

DRESSAGE, EVENTING, HUNTERS, JUMPERS

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PRACTICAL HORSEMAN

EXTRA

Peter Leone
and That's It 3

PETER LEONE: THE INS AND OUTS OF IN-AND-OUTS

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THE INS AND OUTS OF JUMPING IN-AND-OUTS

Part 1: Teach yourself how to jump these obstacles confidently or introduce them to your horse.

By Peter Leone ■ Photos By Amy K. Dragoo

Almost all jumper courses, from grand prix to smaller local shows, include an in-and-out, or double, question: a combination of two jumps separated by one or two strides. In-and-outs are also found in equitation classes (above the Short Stirrup and Maiden levels), hunter derbies and even some hunter courses as

well as in the cross-country and show-jumping phases of eventing. So if you plan to compete, you need to know how to tackle them. And to do that, it helps to understand why we jump them.

Our modern riding sports evolved from times when horses were used for general transportation, chasing and hunting game, and by the military for carrying soldiers into war. All of these scenarios involved covering a wide variety of natural and man-made terrain. Riders frequently encountered fences, roads, streams and drainage ditches, often in combination. For example, a rider might have to jump over a pasture fence, drop down an embankment to a road, cross it and then jump over a drainage ditch on the other side.

To test that such skills haven't been lost over time, course

I'm riding the 11-year-old Belgian warmblood gelding San Souci (Johnny), who does the 1.15-meter jumpers with his owner, Matti Fisher. Whatever your level, all in-and-outs command respect. They give your horse more to look at and react to, which means you have to be even more careful in planning how to ride them.



GREEN RIDER: 5-Stride to 3-Stride Line



▲ In an ideal world, all green riders would learn how to jump new challenges like doubles on as experienced a horse as Johnny. But if you and your horse are both green, combine this exercise with the green-horse exercises on page 38 by using piles of poles between the standards in this setup and poles on the sides to form a chute. Then gradually convert the piles to small crossrails.

SETUP: Build a crossrail with a trot rail on the ground 8 feet in front of it. Add another crossrail five strides away (60 feet). Set standards for a third vertical three strides away from the second (46 feet), but place the poles to the side for the beginning of the exercise. You'll jump through the first two fences at first and then build the third vertical. Use generous ground lines for each fence.

1. Approaching the first jump, I set the stage for the entire exercise by first focusing my eyes on the center of it then, as we reach the trot rail, lifting them to a focal point in the distance. I use my hands and legs to aim Johnny straight toward the middle of the exercise, with a slightly closed hip angle to keep me with his motion. As he goes over the trot rail, I prepare to reach my hands forward and press them into his neck. By concentrating on my balance and eyes, I give him the opportunity to do his job.

2. As Johnny takes off over the fence, I drop my weight down in my heels and allow my hip angle to close while keeping my hands pressed down on his neck. My eyes stay on my focal point.

3. In the first of the next five strides, I focus on guiding Johnny to the center of the next jump, primarily with my legs and secondarily with my reins. I keep my upper body forward over my lower legs so I stay with his motion. Because he's on the sensitive side, I stay in two-point to avoid overstimulating him and causing him to rush down the line. If he were a lazy horse, I might sit lightly in the saddle to encourage him to move up to the next jump.

4. In the air over the second jump, I keep my weight in my heels and focus my eyes intently on the final jump. I'm holding a little more rein contact than I would like to see a novice rider holding.

designers try to recreate similar challenges in our modern-day competitions. Given the distance options (one or two strides) and choices of jump types, which can include verticals, oxers, triple-bars, skinnies, liverpools, banks and ditches, there are probably about 25 variations to choose from. An in-and-out can consist of a vertical to a vertical, an oxer to a vertical, a triple-bar to a skinny—the list goes on and on. The only variation that isn't allowed by U.S. Equestrian Federation rules is using a triple-bar as the second element, which creates a dangerous optical illusion for horses, making them leave out strides in between fences and risk crashing into the out jump.

To make doubles even more challenging at the upper levels, designers place them before or after other difficult jumps or combinations on course or add tougher approaches, such as a tight turn. They also play with the distance inside the

GREEN RIDER: 5-Stride to 3-Stride Line



▲ 5. During the three strides to the next fence, I concentrate on my own balance while keeping my eyes and chest up. Johnny knows what he's doing, so I stay quiet in my position and maintain a very light contact. His expression says it all: "I've got this!"

6. As a result, we arrive exactly where we need to be to make a nice jump out. I'm already doing my most important job here, looking ahead to my focal point in the distance.

