Finally, we ‘welcome’ the arrival of the big frosts that sort Queenslanders from southerners. The ice was a bit late arriving because we usually begin getting the water-trough-freezing-frosts by about Anzac Day, but not this year. This late autumn has been quite warm, which is great for growing cattle and sheep feed. Southern Australia has been having a fantastic autumn, agriculturally speaking.

It hasn’t been so good, however, for our desert loving equines. There seems to have been a multitude of mid to late autumn laminitis cases.

It’s probably no coincidence that it has mainly been those whom are metabolically challenged, often to the point of being ‘Cushingoid’, who have succumbed in greatest numbers. The highly digestible new grass combined with the rapidly shrinking daylight hours is diabolical.

I’m sure Cushing’s Disease was once a rarity – going back twenty years or so – but now it seems to be epidemic. Something in the domestic equine world in this country must have changed over this period for such a disease to rise from obscurity to prominence. It is likely more than just the increase in our use of veterinary diagnostics that sees us picking up more of the subtle cases.

I think we are just beginning to see a legacy of the chronic overfeeding our horses, especially on the processed feedstuffs that have proliferated in this current generation of horses who are now coming of age.

Maybe this is somehow linked to the chemical drenches that we have been increasingly pumping our horses with, which means they never have a natural worm burden, so their systems are actually out of dynamic equilibrium and they are simply absorbing too many nutrients too often from their daily food?

Maybe it is also the ‘diabetic affect’ of a sedentary lifestyle that has arisen from needing to house them in small paddocks and not being able to work them enough – as in take them out trail riding for several hours, several times a week to put the miles into them that they are genetically designed for; the gross movement they need.

Maybe it is all of the above?

In other words, are we seeing an increase in permanent metabolic disorders due to chronic overfeeding and underwork-

There was also a time when the start of winter would herald down time for farriers. The fiscally robust minority could shut shop and disappear up north to get some sun on their broken bits whilst the fiscally challenged multitude could find winter work such as feeding cattle for fiscally smiling farmers who would disappear overseas to help distribute their kids’ inheritance to warmer places.

The system seemed to be rote. Back then, horse owners would routinely turn their mounts out for the winter; the whole winter and maybe even the start of spring. Apart from the mad hunters and slow racehorses who seemed to thrive in the worst possible weather, there were no competitions and there were very few indoor or all season arenas to ride on. This coincided with shoe removal for the duration of winter and the intelligent horse owners would get the shoes removed by the farrier and the hooves trimmed, whereas those horse owners at the other end of the great scale of grey matter would simply turn their horses out with shoes on and let them just fall off eventually in the paddock (yep, that really did happen).

Either way, a whole season spent out of shoes would give
hooves a chance to recover from the distorting effects of having to support the whole weight of the horse above just around the rim.

But nowadays it seems there is an indoor arena on every street corner and there are competitions available all year round. Horses are no getting a seasonal spell and nor are their hooves. There wouldn’t be many farriers who would not agree that this is a major problem. I would go as far as to say that this is one of the major causes of chronic lameness. Continually shod hooves are locked into a ‘forever cycle’ of dysfunction and deformity.

As much as it sounds like total fun to be barefoot in winter, it should be of no great surprise that metal shoes are far worse when the ground is summer hard, more so than when it is winter soft. As Prof. Bowker keeps telling us and showing us more evidence each year, it’s the concussion / shock / vibration from metal shoes on hard ground that is the deal breaker. The horse breaker.

Maybe we have got it seasonally ass about and horses should stay shod in Winter and be spelled out of shoes in Summer? Yeah, as if that is going to happen.

How many times have we heard that a horse needs to go back into shoes for the summer because the ground is hard? How can hard shoes on hard ground possibly end well for the horse?

Fortunately there is a quiet revolution ticking away in the background with the increase in use of soft poly shoes for the summer months when the ground is hard. Currently I have about 50 horses on my ‘books’ that are wearing polyshoes now because they are proving such a fantastic summer shoe to combat the effects of hard ground. These are horses that either can’t go barefoot outright or be barefoot with boots. Seems like a sustainable compromise.

* * * * *

Back now to this elusive quiet time of winter: We have been needing a bit of down time because we are still in the backwash of Professor Bowker’s visit in late April. It was a very busy time for Bob as well, first with the new students for five days and then straight into a three day master class with the old students and this year we finally got him over to Western Australia for his first visit there with a two day mini conference for a very appreciative group (many thanks to Crystal Greenwood for organising this).

Here at Mayfield, we feel very privileged to be able to ‘hang out’ with Bob every year. He is an incredibly prolific researcher and has a mind that never rests. The sum total of information he has about functional anatomy of the distal limb is simply staggering. Importantly, he does not horde it. He is happy to share it.

Then, as if my brain wasn’t already bent out of shape after a couple of weeks with Bob, I sat in on one of Daisy Bicking’s four day hoof mapping classes.

Daisy is an American farrier who has been using an x-ray machine to reconcile external anatomical landmarks to radiographic evidence which has enabled her to fine tune the process of hoof mapping. She has been able to build on the great work of the pioneer hoof mappers like Dave Duckett, Gene Ovnicek and Martha Olivo to name but a few.

She also utilises the latest technologies in hoof protection and hoof prostheses with polyshoes and acrylics.

It is great to see so many of our past students participating in these classes and extending their skill sets, especially with glue on shoes for those who are wanting to service more challenging rehab and performance horses but do not wish to learn how to nail.

It is hard to keep abreast of all the new developments in the equine hoofcare industry. How good would it be to be a young, eager and upcoming hoofcare professional nowadays?

Full credit must go to Sarah Kuyken (and her hard working offsider Sarah Morgan) who have been facilitating Daisy’s trips to Australia.

