



“The Vaquero Source”
THE COWBOY GAZETTE
Winter 2009

Back at the Ranch

California Classics has relocated to our Paso Robles ranch headquarters. We're getting settled & we finally have been blessed with rain! Remember that the phone is the same (805-434-3858), but the mailing address has changed (see below).

Collector's Corner

Aaron just returned from his first trip to the High Noon Show/Auction in Phoenix. The High Noon staff was exceptional & he visited with a great many of our friends there.

John Wayne's Visalia saddle with Schaezlein silver was consigned to the auction. Aaron took rare books, some once-in-a-generation Schaezlein sterling from the famous vault, Navajos, a matched pair of pre-1937 Nolte saddles with tapaderos, etc.

A tribute to a remarkable man, the late John Reynolds, was given in the program. Fortunate bidders were able to purchase some of Mr. Reynolds' personal collection of art, books & memorabilia. John was the father of Alamar Media's & *Living Cowboy Ethics* publisher, Bill Reynolds.

Overall, CA style bits were thin. Sales were soft for the whole event. This was sad since he kept reiterating that there were some really fabulous pieces in a variety of booths & the auction. Topping it all off were

innumerable collectible rifles in superb condition. If you are interested in western collectibles, consider making a trip to Arizona next Feb. The event is set for Mesa in Feb. 2010.

New to the CC Corral Introducing...

The new CC snaffle bits are being received with applause. Our talented "metal man," Mark, has worked with us this winter to develop a new line of CC ring, heavy ring and D ring bits. Being a perfectionist, the swivel connections are smooth as is his finish work. All are "Made in CA." Call for details or to order yours. They are in stock now. \$135.

Made standard in 5.5 & 6-inch widths, the best news is that you may order pony to Warmblood-sized widths for a small additional fee.

Designed to give years of service, these mild steel bits have copper inlaid mouthpieces. Copper & mild steel are dissimilar metals. When used in bits there is a "galvanic reaction" that helps with the production of saliva. Lubrication is key to a soft mouth. We want to preserve the "boca mojada."

Mild steel has more carbon than stainless (which also has nickel & chrome). These bits will rust. This is what the mythical "sweet iron" is. Just like the galvanic reaction, rust is oxidation that adds taste. This makes the bit more acceptable to horses.

Occasionally, we are asked about making a mouthpiece out of black iron. Black iron has more sweet taste than mild steel, however there are downsides. Pure iron is soft & will rapidly rust, pit, etc., so it is not a good choice for a bit. It will become rough & wear out rapidly. This is why we rarely encounter really old bits in good, usable condition.

The latest in the snaffle line is the addition of dressy sterling stripes in the D ring version. Introductory price: \$275. For photos check <http://s385.photobucket.com/albums/oo291/Calclassicsphotos/> Click to enlarge them.

We are listening to you! Yesterday, we met with Mark to plan the development of a line of California style bits & rein chains. We have a different twist on some old ideas. We think that you will like them. Be

watching www.calclassics.net shortly for updates. If you are looking for a CA style bit, give us a call (805-434-3858) with your “two-bits” worth!

Hackamore Tips

Even those in cold country can make progress with your horses during the winter. Stuck in a barn aisle? You, too, can develop lightness in your touch & your horse on the ground or in the saddle. See how little it takes to move our horse’s head. How much does it take to get his head lowered? Now, see how few ounces it takes to move a foot. You get the idea. Get your horse’s attention, and then see how long you can keep it. Build on that. Try to stay warm at the same time!

If you saddle, you don’t have to go anywhere in deep snow or ice. Always giving direction with one hand at a time, practice taking a soft feel in different degrees of firmness. With your body, shift the weight of your horse slightly toward his hindquarters. Eventually, we want his hindquarters coiled, his abs & back lifted, his neck released & his poll started to give to release the energy.

Now, thinking in terms of an arc of the neck (rather than just nose in & down) without moving a foot, bring the horse’s head to the left, center, to the right & center while maintaining the arc. Use one hand at a time & don’t slop over, but be precise.

Reward the slightest try. Don’t give up. It may take several times or you may give thanks that this horse is getting it. If he does it right, then rebels & then does it right again, then you have something concrete that has taken place.

NOTE: long hairs on the triangular shaped bones on the jaw may need to be trimmed to avoid impeding the lift & release of the hackamore (& hurt).

If you have close up & overview photos of CC hackamores/bosals in action, please send a copy to us. Don’t forget to send your hackamore or hackamore horse questions or observations info@calclassics.net. Your question may help others all around the world.

Down to Earth: Earning Your Spurs

Joe Bruce may live in Colorado, but he was raised by California bridle horse people. He has a new DVD out. It is a two-hour “visit with Joe” about gear, handling horses & lots of practical horseman’s tips.

You won’t be bored since this Renaissance man quotes the Greeks, Latin, the Bible & spouts poetry at will to make a point & keep your interest. There is also the music of Buffy St. Marie between segments.

This should be mandatory viewing for those getting started with horses (& some who have holes in their education). The proceeds go to agencies that help battered women & abused horses. Contact Eclectic Horseman & type in “Joe Bruce.”

Traditions Traced

Long waiting the telling, “Los Primeros”: the fifth in the Vaquero series by J & S Productions is being shipped all over.

Filmed in Spain, Mexico, California (meet some of our friends in the footage of the Old California Reata Roping & Stock Horse Contest held just a few minutes from here) & the American West, this DVD runs 98 minutes. It includes the music of Dave Stamey, Ian Tyson, Brenn Hill, Adrian & others. In stock now: \$19.95

Tallies on the Family

Ranch roping clinician Pat Puckett will have his hip replacement surgery Feb. 17. He has been healing from the first try for many months when infection set in. We pray for a successful surgery & healing. We hope he’s back in the saddle again soon & to see him & Deb this fall.

The folks of The Buckaroo Guide are taking care of family right now. It appears that the reins will be taken up again by the end of this week. The upcoming Buckaroo Barb e-zine is on hold for a short time. You can, however, take a look at the new saddle with full-length taps made by 246 Saddlery (www.buckarooroguide.com then saddle).

Pony Express

Call 805-434-3858 or email info@calclassics.net with your orders. Have a question? We will answer until 9 p.m. Pacific time. We still take Pay Pal, checks & cards; just nothing that eats! Shipping is US Mail Priority. Our mailing address is: 6180 N. River Road, Paso Robles, CA 93446.

Have bits, spurs, rawhide or roo horse gear, hard to find books, Navajos, old headstalls to market? CC is known for offering good western collectibles & using gear. Have gear that needs restoration? Give us a call & discuss your needs.

In all of the whirl of the everyday, we really need to stop, take note of what & whom we treasure & count our many blessings. It's raining again. Here's hoping you receive moisture for plenty of feed where you need it. A little fat is still a pretty color on a horse or a cow.

Dorothy, Aaron (yes, & Cali)

Don't be left out! We are always updating our email & our snail mailing lists. If you have changed any data or know of anyone who would like to receive "The Cowboy Gazette," please email info@calclassics.net or call 805-434-3858. Don't worry: we work on a Mac, we don't ship junk, nor do we share your information with other companies. If you would like to be removed from our mailing, please contact us. Copyright CC 2009