5-STRIDE TO 1-STRIDE (see photos pages 34–35)

After shortening the last distance to a 24-foot two-stride and riding that a few times, I shorten it to a one-stride. I trot in over the trot rail and crossrail and canter the five strides to the second jump. In the air, I focus my eyes on the final fence and think of lifting my upper torso a little so I land in balance, ready to canter the one stride. Because this is set at a comfortable distance, no adjustment of the stride, balance or bascule is necessary. I simply stay with the motion, with my eyes focused on the next jump. In the air over the "out," I drop my weight in my heels, close my hips and press my hands on the neck, leaving Johnny to take care of the jumping.

combination, shortening or lengthening it slightly to test your horse's adjustability and your reaction times and balance.

Whatever level you and your horse are, all in-and-outs command respect. By their very nature, they give the horse more to look at and react to—which means you have to be even more careful in planning your approach and more prepared to respond to whatever he does. (That's why you never see in-and-outs at beginner levels.) In this article, I'll explain how to teach yourself to jump in-and-outs confidently or introduce the concept safely and successfully to a green horse. Next month, I'll offer more-experienced riders tips for facing advanced in-and-out questions.

Before tackling this new challenge, you should be able to shorten and

lengthen your horse's canter stride on demand on the flat and jump single fences confidently. I introduce horses and riders to two-stride combinations before advancing to one-strides. The former generally provide more room for correcting mistakes and allow more time to recover in between jumps. Otherwise, though, my approach for horses and riders is slightly different, as I will explain.

Green Rider

When learning to ride in-and-outs, maintaining rhythm is key. So I start riders with a longer, related five-stride distance between two single jumps to establish that rhythm, then add a third jump three strides after that. Then I shorten the second distance to a two-stride and, eventually, a one-stride. If you progress slowly

through this process, your balance and rhythm should feel the same in the one-stride as it did in the five-stride.

Setup: Build a crossrail with a trot rail on the ground 8 feet in front of it. Add another crossrail or small vertical five strides away from that, about 60 feet. (For this and all other exercises I describe in these articles, adjust the distances to suit your horse's natural stride—a little longer if he has an especially big stride and a little shorter if he has a smaller stride. Also consider the venue. Distances in a small indoor arena will feel longer than those in a big, open outdoor arena. Set standards for a third jump three strides away from the second (about 46 feet), but place the poles to the side for the beginning of the exercise. Use generous ground lines for each fence—rolled out about 18 inches from the base. Be sure there is ample room before the first jump and after the last one to develop nice, straight approaches and getaways.

Approach the first jump in a balanced, forward trot. Straighten your horse out at least six strides before the fence, aiming directly for the lowest point in the middle of the crossrail. As you approach it, focus your eyes on the center of the jump. At this level, don't worry about where your horse is going to take off. Your job is very simple: Keep him straight, balanced and forward to the fence. Maintain a soft feel

GREEN HORSE: Warm-up



▲ Grace is a 4-year-old homebred by Bubalu, a member of the Dutch jumping team at the 2012 London Olympics, and out of a wonderful hunter mare named Vanity Fair. This was her first experience jumping in-and-outs, so it was a great real-life test both of her training over fences to this point and of my system for introducing green horses to doubles. When riding a green horse, I always carry a stick, both as an aid in itself and to help educate the horse to my legs.

SETUP: Build a simple two-stride double with a distance of about 30 feet. Instead of putting the poles in the cups, place them on the ground between each pair of standards, squeezing two together or forming a small pyramid out of three. Build a chute to guide your horse through the exercise by placing pairs of rails on the ground 8 to 10 feet apart, perpendicular to the jumps.

1. After warming up, I trot Grace over the poles forming the chute of the exercise to see what she'll do. She goes over them in a nice relaxed manner, so I turn right afterward and trot down the center of the chute to ...

2. ... the small pile of poles we've set up between the standards. The chute poles help me guide her straight to the center of these poles, which she decides to jump. I reward her brave, positive attitude by keeping my weight off her back, staying soft in the reins and closing my hips to follow her motion. We then build the pile of poles into a single crossrail and practice that a few times before setting the second crossrail and asking her to jump her first double combination.

of his mouth until you get to the trot rail.