For those who may not know, Sarah K has a busy little online store that sells all the equipment and supplies needed for gluing on various poly shoes, as well as impression materials and hoof casts and a whole lot of other related equine hoof ‘stuff’. She is of the Facebook generation and can be found on that esteemed medium at Innovative Hoofcare Australia.

After spending quality time with Bob and Daisy, the solution to sustainable hoof health keeps coming back to maintenance trimming – less trimming done more often. It keeps distortions at bay and the hooves functional. Not surprisingly, this becomes apparent in our travels around Australia when I get to see the horses of those owners who have done workshops with us in the past and have been diligently maintaining the hooves of their horses every few weeks. These owners consistently show us hooves that are better than what a professional can produce with a traditional trim cycle of six weeks. The power of hoof maintenance never ceases to amaze me. Less more often is always better than more less often. It’s in the genes.

* * * * *

Daisy is an absolute dynamo, especially seeing as how she was on the rebound after getting a nasty kick in the face (by a donkey, I think) some weeks prior to her Aussie visit.

There I was, thinking how the heck could that happen when someone is working on a critter’s hooves? Kicked in the butt, yes, that happens a bit, but kicked in the face, hmmm? Surely that must be a bit of inexperience creeping into the equation.

Us old farriers would never get a kick in the face while working on an equine’s hooves. How could it possibly happen?

Well……..

I found out. Recently. The hard way.

I got a nasty little reminder about the dangers of farrier complacency combined with maybe just a smidge of old farrier arrogance.

There I was at the tail end of a big day, on the last horse of the day, on the second last hoof and I was bent right over (as one tends to be at the end of a long day) trying to crowbar drying mud out of a galloway’s hind hoof when I totally forgot about the bad case of thrush that causes him great sensitivity.

Fortunately the human brain is kind enough to blank out the
traumatic bits between just prior to impact and the recovery of one’s senses.

I didn’t need smelling salts to wake me up because the miasma that the thrushy hoof left imbedded in my face made my eyes water more than the bashed up face did.

I was also very relieved that the offending hoof did not have a shoe on it and fortunately there was not much external damage that I had to wear around like a badge of stupidity.

Seriously though, the concussion that accompanies an equine hoof to the head is not a good thing.

To everyone reading this who pick up horse’s hooves, whether an amateur or professional, remember to make a rock solid habit of doing a quick safety audit of the immediate workplace every single time before you commence trimming a horse or even just when you are picking up a horse’s hooves to clean them out.

Remember too that the workplace evolves. It may start out safe but might not stay that way. Keep a weather eye on your surrounds and always be conscious of workplace safety.

Cheers – Andrew

What’s Happening at Mayfield

A
fter a beautiful mild autumn with lots of new growth, winter has hit and is super chilly and frosty. Frost is not good for IR and cushingoid horses as it causes a spike in the sugar levels of pasture. So basically it’s just been too much for these horses and laminitis is rife !!! Pictured below a typical morning feed round in the frost and fog. Bullet the pony is even icy !!!! An easy way to help remember when to graze in these frosty conditions was developed by Dr. Katy Watts:

The Fructan Jingle:

When you wake at crack of dawn, graze your pony on your lawn.
But sugars rise in the afternoon, for foundered ponies this spells doom!
When frosts cause fructans to increase, your pony’s grazing must now cease.
Hold off a day, or maybe more, or else your pony will get sore!

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Charcoal has been recognised for millennia as a wonderful aid to a healthy digestive system, which in turn benefits the immune system. It is a fantastic remover of toxins and intestinal gases, indeed should you have the misfortune to end up in hospital with poisoning, the first thing prescribed to you will most likely be charcoal!

Charcoal is super absorbent, it has a huge surface area due to numerous pores and fissures contained within its structure. When introduced to the gut it restores the correct PH balance in a passive way by collecting toxins before being “passed” out of the system naturally.

Due to its inert nature there are no side effects and it is a simple, safe, effective and great value way of dealing with digestive related issues in equines and other animals primarily due to ingesting mycotoxins within endophytes that commonly appear on and in grasses and feeds.

The action of this natural feed supplement is inexpensive and very effective. It allows them to regain weight and improve their condition, through the safe and natural action of removing toxins from the digestive system.

Charcoal is a relatively inexpensive supplement and is worth a try in horses that seem to have gastric upset (scouring, flatulence, smelly poo!) and problems maintaining weight.

It’s Lambing time again and all is going well. We have well over 100% in both mobs as there are a lot of twins. Not too many mortalities either although we have been lucky enough to have some fox shooters helping us out. There are a dozen less foxes around. We do think one of our neighbour’s dogs...
has been having a little fun though as some of our larger stronger lambs were attacked and killed.

We have been fortunate to have a previous student, Danee Finich from Northern WA stay after the masterclass and assist us on the farm and we have utilized her expertise with horses by starting North and Nemo under saddle.

North and Nemo are two of our Morgan cross youngsters. They will be offered for sale at $3500 each. If anyone is interested please get in touch.

Pictured below Danee on Ayla with North on her right and Nemo and Felix on her left. A beautiful day for a ride and lead experience.

