



Fields
snow
covered
horses
going
out.
Ground



This horse is just tracking up & stepping *through* the rider's leg & seat. He is rounding nicely over his top line giving at the poll & yielding to the bit...

Is Your Horse *Through*?
***Through* what....? That is the question...**

Dressage Today Oct 2009 - (Throughness (or the German term Durchlassigkeit) According to Beth Baumert Technical Editor of Dressage Today, "The U.S. Dressage Federations says it like this: Throughness is the "supple, elastic, unblocked, connected state of the horse's musculature that permits an unrestricted flow of energy from back to front and front to back, which allows the aids/influences to freely go through to all parts of the horse (e.g. the rein aids go through and reach and influence the hind legs.)

Lisa Wilcox in the same magazine in her article on 'Through' defined it as such:

'Through',... "in general, when your horse is "through" he is supple both laterally and longitudinally. Energy moves through his entire body with no blocks so the entire top line works without tension." DT Oct '09 pg 44

In the article *The Tibetan Half Halt*, by me, I talk about "through" and how it relates to half halts.

A good half halt is felt when the horse downshifts, or steps under and carries from the hind end. It is when one feels a half halt go through, that the half halt is what is termed "through" and a good half halt. However, all rider's should ask, through what? Well, through the horse's whole body.

The nirvana of half halts is when the horse steps forward from behind through its back, bascules over its top line and under the rider's seat resulting in the horse giving at the jaw and poll through an elastic rein connection with the rider. The horse then drops its nose to the vertical where the rider's light and elastic rein aid from the elbow captures each forward thrust generated by the hind end. The rider then determines if the horse needs a rebalancing half halt at any particular moment while riding. The application of the precisely timed half halt then rebalances the horse's forward movement back through its top line under the rider's seat to the hind end. The result is a half halt that went "through" both the rider and horse.



To the left, is the same horse under tracking, not stepping & coming *through*. As a result, his stride & neck are shortened. He needs to "cover more

ground" with the hind end in order to be *through*. Some would say he needs to go more forward. Which would also lengthen his stride.

To the right, is a horse that is over tracking. That means coming *through* & then some! As a horse that is *through*, he will be more responsive to the rider's aids, using his whole body in unity. We can call it **Whole Horse Riding** & may start a new fad! However, to be *through*, a horse needs to be relaxed in its top line & musculature....and the rider needs to be able to "capture it." That means, keep the horse on the aids.

