred riding time - asap.

Sat Nov. 21 evening - Wpda Banquet

Here is a really good website site with all kinds of neat horse stuff.... www.ultimatehorsesite.com

Gwen, who owns Sadie, submitted some her photos to the Dover photography contest and she won 2nd place for most artistic! Way to go Gwen... Here is her photo and you can view the rest of them at the link below. Is that Sadie looking all innocent?



<http://www.doversaddleryphotocontest.com/pcwinners.php>

"Find something you're passionate about and keep tremendously interested in it."-- Julia Child, chef

Stretching, Stretching and more Stretching

If no one has noticed I like to stretch horses, and the horses like it too. All athletes have to stretch to keep the muscles supple, oxygenated and fluid. A stiff

muscle is one that can injure readily. Our horses can stretch at the walk, trot and some at the canter. Here is Somerset beginning a stretch at a canter. He is in balance and not falling on his fore hand. He is also an aged thoroughbred who looks incredible because of his gymnastic training which is also called dressage.

This photo is really nice because the rider is off his back



enabling his stretch to come through the rider and his back. He is also totally connected with the rider by being softly on the aids. She is allowing him to stretch down, he is not pulling. By opening her fingers he will gradually go further down, as

she allows. Stretching is not letting the horse rip the reins from your hands and pull them out of your hands. One of my favorite authors, Eric Herberman is quoted from his book The Dressage Formula. "The forward and down exercise is not merely used as transitional stage in the training of young horses (to teach them to stretch for the bit). One should be able to demonstrate the forward and down with any horses, at any stage of training. Forward and down is the sign that the horse has been correctly worked (from back to front), and that its back muscles are elastically in play, originating from a lively, impulsive hindquarter." Also, in this book , he is the only person I have ever seen stretching a horse correctly, and then bringing it up to do a Piaffe, the most advance form of collection.

Then of course, after you have trained your horse to go forward and down, or stretch without loosing balance and falling on the forehead, and as result, developed a top line that carry's the rider, we then learn to ride our horse "under and up." Here is Mandy cantering Somerset in an



uphill balance, his back is swinging , his tail swaying side to side showing his elasticity, or what they now call "swung."



Happy Riding !

