

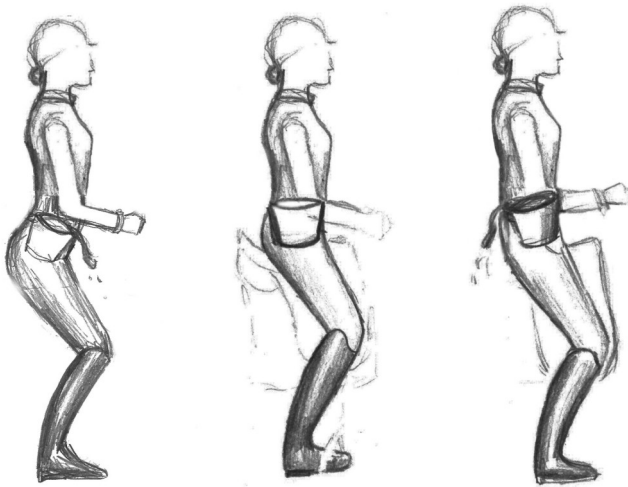
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LATEST NEWS

- > Everybody's talking about the rider's position!
- > What is a professional amateur?

HOW STRAIGHT DO YOU SIT?



We've noticed how much attention there has been over the summer to the horse rider's position. Many references and articles have appeared be it in *Horse & Hound*, *Your Horse*, or *Rider* on this important topic.

Mark Philips spoke of his concern at riders "balancing on their reins and their horse's teeth so the horse was not able to use its neck in the air" and Pammy Hutton asked "how many riders sit truly straight?"

If you've ever taken a recreational Pilates class then the expression 'core' muscle will be familiar terrain. Top level golfers practice daily

Ask not WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR ASSOCIATION: but what can IT DO FOR YOU?

I recently spent an evening with some of the 'behind the scenes' team of the Event Riders Association (ERA). It was fascinating to read through the 100 pages or more of the FEI Eventing rules and even more perplexing to discover the sorts of issues ERA wrestle with "all in the name of sport"

I wonder how many of us stop to think at ODE or bigger competitions: do you know who the rider representative is? Do you care? Do you know what their role and responsibilities are? What exactly does happen next if you take an issue to them? Do they get training?

Pilates as do many horse riders.

Then there is the new concept of Equilates—which takes the principles of Pilates and refines them specifically for the horse rider. This helps us to 'get out of the way of our horses' performance' by staying straight, stable and well balanced—or as much as we can be (given that we are on a moving horse, at speed)!

If you are still unsure that rider straightness has any impact on a horse's performance take a look at the habits of some of our modern day riding icons. Riders such as Ben Maher and Bettina Hoy—both of whom compete professionally, internationally at CIC *** and higher. Both these riders are renown for their incredible 'core' strength. They both have talked openly about their belief in the importance of developing their 'core' muscles.

If it's good enough for Ben and Bettina, then why can't it help more of us?

One thing is for sure if developing a core can help me to ride like Bettina then where do I sign up? Fortunately at Jigsaw equine; Equilates is just one of the things we do! Talk to us to find out more., ask for Rachael by emailing info@jigsawequine.com

Then there's the issue of venues and schedules! How many is the right number to stage in a year? How can more be added at a variety of rider and horse levels that can be funded, safely hosted and not crash into existing popular events? Finally, if you still have an appetite for good discussion— what does the future hold for Eventing? How can it continue safely, successfully and appeal to a growing audience? Does it have to be a 'born to it' right of passage? Can a professional amateur (yes that term exists) or a happy hacker really aspire to more? How can the ERA help? Ideas? Questions? Let us know, we'll be happy to pass them on to ERA for you and report back.