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## Workshop Dates 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane QLD</td>
<td>Saturday 8th July</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cordalba QLD</td>
<td>Sunday 9th July</td>
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<td>Imbil QLD</td>
<td>Saturday 15th July</td>
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<td>Caboolture QLD</td>
<td>Sunday 16th July</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ballarat VIC Advanced</td>
<td>Saturday 26th, Sunday 27th August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yarck VIC</td>
<td>Saturday 2nd September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yarck VIC Advanced</td>
<td>Saturday 16th, Sunday 17th September</td>
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<td>Perth WA—Proposed</td>
<td>Saturday 23rd September</td>
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<td>Geraldton WA—Proposed</td>
<td>Sunday 24th September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perth WA Advanced—Proposed</td>
<td>Saturday 30th September, Sunday 1st October</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharon May-Davis 3 Day Equine Anatomy Clinic</td>
<td>Friday 6th—Sunday 8th October</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharon May-Davis 2 Day Donkey Anatomy Clinic</td>
<td>Saturday 14th, Sunday 15th October</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manjimup WA —Proposed</td>
<td>Saturday 14th October (and possibly 15th)</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Australia—Proposed</td>
<td>Saturday 21st October</td>
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For full details and registration forms, visit the Trimming Workshops page under Education on the web site.

[www.barehoofcare.com](http://www.barehoofcare.com)
Pictured below Danee starting Nemo.

Pictured below Danee starting North.

GUTZBUSTA SLOW FEED HAY NETS NEW PRODUCT AND DESIGN ANNOUNCEMENTS:

VARIOUS SIZES AVAILABLE TO CATER FOR YOUR INDIVIDUAL HORSES’ AND SITUATION

SMALL - TAKE UP TO 3 CENSORS BISCUITS
MEDIUM - TAKE UP TO 6 BISCUITS OR HALF SMALL BALE
LARGE - TAKE A FULL SMALL BALE

A VARIETY OF ROUND BALE HAY NETS

4X4 (4PLY & 60PLY) 4CM HOLES
5X5 (4PLY & 60PLY) 4CM HOLES
6X6 (4PLY & 60PLY) 4CM HOLES

NOW AVAILABLE IN BOTH 4PLY AND 60PLY NETTING IN 4CM HOLE SIZES FOR EXTRA STRENGTH AND DURABILITY

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL OF THE 6X4 HAY NETS WILL FIT ALL 3 SIZES OF ROUND BALES AS WELL AS THE LARGE EXPORT SQUARE BALES (2X2X2 AND 3X3X3).

NEW - 6X4 (4PLY) 3CM HOLES
NEW - 6X4 (60PLY) 6CM HOLES

THE 6X4’S ARE A ONE SIZE FITS ALL HAY NET EASY TO ADJUST SIZING BETWEEN DIFFERENT SIZES OUR ROUND BALES

ALL OUR HAY NETS ARE EASY TO FILL AND USE AS WE HAVE MADE THEM A VERY GENEROUS SIZE

www.allbarewithnaturalhoofcare.com.au
Vale Silver

A much loved cat on our farm with some fond memories, the beginning was the day Emma, a 1 yr. old toddler trapped him and his brothers as a feral kitten in the outside toilet, there was a lot of commotion.

I ran out the door leaving it open, when I opened the toilet door the feral kittens ran around the veranda and into the house. There were kittens running up curtains and bashing their heads on windows. Eventually I caught them all without too many scratches and Silver was the cutest so he stayed!!

We had to keep him in a cat cage for a couple of months before he was tame enough to let out!!

I remember Emma rolling the cage a few times which probably didn't help in taming him!!!

About the time Silver matured we had a terrible brush tail possum plague. Silver learnt to deal with the problem and to this day there are no brush tails eating my veggies and roses.

A few years later Emma’s pet bunny went missing. One morning I looked out the kitchen window and watched Silver herd it back from the creek right to the back door!!! I couldn't believe my eyes!!

Silver also spent a lot of time keeping recumbent horses company !!! To us he was a wise old man with a warm heart and he will never be forgotten.

Welcome back Max!

In late 2015, Max came to us in a very bad way. A big boy with grass founder coupled with mechanical laminitis in his fronts.

Max was not attended to straight away and he had become laminitic and he did not receive any initial anti inflammatories.

When he came to us he was in a bad way but did not want to lie down. This was detrimental and he prolapsed through his front coronary bands, often a death sentence due to the large amount of tissue damage so close to the coffin joint.

Eventually he had to lie down as he could not stand and euthanasia was considered several times.... BUT he always had that look in his eye that he wanted to live.

It has been a very long road to recovery and he does have residual bony damage in P3. He also has biomechanical issues (probably pre laminitis) that we have to deal with and are still dealing with. Sophie our eldest loves Max and is working him daily now to try and bring him back better than ever!!

Above: Silver keeping an eye on things manning the office door.

Pictured above “Max” at pony club, a big milestone in his recovery.

“By ginkers” I think Emma and Garnett have finally overcome their fear of water jumps together !!!

Cheers, Nicky
A bitterly cold winter evening rainbow !!!

**Mayfield Horses For Sale**

**Mayfield North FOR SALE**:  
Registered Morgan cross gelding  
(Morgan X QH) rising 4 this year.  
Just been started under saddle and  
turned out for the winter.  
Lovely man with a very friendly and  
willing disposition.  
Early bloomer and just under  
14.1 hh  
$3500 plus GST

**Mayfield Nemo FOR SALE**:  
Registered Morgan X Gelding  
(Morgan X Anglo) rising 4 this year.  
Just been started under addle and  
turned out for the winter.  
Athletic type, very sweet but  
sensitive and clever.  
Late bloomer and about 15.1 hh  
now.  
$3500 plus GST
Functional Hooves for Lifelong Soundness

Have you ever thought you wished you knew more about horses’ hooves? Found google to be a landmine of information, unsure of what to believe and what might be fiction?

Andrew and Nicky Bowe, from the Barefoot Blacksmith have put together 'A Handbook for Owners: Barehoofcare (Second edition)' full of interesting and useful information about hooves! For only $15 plus p&h; you can gain an understanding about the structures and function of your horses’ hooves. The anecdotes explained in this handbook are based on the research conducted by the highly respected Professor Robert Bowker from Michigan State University.

