

Unlocking Endurance Horse Potential: My Journey with the Masterson Method Performance Bodywork.

Introduction: As an avid rider and now competitor in endurance races, I've always strived to improve my performance and strengthen the bond with my horse. In my quest for success, I realized that focusing solely on physical conditioning and nutrition wasn't enough. I sought a deeper understanding of my horse's emotional well-being, tension release, and self-regulation. This led me to integrate the Masterson Method® Bodywork into my training routine. In this blog, I want to share my personal experience and the remarkable impact this method has had on my horse, Fox, and our competitive journey.

The Intersection of Physical and Emotional Fitness: Having worked extensively with human athletes and understanding the importance of mental and physical preparation, I recognized the same principles applied to our equine partners. Alongside my exploration of nutrition, conditioning, and other essential aspects of endurance training, I wanted to delve into my horse's emotional fitness and ability to release tension. I knew this connection between the mental and physical played a vital role in our success.

Discovering the Masterson Method: During my first Masterson Method Beyond Horse Massage weekend workshop, I could hardly contain my excitement as I immediately became aware of how my experience working with human biomechanics, rehabilitation, and fitness with my Pilates clients had a significance correlation to the nervous system and tension patterns we were finding in the horses' bodies. I started integrating my human knowledge into my equine practice with my new Masterson Method techniques. My 6-year-old Arab Fox became the catalyst in my journey to understanding the power of this method.



Peeling Layers of Tension: During our initial sessions, Fox exhibited guardedness and resistance in releasing tension. It became evident that the Masterson Method techniques allowed me to peel off these layers gradually. I learned to be attuned to his responses, knowing when to back off and when to hold space for him to work through the tension. With each session, we uncovered deeper levels of release and newfound freedom of movement.

Flow of Movement and Micro Gains: Drawing from my experiences with clients in human biomechanics, I realized that facilitating movement through restrictions and imbalances led to significant breakthroughs. So, I adopted a new approach with Fox. After addressing specific areas of tension or imbalance, I would put him out on a lunge line, allowing him to feel and experience the difference. As he moved more freely, we followed up with ground exercises to solidify and strengthen the newly discovered neuromuscular patterns. This approach has been a game changer for us.

Deepening Connection and Partnership: The Masterson Method has deepened my connection with my horses, granting me a new level of awareness and understanding. I've gained insight into how they hold tension, release, exhibit behaviors, and form partnerships. It's the attention to detail that has truly transformed our journey. By slowing down and focusing on the subtleties, we've ended up going faster and achieving remarkable results.

The Benefits in Endurance Racing: Recently I attended a Masterson 'Light to the Core' seminar in Calgary, Alberta. Fox was used as a demo horse for others to work with. Though initially concerned

about his performance after the session, I recognized it as another layer of tension being uncovered. With the techniques I had learned, I worked on his shoulder, opened up his chest and pecs, and addressed his hind end points. After allowing him time to process, he moved better than ever before. Notably, his canter departs and overall performance has continued to improve, even leading to successful dressage tests and long canter work in his first long distance race.

The method played a crucial role in supporting his well-being throughout the entire racing experience. After a long trailer journey to Caribou, British Columbia to compete in the Gold Rush Express Endurance Race, I used the method to check in with Fox's body, ensuring he was in optimal condition before the race began. During the mid-race hold, I focused on addressing tension in his hind end points, promoting relaxation and maintaining his peak performance. Post-race, I utilized the Masterson Method techniques to help Fox relax his entire body, preventing tension buildup and aiding in his rapid recovery. This comprehensive approach to managing his physical and emotional well-being further demonstrated the effectiveness and versatility of the Masterson Method in the context of competitive racing.

Conclusion: Through integrating the Masterson Method into my training regimen, I have witnessed remarkable improvements in Fox's performance, well-being, and our partnership. By incorporating emotional fitness, tension release, and subtle yet powerful techniques, this method has elevated our endurance journey. It has taught me the importance of holistic approaches to training and the profound impact they can have on our equine athletes. As we continue to strive for excellence, I am grateful for the opportunity to learn The Masterson Method and experience the newfound depths it has unlocked in my horse and myself.



By focusing on slower and specific training methods, Fox achieved a major milestone and won his first endurance race. What's even more important is that Fox finished the race in a healthy and happy state, with a remarkably fast recovery. This achievement showcases the positive impact of the Masterson Method on his physical and emotional fitness, leading to a successful and fulfilling competitive experience.

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