

SYMPOSIUM  
OPTIMIZING YOUR HORSE'S STRAIGHTNESS,  
BALANCE & PERFORMANCE



June 9 - 10, 2012  
Circle Oak Equine, 909 Mustang Court, Petaluma, CA  
CONTACT: Caroline Larrouilh, PRoudHorse Connections  
415.595.2589 [clarrouilh@gmail.com](mailto:clarrouilh@gmail.com)

Hosted by Circle Oak Equine, Northern California's premier sports horse medicine and rehabilitation clinic, this two-day symposium featuring Dr. Kerry Ridgway, DVM and Colonel Christian Carde, I Judge, former Ecuyer-en-Chef of the Cadre Noir, President of Allege-Ideal, national equestrian coach of France, will take an in-depth look at equine crookedness, straightness and balance from both veterinary and training standpoints.

### THE PURPOSE OF THE SYMPOSIUM

Designed to teach participants about the causes of equine laterality (crookedness & unevenness) and its consequences on equine soundness and performance, the symposium will address how to remedy laterality and straighten and rebalance horses from an integrative medicine and training standpoint.

By symposium's end, participants will be able to identify, understand and address laterality related issues:

- Look at a horse's body and identify what specific patterns of laterality may be present.
- Recognize unhealthy equine postures and understand how and why they contribute to crookedness and lead to unsoundness.
- Recognize and understand what equine postures are healthy and lead to soundness and better performance.
- Understand and apply basic training principles that promote equine straightness and balance.
- Understand the role of integrative medicine in supporting, restoring or enhancing equine straightness and balance.

The course will be divided between:

- Lectures
- Laterality pattern evaluation tutorials (dynamic and static)
- Hands-on explanation and demonstration of the best integrative medicine treatment plan (acupressure, stretching, bodywork and more) for each case
- Demonstration of in-hand or ridden corrective gymnasticizing exercises.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

This symposium is designed for equine wellness professionals such as veterinarians, vet techs, farriers, massage practitioners, trainers, and riders interested in the relationship between biomechanics, training and equine soundness.

## WHY SHOULD YOU COME?

Every horse is born with a degree of laterality, which can be lessened or worsened through training and management. Crooked, asymmetric, and uneven are also terms used to describe laterality. The consequences of uncorrected crookedness include impaired performance, lameness, training and behavioral issues.

Most of the musculoskeletal issues (including lameness) that veterinarians treat every day in their practice have their roots in the issue of crookedness. From a training standpoint, crookedness, unaddressed, leads to horses with unpure gaits, straightness, suppleness, bend and balance issues. This can translate into lowered performance and career-interrupting or -ending lamenesses.

Most hoof growth patterns and asymmetric heel height patterns that are seen daily by farriers result from a specific forelimb dominance.

The muscle patterns seen by equine bodyworkers are over 90 percent related to crookedness. Many performance issues seen by trainers are related to unidentified and unrectified laterality. In short, anybody dealing with horses will benefit from understanding laterality.

Without understanding the causes and biomechanics of asymmetric heel heights that are a serious compromise to the long term use and soundness of the horse, the problem will likely not be addressed. Veterinarians will only treat the symptoms and consequences. In general, farriers are quite unaware of the problems and pathology created by this syndrome.

Through understanding the causes and biomechanics, riders, trainers, farriers, and veterinarians can work as a team to correct, or at the very least, manage the condition to keep the horses more comfortable and sound.



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## SYMPOSIUM DESCRIPTION

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### DAY ONE MORNING LECTURE

#### Laterality: The Crooked Horse Syndrome

An examination and explanation of the biomechanics of the “natural horse” and how the biomechanics must be changed for the horse that is to be ridden. The presentation will show how “laterality,” i.e. right or left forelimb dominance is the source of the “crooked horse syndrome.” The human biped (right or left “handed”) will be contrasted with the forelimb dominance of the quadruped horse. The lecture will describe in depth how the owner/trainer/veterinarian can identify the dominance and the associated problems.