Included in this handbook is a vast amount of information about horses hoof structure and function, how to maintain the function between your regular trims plus pictures to show you the appearance of a healthy hoof.

You will learn of the various options other than traditional steel shoes that can protect your horses hoof - such as hoof boots, shells, poly shoes and tips.

Descriptions, pictures, causes and treatments for various fungal, bacterial and lameness problems will ensure you are able to spot these issues before your farrier/trimmer arrives - allowing you to deal with the situation before it gets out of hand.

This handbook also includes information on how to improve yours horses feet through diet, exercise, terrain and paddock systems.

A Handbook for Owners: Barehoofcare is an affordable option for reliable information, with scientific backing.

98 pages - Full colour
Excellent value at $15
To order your new handbook please go to our online store www.barehoofcare.com
Sharon May-Davis

Two Day Donkey Anatomy Clinic

14th and 15th October 2017

Mayfield, Yarck Vic.

Take advantage of this very rare opportunity to participate in the dissection of a donkey.
You will be amazed at how different donkeys and horses are below the surface.
This clinic is designed for those with an interest in anatomy who wish to extend their understanding of the equine species and learn from an expert in her field.

Two day clinic—$325

Full details on the website under Education > Special Events

Diploma of Equine Podiotherapy

Training hoof care specialists for the 21st century

The Australian College of Equine Podiotherapy is a private college dedicated to the ongoing education of professional equine hoof therapists.

Our Diploma Course is Nationally Accredited. This exclusive course is the only accredited Diploma of its kind in Australia delivering the stand alone modality of functional equine hoof care.

The curriculum is based on years of “in the field” experience by hoof care industry professionals, in collaboration with the findings of veterinarians and leading research scientists who have been at the forefront of rehabilitative hoof care practices and education, both in Australia and overseas.

The college embraces an holistic approach aimed at enhancing equine biomechanics by applying hoof care methods that promote lifelong soundness.

How long is the Diploma Course?

The course runs over two years and involves on campus and external study.

In the first year the course is delivered in four blocks of 6 days spread throughout the year. During these blocks students are expected to complete face to face lectures and practicals. Assignments are to be completed between the blocks. Students then have an additional 12 months to complete a series of case studies to attain their Diploma.

Where is the college located?

The college campus is based at Mayfield, near Yarck in North-East Victoria. Mayfield is a working beef, sheep and horse breeding farm and lameness rehabilitation centre for horses with serious hoof issues such as laminitis. The campus provides a comfortable air conditioned classroom, student amenities, accommodation and camping facilities. There is also a full range of off-campus accommodation within easy driving distance.

Your therapeutic hoof care career starts here

www.equinepodiotherapy.com.au

Latest addition to the family, Hagrid, ex-feral kitten loaded with personality doing his best impersonation of Puss in Boots.
Gee, time seems to fly by so fast! I can’t believe the time has come around to the next newsletter already!

What an amazing time we have all had since our last newsletter!

We had both groups of students combine for their second block. They were lucky to have Professor Bowker lecture for 4 days, along with dissection practical. We also managed to fit in lots of trimming practise, with the inclusion of some ‘real world’ client’s places with some interesting horses to work on.

It was great to see the students becoming more confident and competent in their trimming. They also enjoyed the lectures with Renee Pearson with her ‘prelude’ to Bob’s work. Helping students understand how things work in the musculature and skeletal systems of the horse.

We then followed up the block with the Masterclass for past and present students. This consisted of 3 jam packed days.

- Professor Bowker lectured on his new research and where he is going.
- Kristy Swinton lectured on using range of motion to help assess potential issues for the trimmer.
- Mike Ware from Easyboots Downunder went through new boots and what has been happening with Easyboots.
- Dave McDonald from Scoot Boots Australia presented on their boots and what is happening with them.
- Liz Inder on the legal risks all EPT’s need to know about.
- Andrew Bowe presented on fitting poly shoes and tipping, and finished off with a morning of practical tipping and poly shoe fitting.

Andrew and Bob were so busy that they managed to miss their plane to WA! It was great to have the inclusion of new lecturers. We are very grateful for having them share their knowledge with us.

One of our past students from WA Crystal Greenwood, helped co-ordinate 2 days of lecturing with Professor Bowker in WA, immediately after the Masterclass. Many thanks go out to Crystal. We have had terrific feedback from those that attended.

We now have a break from students until the 3rd block in August. This will include a visit from the exciting Sharon May-Davis. Her passion for horses is contagious!

Congratulations to Erin Paffett from Rye in Victoria on successfully completing the Diploma of Equine Podiotherapy.

We now have our 2018 Block dates and fees set, and are as below:

- Enrolment  Wednesday 14th February from 12.30 pm onwards
- Block 1     Thursday 15th February—Monday 20th February
- Block 2     Wednesday 18th April—Tuesday 24th April
- Block 3     Wednesday 15th August—Monday 20th August
- Block 4     Wednesday 24th October—Tuesday 30th October

Further information can be obtained from our website www.equinepodiotherapy.com.au

On that note, I will be heading to sunny (I hope!) QLD for the next 3 weeks!

I hope that you are getting some quality time with your now hairy four legged friends and are not finding the depths of despair when it comes to winter!

Cheers,

Tamara Fox – College Administration.
Making Hoofboots Work

By Andrew Bowe

“Behind most hoof boot failures is either a boot that has not been fitted correctly, is the wrong boot for the job or there has been an unrealistic expectation of just how much boots can endure when strapped to a horse’s hoof.”

The development and adoption of removable rubber boots for protecting the hooves of barefoot horses when they are working has been the driving force behind the expansion of barefootcare; from the eccentric fringe to mainstream.

