

Is my horse's poor ridden performance due to discomfort?



We've all been there! Feeling frustrated that your horse won't pick up the correct canter lead, or does he/she disunite behind in canter? Will your horse perform lateral work happily one way and not the other way? Does it struggle to use its hindlimbs correctly to provide power to the gait? Or does it have an annoying hopping like gait on the bends?! These are all complaints that we are used to investigating every single day. Did you know that we have talented riders amongst our nursing team who will happily ride your horses on our arena whilst we investigate the ridden problem?

As horse owners, we know that our horses are desperate to please us most of the time! Don't get us wrong, there is the odd occasion when they push their luck of course with a little bit of cheekiness, but on the whole they want to do a great job for us as their riders. So when they are objecting to what we are asking them to do, we need to stop and ask these questions:

- Is my horse at a suitable age to be able to do what I am asking?
- Is my horse adequately trained and prepared for what I am asking them to do?
- Are there any external factors or management changes that could be impacting my horse's ridden behaviour?
- Am I asking something that is out with the athletic capabilities of my horse?
- Could my horse be in discomfort?

Sometimes, by simply examining the musculoskeletal status of your horse, we can help you to make adjustments to your feeding or training regime to help strengthen the weaker areas of the horse. Further investigation is not always warranted or recommended!

As highly trained professionals, we are here to advise you regarding the best way to proceed with your horse, that may be a bute trial, a lameness investigation, x-rays of the spine or gastroscopy.....Horses are unique, and the way they present is unique, you are unlikely to find a solution to the problem on Facebook :-)) and are often much better bringing your horse to our clinic for an initial assessment with one of our experienced veterinary surgeons in this field.

We are more than happy to begin a discussion with you by phone if you have any concerns about your horse's ridden performance, we are always here to help.