

"The horse should maintain the rhythm of the canter before and after the flying changes and should show expression & straightness."



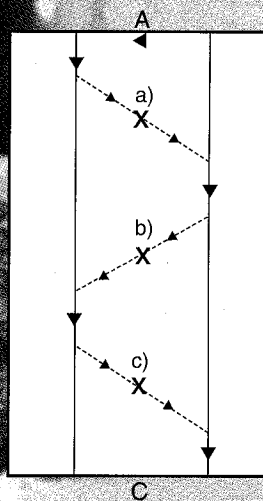
What a change!
The super Westfalen stallion, Laurentianer with Michael Farwick - meet them both next month in our exclusive feature on Jo Hinemann and the Westfalen Stallions...

A horse is ready to start working towards flying changes in sequence when he is comfortable, confident and maintaining a good balance and impulsion, making the single flying changes from both sides. The horse should maintain the rhythm of the canter before and after the flying changes and should show expression and straightness.

The first exercise you are going to do is flying changes to the counter canter and back to the true canter on the 20 metre circle. It is very important that we ask for the flying change only when we feel the horse is ready, which is when he is correct in terms of impulsion and balance. In the beginning we should make a transition to the walk and back to the canter after each flying change. By doing these transitions we keep our horse listening and obedient to the half-halt and check and encourage calmness, balance, impulsion, and - of course - straightness of the canter.

The next exercise is flying changes going from one quarter-line to the other, initially with transitions to walk and back to canter, after each flying change. The horse should become comfortable and confident doing a few short diagonals with flying-changes, going in the same direct of the arena without the

transitions to walk. As in this diagram:



From canter to the left, flying changes at a), b) & c)

We only take a new short diagonal when our horse is absolutely straight on the quarter-line. If he becomes anxious or excited, we keep going on the quarter-line until regaining the calmness and harmony. This

exercise is very important to train and check the calm, impulsion and straightness of the canter before, during and after each flying change.

When this work is executed with confidence we are ready to start to work directly towards the flying changes in sequence.

FLYING CHANGES IN SEQUENCE

WITH MIGUEL TAVORA

1. On the canter to the left for example, we take the diagonal and on the beginning of this diagonal, we ask for a flying change to right, followed by a transition to walk, and we finish the diagonal at the walk. After the first corner and on the beginning of the short wall, we take the right canter and again we take the next diagonal doing the same work that we did on the previous diagonal. When this is done with calm and ease, we ask for the flying change at the end of the diagonal instead of the beginning, also with a transition to walk after the flying change.

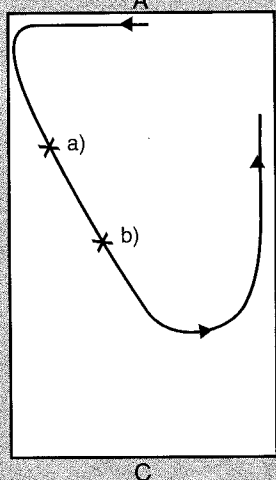
When this work is done correctly, after the flying change on the beginning of the diagonal, instead of the transition to walk, we make a transition to the medium canter collecting before the corner. This transition should be calm and smooth. In our further work we alternate the transitions to walk with the transitions to medium canter, or we just finish the diagonal maintaining the collected canter. We know that if the horse maintains the correct balance and impulsion, he will be straight, and we are developing control.

2. From the canter to the left, for example, on the beginning of the diagonal, we ask for a flying change to the right, and after four strides, another flying change to the left, with a calm transition to walk. We reward the horse and we finish this diagonal at the walk. We pat, dismount and finish the lesson. Next lesson we do the same work from both leads.

When our horse is comfortable doing this work we take the diagonal on the canter to the left, for example, making two flying changes every four strides, keeping the canter and turning to an arc of the circle finishing with the canter on the left rein, like this:

At a) flying change to the right - 4 strides - at b) flying change to the left and follow the arc of the circle to the left

When this work is done correctly we keep going on the diagonal making another



flying change to the right after four strides. We make a transition to the walk and reward the horse. The horse is now doing flying changes every four strides. When he is calm and confident doing these three flying changes we can increase the number. To train the flying changes every three and every two strides we follow the same work and progression.

Any time that the horse becomes excited or loses its balance, we should do transitions canter-walk, walk-canter, and single flying changes, followed by transitions to walk. If on the contrary, after one or two flying changes in series, he loses impulsion, we follow the last one with a calm transition to medium canter. When our horse is confident and comfortable doing flying changes every two strides and can do a few of them on the circle, he is ready to start the flying changes every stride.

1. On a 20 metre circle at A or C, we make transitions: canter - walk, walk - canter, to develop balance, impulsion and control. When we feel that we have a good canter we take the diagonal and after two and three strides, we ask for two flying changes every stride. If the horse in the beginning does two strides between the flying changes, because he didn't understand what he was supposed to do, or our aids were too slow and inaccurate, we just walk and start again looking for a canter with a better balance and impulsion and for the accuracy of our aids. If he responds correctly we do a transition to the walk, we reward and we finish the lesson. Next lesson we do the same work from both sides.

2. When our horse remains calm and with impulsion in his work, we do a circle around X doing firstly some transitions canter - walk, walk - canter, in preparation. When we feel that we have a good canter we asked for two flying changes every stride after E or B, followed by a transition to walk, and then to the canter again. With time and experience the horse should be able to do these flying changes in different places on the circle, maintaining the canter with good balance and impulsion. This horse should be comfortable to do this work on both reins:

At a) and b) or c) and d) two flying changes every stride.

3. On the beginning of the diagonal we ask for two flying changes every stride followed by a transition to walk. If the horse becomes excited after these two flying changes, we keep the walk to finish the diagonal. If, to the contrary, we feel him losing the impulsion, we make a smooth and calm transition to medium canter to finish the diagonal.

4. On the diagonal we ask for an increasing number of two flying changes every stride, making sure that our horse keeps the calm and impulsion between these flying changes. For example, coming from the canter to the left, we take the diagonal, we ask for two flying changes every stride, we keep the canter on the left for three or four strides, we ask again for two flying changes every stride and a transition to the walk. The next time we ask for three series of two flying changes every stride and so on.

5. On the beginning of the diagonal we ask for three flying changes every stride and a smooth transition to walk.

6. On the beginning of the diagonal we ask for two flying changes every stride, we keep the canter, and we ask for three flying changes every stride at the end of the diagonal.

7. We are now ready to increase the number of flying changes every stride. Every time that we feel the horse losing the calm we must do transitions to walk after every series of flying changes every stride. This is the only way we have to keep the control, the correct balance and impulsion of the canter.

We should always be able to break up and start again any series of flying changes every stride. For example, coming from the canter to the left we take the diagonal, we ask for five flying changes every stride, we keep the canter to the left for three and four strides, and we ask again for four flying changes every stride to finish the diagonal. This proves that our horse is keeping the correct balance and impulsion that allows us to keep the control of the number of flying changes we intend to do.