Hoof boots provide the best of both worlds for horses, enabling their hooves to be armoured without hindering hoof function and risking loss of long term soundness, but remain barefoot in the paddock. With every ounce in the saddle becoming a pound on the hoof, putting a layer of rubber between hoof and hard ground is a good deal for horses. Hoof boots are sustainable hoof protection at its best.

Alongside an increasing awareness of the benefits of keeping horses unshod, the hoof boot story has grown expansively. Currently, there are at least six manufacturers selling a total of two dozen different models of hoof boot in Australia.

This author has always done the show and tell thing with hoof boots at hoof trimming workshops for horse owners and there was a time when there were only two models of boots on the market (the original Old Macs and Epics) and the whole boot talk would only take five minutes. Fast forward more than a decade and the hoof boot talk fills up half an hour, yet it’s not possible to showcase all the different boots, so a few of the more popular boots are glanced over and further enquiries are referred to local hoofcare professionals.

Hoof boots are clearly working, but the question arises; if hoof boots are as good as the author suggests they are, why isn’t everyone using them?

Putting aside the anachronistic regulation of dressage that prohibits the wearing of boots in competition (which is surely preventing the widespread adoption of hoof boots in that equestrian discipline), the reality is that hoof boots can be a source of frustration for horse riders.

For every possie of riders who have made hoof boots work and now wouldn’t ride their horses very far without them, there is a disgruntled rider somewhere who has tossed their hoof boots into the furthest corner of the stables; the forever home of cockroaches and big black spiders.

The reasons for this frustration are varied, but the single biggest issue has been boots coming off when riding at pace. Boots are easy to keep on when just trotting, but can be hard to keep in place when a horse is cantering or galloping.

It has often been joked that the real reason some hoof boots are made in bright colours is not for fashion, but so they can be found after they fling off into the bushes!

Now, before the author manages to hurt the feelings of all the boot sellers in saddle shops and google land, let’s clarify this premise. Behind most hoof boot failures is either a boot that has not been fitted correctly, is the wrong boot for the job or there has been an unrealistic expectation of just how much boots can endure when strapped to a horse’s hoof.

Commercial sensitivities aside, there are two underlying realities that affect the reliability of hoof boots.

Firstly, hooves endure great pressure when a horse is moving at speed, so boots need to be quite firmly attached, but unfortunately the hoof capsule alone does not have the correct architecture to create a structurally perfect fit. The hoof capsule is a cone shape, but the heels are always a smaller angle than the toe, so for a boot to be irreversibly attached, the clamping mechanism needs to rise above the hoof capsule and either wrap around the pastern or wrap over the top of the heel bulbs.

Herein lies a problem because pastern and heel bulb skin is way softer than the hoof capsule and can easily suffer from rubbing or compression.

How then can we improve the chances of keeping hoof boots in place when they’re under pressure, but still be kind to the horse?
The best path to success with hoof boots is to copy whatever it is that successful people are doing. Follow the winners; don’t follow horses that follow horses!

There is more to fitting hoof boots than just reading and robotically following the charts published by boot manufacturers. Sizing charts are a good start, but the author finds that they are mostly only a ballpark guide. This is because they are quite two dimensional in their judgement of hoof size; basically the width and length of the footprint. This works well for normal hooves (whatever they are), but sizing charts cannot consider how steep or how oblique the hoof walls are (think of the difference between a boxy quarter horse hoof and a splayed thoroughbred hoof which can measure exactly the same underneath but be two totally different hoof boot sizes). Furthermore, sizing charts do not take into consideration how far the heel bulbs extend rearwards beyond the heel platforms.

Then there are hooves that are simply ‘off the charts’; usually too wide and too short. According to the various sizing charts, such hooves simply can’t be fitted with boots, but most times an experienced boot fitter can find a workable solution.

If you are trying to get a boot fit organised online, it may be advantageous to send photos of your horse’s hooves to the boot seller. Some boot sellers have a background in hoof care and their experience can help you identify the right sized boot, even from a distance.

Better still, for those who have access to a professional hoofcare provider, who is experienced in hoof boots, see if you can hire them to fit your horse on site. Such professionals don’t often use sizing charts, but have fit kits and sometimes stocks of hoof boots of different brands and sizes that can be tried on your horse’s hooves, on site (repetition intended).

Creating the right fit between boot and hoof also requires the correct adjustment for tightness. This varies between different boots and different brands but again, an experienced boot fitter will know this.
1. Use the right boot for the right job

With so many different hoof boots available, it is becoming quite an art form to select the best possible option for each situation.

The best way to start your quest for getting the right boots for your horse is to hire the services of either a reputable online boot seller or a hoofcare professional who is renowned for their hoof boot fitting prowess and experience. Ideally your helper would ride in boots themselves and have a working knowledge of most or all of the brands and models available in Australia.

A good boot fitting professional will literally ‘interview’ you about the following considerations:

- Grip (there is widely varying traction between different boots)
- Arena surfaces (will sand get into the boots and cause irritation?)
- Potential rubbing (some thin skinned horses can be rubbed raw by the wrong boots)
- Ease of use (some riders struggle with boots that require strength or dexterity of fingers)
- The need for padding (some boots can’t function with thick pads)
- Whether the hooves are different sizes (some boots are only available in pairs).

2. Get the fit right

Hopefully, your professional hoofcare provider has identified at least a couple of suitable options for your horse because, ultimately, the best boot is the one that fits the best.

The boot of first choice may not fit your horse’s hooves very well (that is, the hooves could be midway between sizes), so you may need to settle for your second choice.

The right trim

The ‘style’ of trimming also affects the fit of hoof boots.