Before takeoff, raise your eyes to a new focal point, choosing an object on the far end of the arena that lines up with the center of the line of jumps. Press your hands on the crest of your horse's neck and close your hip angle to follow his motion in the air just as you would over any single jump. Allow him to land cantering, then guide him straight down the track with both legs and hands toward your focal point in the distance. Then focus your eyes on the center of the top rail of the next fence. Meanwhile, check that your position is balanced over your lower legs and your hip angle is closed so that you continue to stay with his motion.

Canter a smooth five strides to the

second fence, jump that in the center and then keep your horse straight for several strides after landing. If your arena allows, turn in the direction of whatever lead your horse lands on. If the jumps are set up on one side of the arena and your horse lands on the wrong lead to make the turn, either produce a correctly executed flying change (if you know how) or bring him to a trot or walk to make a simple change.

Repeat this three or four times. When that feels comfortable, build a crossrail or small vertical in the third set of standards. Approach the line in the same balanced, forward trot. Land in canter and stay straight to the second jump. Be careful not to get ahead of yourself mentally. This will be important to remember later on:

Always jump one fence at a time.

Over the second jump, close your hip angle and follow his motion in the air just as you did before, only this time think of slowing your upper body just a little so you're not tempted to close too quickly or duck your shoulders. When you land, focus your eyes on the third jump. Drop your weight into your heels and think of lifting your chest slightly upward—not sitting up but using your eyes and chest to create a slightly upward sensation. This will help to keep you in balance while your closed hip angle keeps you with your horse's motion.

Try not to change anything else as you canter to the final jump. Use your eyes, legs and hands to stay straight on the track and maintain the same balance and rhythm that you felt in the five-stride line.

As your comfort level improves, gradually shorten the distance between the last two jumps, first to a two-stride (about 36 feet) and then to a one-stride (24 feet). When that feels easy, you can increase the difficulty level by adding a back rail to the last jump to turn it into a small oxer, then by changing the first crossrail into a vertical. Give yourself a number of sessions to work through these steps, taking the time to build your skills and confidence.

Green Horse

For horses, it's important to keep the introduction to in-and-outs very simple. Instead of three jumps in a line, I use just two. I

GREEN HORSE: Trot Over a Crossrail In-and-Out



▲1. As we approach the in-and-out, I keep my position in balance over my deep heels and create an imaginary chute between my legs and reins to help Grace stay centered. I gently touch the saddle with my seat bones to reinforce my message that she *will* go over the jump. With a straight line from my elbow to her mouth, my rein contact is maintaining the connection while also allowing her to evaluate the question at hand. She's responding with a curious, yet ready and willing, expression.

2. The result is a successful jump over the crossrail. Grace hasn't yet learned to use her front end as well as she will later in her career, but I'm pleased with her nice, round topline and relaxed expression. I have already raised my eyes to focus on the next jump while maintaining a steady rein contact, which provides security and guidance without interfering with her jump in any way.

3. On landing, I ride her again between my two legs and two hands, which hold light contact on the reins, giving her very simple instructions to stay balanced, forward and straight. My hip angle is more closed than I'd like to see, but by staying off her back, quiet in my body and with her motion, I'm allowing her to focus all of her attention on the upcoming fence ...

4. ... which she jumps beautifully. Notice how centered she still is in the middle of the exercise. She'll land straight and canter nicely away through the chute. To help her do this, I'm distributing my own weight equally between my lower legs, keeping my body centered, too, and looking ahead to my focal point in the distance.

also create a lane with ground rails through the exercise to reinforce the critical lesson of straightness. (Green horses tend to get wiggly in combinations as they're figuring out how to negotiate them.)

Setup: Build a simple two-stride double (with a distance of about 30 feet, depending on your horse's stride—make it slightly longer if he's big-strided or shorter if he's short-strided). If you have a cautious, timid horse, build the exercise so that he's jumping toward the barn—horses tend to have more enthusiasm when heading in the direction of home. If he's bold and aggressive, build it going away from the barn. You will jump this exercise in the same

GREEN HORSE: Canter the Crossrail In-and-Out



▲ 1. Next, I adjust the distance to 34 feet, and we canter into the exercise. My weight is deep in my heels, equally distributed. I'm keeping my instructions simple, allowing Grace to arrive at a comfortable takeoff spot. Because she is green, I don't risk throwing her off balance by aiming for either a very long or very deep takeoff spot. Even sitting in more of a three-point position would be giving her too much input. Instead, I stay out of the saddle and do as little as possible to distract her focus from the jump in front of her.