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### DAY TWO MORNING LECTURE

#### The Causes and Biomechanics of Asymmetric Heel Heights

Any horse with a high/low heel problem is by definition a crooked horse and his performance and soundness will be compromised. Over 70 percent of horses show front foot heel height asymmetry. The most common cause is associated with laterality, but this is not the only source. This presentation will cover both causes and correction.

Asymmetry changes joint angles from the ground up, causing a marked asymmetry of the shoulder and muscles behind the shoulder. This results in serious problems with saddle fit and the ability of the rider to sit straight and properly in the saddle.

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### DAYS ONE AND TWO PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

#### Practical Equine Locomotion Evaluation and Equine Musculoskeletal Evaluation Techniques

Using chalk and dots, Dr. Ridgway and Colonel Carde will teach participants how to evaluate a horse’s gaits for symmetry, regularity, scope and straightness, as well as tempo, rhythm, and regularity. At a halt and in movement, particular attention will be placed on healthy diagonal pairing, whole body placement, head and tail position, and how the pectoral and gluteus muscles move in contrast to one another and more. Six horses will be evaluated in-hand at walk, trot and canter.

In addition, participants will learn how to evaluate their horses for laterality patterns (crookedness & unevenness) from a musculoskeletal perspective and how to “scan” their horse’s body for existing and future issues, paying special attention to how to recognize irregular hoof alignment, detrimental postures, poor or good neck, back, and croup muscle development, tone and shape, coat texture and patterns and more.

Using different horses throughout the day, Dr. Ridgway and Colonel Carde will cover how to:

- Identify key bony and muscular landmarks, discussing in simple anatomical terms the importance of each landmark, what to look for muscle tonus, size and feel-wise, and why it matters.
- Compare and contrast both halves of the horse, defining and demonstrating symmetry and explaining why it matters.
- Execute simple range-of-motion exercises and help owners evaluate their horses strong and weak points to develop a muscular rebalancing and straightening training program accordingly.
- Use in-hand or ridden exercises designed to straighten and rebalance the horse according to its specific needs.



At the end of the two days, the participants should be able to assess their own horses with some confidence, recognize patterns of laterality and have an understanding of how to rebalance their horse’s musculature through ridden or in-hand exercises and the help of integrative medicine.



## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE INSTRUCTORS

## DR. KERRY J. RIDGWAY, DVM



Kerry J. Ridgway, DVM is a US based “Integrative Medicine” specialized veterinarian, competitor, author, judge, and instructor who lectures around the world teaching veterinarians, trainers, and riders about issues that compromise equine health such as laterality, high and low heel syndrome and ulcers. Dr. Ridgway’s “whole horse health” approach marries conventional medicine and alternative treatment modalities such as acupuncture, chiropractic, hoof care, saddle fit, kinesiology, neuromuscular and myofascial therapies, as well as dental health and nutrition.

Most recently Dr. Ridgway contributed a chapter to Pete Ramey’s new book “Care and Rehabilitation of the Equine Foot,” and studied in the USA (2011) and Germany (2011 & 2012) with Klaus Schoneich, author of “Correct Movement in Horses: Improving

Straightness and Balance.”

In 1990, Dr. Ridgway was elected to the Endurance Hall of Fame for his contributions to the sport, and for his development of the “Cardiac Recovery Index,” a standard adopted internationally. He became the first approved FEI Judge when the sport of endurance riding was officially recognized as a discipline by the FEI. Dr. Ridgway is also a founding member of the “International Association for Equine Sports Medicine,” and served many years as the chairman of the American Veterinarian Advisory Committee for the American Endurance Ride Conference.

Dr. Ridgway is also the author of two DVDs on Saddle Fitting and Ulcer identification and treatment through acupressure.