The difference between a traditional farrier trim that sets up a flat surface compared to a specific ‘barefoot’ trim that follows the contour of the sole down through the quarters can be a hoof that is a whole boot size different in width. A flat trimmed hoof is always going to be wider than one that is trimmed to the solar contour.

It is probably reasonable to suggest that hoof boots manufacturers are well versed in the parameters (and therefore the dimensions) of hooves trimmed specifically to remain barefoot rather than having a flat trim.

Another aspect of trimming for boot fit is that boots are designed to fit on a hoof with straight walls. This means any flaring that is present needs to be removed.

The regularity of trimming

Hoof boots are designed to fit snugly on hooves. The trouble with this is that hooves are constantly growing and a boot that fits well on a freshly trimmed hoof may not fit on the same hoof after more than three or four week’s of growth. Some boots are better at fitting on a hoof of varying size, whilst some boots need hooves of a constant dimension to remain well fitting.

The author attempts to allow for several week’s of growth when judging boot fit. This may require the use of a pad as a space filler insert when the boot has to go on a freshly trimmed hoof. The pad can be removed after a couple of weeks when the hoof has grown to fit the boot.

Better still, hoof boots work when horse owners do some maintenance of the hooves in between visits from the professional. This way the hooves never get too long for a boot to fit.

Unfortunately, the growth in hoof boot use has been paralleled by an increase in the number of horse owners learning how to maintain their own horses’ hooves.

There are occasions when horse owners can neither trim the hooves themselves, nor access the services of a hoofcare professional more regularly than 6-8 weeks. Some owners in this position actually have a second pair of boots that are half a size bigger than the first which can be used for the second half of the trimming interval when the hooves are too big for the smaller pair of boots. This may sound a touch opulent, but when the savings generated from not having to keep a horse shod are calculated, two pairs of boots may well be a fiscally intelligent option.
Then there are hind hooves

Some horses need hind boots, but hind hooves are even harder to keep boots on than front hooves because they are a different shape to the front hooves. Front hooves are round whereas hind hooves are more ‘pointy’. The trouble is there is no hoof boot manufacturer making boots shaped specifically for hinds. This problem is further exacerbated by the great sideward thrust generated when a hind hoof pushes a horse forwards at speed. Some horses with hind end issues also have a screwing action which adds more pressure to the equation.

So, what to do?

Some conformational adjustments can be made to front boots with heat shaping techniques, although the same underlying problem exists with the shape of the base remaining round and not form fitting.

Other than this, the best option may be to select a style of boot that can be securely attached around the pastern to accommodate the less than snug fitting around the hoof.

Even better, what about turning a front boot into a back boot?

The author is always scratching around in the workshop trying to invent the next great thing for mankind and recently when one of the saddle horses at Mayfield was needing hind boots to cope with the torturous gravel of Middle Creek Road, the need for invention arose. Front boots that were put on the hinds of this horse failed due to her screwing hind quarter action. Even boots that were tightly wrapped around the pastern would soon be looking like Charlie Chaplin duck feet. So, with a little bit of cutting and gluing, front boots were turned into hind boots. Problem solved.

As techniques for plastic welding evolve, this may yet prove to be a fairly simple solution to the frustrating hind hoof boot problem.

In the meantime, the author would like to officially throw down a challenge to boot manufacturers to develop hoof boots shaped specifically for hind hooves. Surely the hoof boot market is approaching the critical mass to make it worthwhile investing in such product development. The first company to do this might be on quite a winner.

Hoof boots have come a long way in the last decade and continue to evolve and be more successful. They are easier to use than ever and when they have been correctly sized and fitted, they are quite a reliable and viable form of hoof protection.

Evolution continues. Looking into the crystal ball, the author can see hoof boots created to exact fit by 3D printing. With the speed at which 3D printing technology is evolving, it wouldn’t be too outrageous to envisage clients sending an outline of their horse’s hoof prints (freshly trimmed to barefoot parameters of course) to a boot manufacturer who will simply print them to order. The perfect fit.

Probably in bright colours. Purely for fashion.

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New Product

We happened to run into a lovely lady through contacts in our rehab centre and she gave me a present. “Bling it on Pony” which is a colour enhancer for white legs.

When I read the label and inspected the product, I thought it would work well in hoof boots as it is virtually pure Zinc oxide.

After 6 months of trialling I have only had positive results. The only thing I thought could have been improved was a better way to apply it.

Alyssa was already thinking along the same lines for other reasons and pictured below is the prototype.

Contact us for details.
All in a day's work:

His and hers Trimming

by Nicky Bowe

Here I was helping someone out in Mansfield the other day with a pony that had very long toes, sweating my backside off trying to get the hooves back to near normal in one trim. I texted Andrew some pics being very proud of my work and he replies with the photos below saying “mine was bigger than yours”. Andrew used the nibbler nippers on his trim cutting down from the top, what a great idea! Wish it worked that way for me. I used the nippers and rasps on the top and the nibbler nippers on walls that were folded over the soles.

His trimming pics

Her trimming pics
We have recently launched our revamped College web site at

www.equinepodiotherapy.com.au

The students only pages are now live and we will be launching our lecturers pages shortly.

If you are a current student and don’t have your login,

please contact administration

admin@equinepodiotherapy.com.au
Tibetan Magnesium Chloride

The magnesium story keeps evolving.

Ongoing research has suggested that long term use of magnesium sourced from the middle east may have issues with bromides that may eventually affect thyroid function if consumed in high doses. Whilst this has not been proven, magnesium is a long term macro mineral fed in significant doses, so small impurities may add up over time.

A better alternative has been to supplement with magnesium sourced from the pristine Tibetan plateau. However, a major deterrent to widespread adoption of Tibetan magnesium in Australia has been the prohibitive cost. Many horse owners who have not wanted to use the Middle Eastern magnesium have chosen either to not feed magnesium or to use the cheaper but less effective magnesium oxide. Fortunately there is a new importer in Australia and prices have become more realistic.

The Tibetan Plateau (which after all is the home town of equines) is 3200 metres above sea level in an untamed land isolated from pollutants and contaminants. Unequalled anywhere else in the world.

Magnesium Chloride Hexahydrate MgCL2.6H2O - 100% approximately.
No heavy metals detected and very low bromides.
Available in 18 kg bags, 2 kg bags and 8 kg buckets.
For more information refer to online store.

Past editions -
For newcomers to our newsletter, past editions can be found in an archive on our website. Simply follow the link from the menu on the front page or contact us.
www.barehoofcare.com
Did you know that Australian soils are commonly deficient in Magnesium and that horses evolved living in lands that have high Magnesium soil content?

### Common signs of Magnesium deficiency

- Nervousness & anxiety
- Tying up
- Insulin resistance
- Tight muscles & bracing
- Stifle lock

### Client Feedback:

“Now on magnesium, not one of my 10 ponies has shown any signs of laminitis this season as they have every other year.”

“Magnesium chloride is definitely helping prevent laminitis in my horses.”

“3 days after starting MC, my pony no longer suffers from stifle lock.”

“Mag Chloride has really helped relieve nervousness and muscle tension in my eventer.”

### Don’t confuse Magnesium Chloride with Magnesium Oxide

Left, 5kg Enterolith lodged in a narrow part of the intestine of a dressage horse.

### Premium Quality Magnesium Chloride Flakes

Magnesium Chloride MgCl2 -46.4% approx.
- Heavy metals- none detected
- Bromides - 0.0024% approx.

Available to order online—www.barehoofcare.com
Yes, we know it is harder for people to organise around this and the number of participants is likely to drop, but due to the ever growing body of science pertaining to the equine hoof, it is no longer feasible or fair to cram the information into just one day.

**A two day format allows us to cover in great detail the following subjects:**

- The paradox of modern hoofcare (athletic performance *versus* life long soundness)
- Recognizing functional hooves
- Recognizing and restoring dysfunctional hooves
- Barefoot rehab for pathological hooves
- Dealing with common hoof management problems
- Equine hoof development
- The merits of different trimming philosophies
- Ergonomic trimming
- Tool selection and maintenance
- Sustainable hoof protection (overcoming the paradox)

Participants receive a comprehensive 145 page book of Powerpoint slides and notes and an accompanying data stick containing approximately 50 hoofcare articles that we have published.

The two day format allows us the time to thoroughly analyse your horse’s hooves and then supervise your trimming to assist and further develop your ergonomic trimming skills.

We also demonstrate the very latest ideas in the rapidly evolving field of sustainable hoof protection, including boots, tips and polishes. It’s not just hoof boots anymore.

There is often scope for participants to bring two horses, especially if they have problematic hooves that will further enhance the collective learning experience.

The second day finishes at a civilised hour to accommodate those who have a long way to travel home.

**Who are these workshops for?**

For past participants of our standard workshops or hoof trimming workshops of affiliated instructors.

Also for anyone who may have already undertaken a one day advanced workshop of ours in the past because the information has evolved and expanded. We can give you a huge amount of theory and practical in two days.

Please visit our web site for full details of all upcoming workshops.

[www.barehoofcare.com](http://www.barehoofcare.com)
Press Release

2018 Bowker Lectures - 3 days
Sydney - end of April 2018

This is a preliminary announcement, but planning is under way for our next equine therapy conference.

Exciting developments are in the wind!

We are hoping to hold the conference in the vicinity of Sydney.

Planning is also under way to expand the lectures into two specific streams of study:
Hoof Therapy and Musculo Skeletal Therapy.

There is sure to be a tremendous line up of speakers from around the globe.

Stay tuned for further developments.

Sharon’s 55+ minute ‘Equine Muscles Video’ provides an in-depth understanding of the palpable equine muscles, illustrates their locations and shows their relationships from nose to tail. This is now available from our office on a USB stick for $30 including postage in Australia. This is great value and all proceeds of USB sales from our office will go towards the purchase of a pressure reading walking mat for the college for future research into equine movement. We thank Sharon for her enormous generosity.

Available from our office, phone 03 5773 4306 or email admin@barehoofcare.com

The World Wide Water Trough

For any of our computer competent readers, if you find any interesting, relevant (and of course, legal) internet links, it would be good to be able to share them with our wider audience. Please forward any contributions to info@barehoofcare.com

www.barehoofcare.com
www.equinepodiotherapy.com.au
There is hardly a week goes by when we don’t hear about another outer suburban paddock lost to development. We can’t stop progress, but where do all of the horses go?

An acute undersupply and over-demand for new agistment places in close proximity to the city has seen a huge increase in the cost of agistment. In so many cases, there simply is not enough agistment space for horses. This means owners are increasingly being forced to relocate their retired horses to wide open spaces further away from the cancerous sprawl of the suburbs.

But out of sight agistment requires peace of mind; knowing that your old horse is living out its days in peace and comfort.

At Mayfield we have been offering retirement agistment for quite a few years now. We have quite a sprinkling of retirees amongst the various mobs. The home paddocks spread over about 300 acres of flat to undulating country and we are fortunate to be able to open further paddocks to horses as the need arises. We are currently opening up more room for retirees. Hence this little advertorial.

Why choose Mayfield for horse retirement?