For more information visit: <http://www.drkerryridgway.com>

COLONEL CHRISTIAN CARDE

Born in 1939, Colonel Christian Carde's early riding experiences as a 13-year-old boy in the French town of Bordeaux first led to him to showjumping and eventing.



Prince d'A, Piaffe

From Bordeaux to the wider world, Colonel Carde has distinguished himself as a uniquely expert horseman, trainer and advocate for the horse. An Ecuyer at the Cadre Noir of Saumur for twenty years, he became Ecuyer en Chef from 1991 to his retirement in 1999. He was on the French Dressage Team at the 1980 Moscow Games and was selected to become France's National Dressage Coach from 1985 to 1989.

Dedicated to the teaching of ethical horsemanship, Colonel Carde possesses a clear and logical methodology for developing calm, forward, balanced and straight horses. Equally adept at ridden and in-hand work, he uses humane and

respectful methods that instill confidence in horses and progresses them towards collection while protecting and enhancing their physical and mental well-being.

An FEI International Judge, Col. Carde is passionate about horse welfare and has written extensively about the state of dressage today and the FEI dressage rules. Article 401 in particular. He is the founder of the French association Allege-Ideal (Association pour La Légèreté en Equitation) the International Dressage & Equitation Association for Lightness.

The most important thing which is lacking in dressage today is humanism. Riding became a "technique" much more than an art.

Colonel Christian Carde now dedicates his time to giving clinics internationally. He also offers his personalized training services online in English or in French at <http://www.dressagetrainingonline.com> and in French at <http://www.competences-equestres.com/>

For more information visit: <http://www.dressagetrainingonline.com>

THE FACILITY: CIRCLE OAK EQUINE

What better place to hold a symposium on straightness and balance, two central keys to equine wellness, than Circle Oak Equine?

A private, state-licensed veterinary facility in Petaluma, CA, Circle Oak Equine was



thoughtfully designed from the ground up with one goal in mind: to address completely the well-being and health of horses through state-of-the-art veterinary medicine and stellar on-site horse management.

Specializing in sports medicine and rehabilitation, and fitness services for active and retired performance horses, Circle Oak Equine provides full sports medicine diagnostics and therapies; comprehensive, personalized health and fitness programs for horses recuperating from injuries or surgeries or horses needing to improve or maintain fitness, and provides superior long-term care for horses retired from competitive life.

The facility is managed by a Medical Director, Carrie Schlachter, VMD, a sports medicine specialist with a special emphasis on lameness and digital diagnostics. It is staffed by equine veterinary technicians. It is equipped with a full array of diagnostic and treatment options ranging from leading edge therapies including stem cell, IRAP and PRP to hydrotherapy such as the HydroHorse™ underwater treadmill and ECB Cold Saltwater Spa. Like Dr. Ridgway, Dr. Carrie Schlachter has a whole horse health approach and is certified in chiropractic and acupuncture.

Whether your horse requires rehab, needs a special fitness program to attain or maintain performance condition, or has earned a comfortable retirement, Circle Oak Equine is the place to be.

For more information, please visit: [www.circleoakequine.com](http://www.circleoakequine.com)

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## HOW TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT

When: June 9 - 10, 2012  
Where: Circle Oak Equine, 909 Mustang Court, Petaluma, CA  
Contact: Caroline Larrouilh, PRoudHorse Connections  
415.595.2589 & clarrouilh@gmail.com



To reserve your seat, please print, fill out this form and return it to the address below with a check for the correct amount. Please note seating is limited, so reserve early.

Cost:

June 9th ONLY - \$100

June 10th ONLY - \$100

June 9 and 10th - \$180

Make out and send to: Caroline Larrouilh, 191 La Mancha Drive  
Sonoma, CA 95476

Please include your:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** No dogs allowed. The property does not have a lot of shade and it will be quite hot in June. Thank you for understanding and keeping your pet safe.

Additional information about the event location, releases and parking will be emailed to you before the symposium. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, Caroline Larrouilh at clarrouilh@gmail.com or 415.595.2589.