Company of the mob, a temperate environment that is mitigated in the Summer by huge shady gums and valley breezes and the Winter is short and with few bleak days. There is plenty of shelter besides. Large paddocks that vary from flat to undulating with solid and safe fences. More importantly, there are no ticks, no fruit bats, no midgeys and no Paterson’s Curse. But there is a professional team that is well trained and experienced with equine aged care; everything from diet to hooves.

All up, Mayfield is a kind climate for old bones and peaceful surrounds for old minds.

And very affordably priced. Full details on the website.

www.barehoofcare.com
Australian Association of Equine Podiotherapists

New Web Site Launched

Qualified Equine Podiotherapists can visit www.eptassoc.com to download a membership application form or, if you are already a member, contact the Association for a user name and password to log in.

Welcome ...

...to the Australian Association of Equine Podiotherapists website.

This site will be updated with current information and newsletters. Please check back regularly.

To find a current member in your area, please check our Members listing page. To apply for membership, please download and complete the Membership Application form available from the menu at the top of the page.

The Pony That Did Not Die : Healing Laminitis with Barefoot Rehab

Available from our online store — Select Shop Online from the menu and choose Educational.

www.barehoofcare.com
Be sure to join in the fun and games and ‘like’ our Facebook page. It doesn’t matter that Mum and Dad have absolutely no idea how to operate a Facebook page, the kids have got it in order.

Extended Learning ... Sharon May-Davis

The response from attendees of Sharon May-Davis’ workshops has been fantastic and it is great that horse owners are wanting to broaden their equine education.

Three Day Equine Anatomy Clinics.

A Matter of Dissection

Mayfield Barefoot Rehabilitation Centre
Yarck, Victoria

Friday 6th, Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th October 2017

For details & bookings visit the website. You’ll find the link under Education > Special Events

“There is much we can learn from a friend who happens to be a horse.”
Aleksandra Layland
Bind Not the Heart: A Windflower Saga Novella
Visit our online store to view our extensive range of trimming tools designed specifically with the barefoot trimmer in mind. www.barehoofcare.com
Glenroy Equine Rehabilitation Centre

(Located just outside Goulburn, NSW)

1880 Pomeroy Road, Bannister NSW, 2580

Telephone: 02 4844 3217 Mobile: 0457 275 463

Email: thebarefootbloke@bigpond.com

Find us on Facebook.

What do we offer?

Perfect location, we are based only 2.5 hours from Sydney and 1.5 hours from Canberra

Professional Hoof Care, specializing in the rehabilitation of Laminitis and other hoof pathologies. (Dave Leigh Dip. Ept.)

Agistment for retired and spelling horses.

Clinics offering Instruction for horse owners in maintenance trimming their own horses.

Consultations for general equine well-being and nutrition.
I am an Equine Podiotherapist in southern Tasmania. I have been trimming for many years but recently have been working on rehabilitating difficult cases of laminitis resulting from a wide variety of causes. I am constantly seeking knowledge of anatomy and diet, and an understanding of the evolution of the horse.

I am incredibly fortunate to have spent time with some amazing mentors. The knowledge shared with me recently I did not seek, when I was persuaded to explore the possible benefits of neutralising the effects of mycotoxins using Feedchar, a charcoal-based dietary feed supplement for animals.

My inspired friends Steve and Karen of Agspan Pty Ltd have researched and developed Feedchar, which has astounded me with its results. In hindsight I recognise that the horses in my care were self-medicating on the supplement. I watched them, unaware of what was happening. I witnessed the most amazing outcomes for a pony with a severe sensitivity to rye, where all other products had a limited result. Feedchar helped to resolve her gut difficulties completely within a few days.

Most people don’t realise their horse might have a problem until it spoils their day. Many horses’ agitated behaviour, loose bowels, and lack of concentration can be directly attributed to the effects of mycotoxins in their system, so the possibility of an inexpensive, fairly benign feed supplement countering these toxins is a great step forward for both owner and horse.

My clients support my confidence in Feedchar: it really works. I am regularly hearing from them about the improvement in the health and behaviour of their horses taking it, as shown in some of the adjacent compliments.

— LIBBY FRANZ, Dare To Go Bare, June 2017

Diploma of Equine Podiotherapy (Dip EPT) and Australian Certified Equine Hoof Care Practitioner (ACEHCP)

OMG this product has saved my horse lowest heart rates ever — Debbie Leary (endurance rider)

Daisy my riding pony is a different horse you wouldn’t recognise her — Gaylea Curran

My horse is so chilled and focused on her training — Sue Denman

**FEEDCHAR™**
a charcoal-based dietary supplement for animals

**Why use Agspan’s FEEDCHAR?**

Mycotoxins are compounds in fungi (endophytes) that commonly appear on and in grasses and feeds. Animals experiencing mycotoxicity can show signs of nervous tension, scouring, and other major health issues.

As a dietary supplement, Feedchar is formulated to help as a toxin binder and a digestive aid. The adsorptive (attracting) elements of Feedchar might work as binders to remove mycotoxins and pathogens. Because of its high electrical conductivity, Feedchar might also assist the effectiveness of microbes in the digestive system, thereby improving feed efficiency and nutrient uptake.

Please see our website or contact us for more information on Feedchar and how it works for animals.

— STEVE AND KAREN SULLINGS

www.agspan.com.au

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Feedchar™ is manufactured in Australia by Agspan Pty Ltd | ACN 615 248 470 | www.agspan.com.au | Phone +61 (0)3 6333 1132 | © Agspan 2017
Need a Trimmer?

Visit our web site
www.barehoofcare.com — and follow the links from the main menu, left.

Select Barehoofcare > Need a trimmer? from the drop down box to view a comprehensive, state by state list of barefoot trimmers, including Qualified Equine Podiotherapists.

Newsletter produced by: The Barefoot Blacksmith® Team info@barehoofcare.com ph: 03 5773 4306

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