2. The result is another nice, confident jump. You can see by her expression that she is already focused on the out jump—as am I. I'm using an automatic release here, maintaining a light feel of Grace's mouth without interfering with her jump. Good hands take years of experience to develop. If you're less experienced, press your hands into the neck or don't be afraid to grab mane. As we land, I'll be thinking of being a little more upward with my chest, so I'm in balance and ready for the approach to the out jump.

3. As we canter down the center of the chute, I drop my weight down into my lower legs, maximizing the shock-absorbing function of my heels. I keep a light feel on the reins, maintaining that straight line from my elbow to the bit, but I rely mostly on my legs and eyes to guide Grace to the center of the next fence. As a result, she's cantering in a lovely balance, staying completely focused on the out jump.

4. This produces another confident, straight effort.

direction every time. Instead of putting the poles in the cups, place them on the ground between each pair of standards,

squeezing two together or forming a small pyramid out of three to create more of an obstacle for your horse to look at without

intimidating him. Build a lane, or chute, to guide your horse through the exercise by placing pairs of rails on the ground 8 to 10 feet apart, perpendicular to the jumps.

In the warm-up, establish a balanced, forward trot in your horse's natural rhythm, asking him neither to extend nor collect his stride. Trot through the center of the exercise perpendicularly so he has to step over the two poles making the lane. Do this a few times in both directions to familiarize him with the idea of going over whatever poles you ask him to. Later on, you also can trot over these poles to change your direction.

Approach the exercise in the same balanced, forward trot, being sure to get him straight at least six strides before the first poles. Trot down the center of the lane,

GREEN HORSE: Canter the Crossrail In-and-Out



5. Because Grace has performed so well over her first double, we add a back rail to the out jump to turn it into a small oxer. I ride her through the exercise in the exact same way I did before. In the air over the oxer, I allow my hands to follow her mouth just a little more so she can stretch over the back rail, which she does easily and happily. Her performance in this introductory in-and-out session makes me extremely proud. All of the careful work done to develop her confidence and skills up until now has paid off.

not worrying whether he steps over the poles or jumps them. If he lands cantering after the first jump, allow him to canter over the second one.

Next, build the first jump into a small crossrail. Approach it with the same forward, straight, positive attitude, clearly telling him, "We're going up to and over the jump." When he lands, keep him straight down the lane and over the rails at the second element.

Do this several times off both the right and left turn, then build the second jump into a small crossrail. Trot to the first jump again and allow him to canter to the second. Focus on riding from the center of one crossrail to the center of the next, keeping your horse forward and in front of your aids so he's less likely to hesitate or stop. Don't worry whether he does it in two strides or three. Right now, just focus on building confidence and straightness.

When this is going well, increase the

distance between the jumps to 34 feet and approach them at the canter. Keep the jumps as crossrails, as they will help center your horse in the combination.

This is a very important lesson to instill in him now. When the in-and-out questions get harder, if he drifts off track it will be much more difficult to ride the distances accurately and clear the out jumps cleanly and safely.

In subsequent sessions, you can add flower boxes in front of the jumps to give your horse a little more to look at. When he seems confident, add a rail to the back of the second crossrail to make an oxer. When he is staying reliably straight through the double, turn the crossrails into verticals. Then start adding single jumps before or after the double to mimic the flow of a course. Eventually, you can shorten the distance of the in-and-out to 24 feet for a one-stride.

Make these changes in baby steps over

a span of many sessions, always erring on the conservative side. Once you confuse or scare a horse, rebuilding his confidence is an uphill battle. Give him as much time as he needs to master each step. 🐾

*Grand prix jumper **Peter Leone's** successful career began with many Best Child Rider awards at major horse shows, followed by his win at the World Cup Grand Prix of New York at age 18. Since then, he has represented the U.S. Equestrian Team at numerous competitions, including the 1982 World Championships, in which his team finished fourth, and the 1996 Olympics in which he helped earn the team silver medal.*

The middle of three brothers who rode as Team Leone, Peter polished his riding skills under the tutelage of such greats as Bertalan de Némethy, Frank Chapot, George Morris and Michael Matz. Leone trains and teaches from his Lionshare Farm in Bedford, NY, and winters in Wellington, FL, at his new facility for the show season.. For more information on Peter, go to www.lionsharefarm.com.



To watch an instructional video of Peter demonstrating these exercises, go to www.PracticalHorsemanMag.com.

Colonic Ulcers in Horses Linked to Stress

Most of us know that horses can suffer from equine gastric ulcers syndrome. EGUS is a condition where horses develop ulcers in their stomachs. Horses can also develop ulcers in their large intestines. This condition is referred to as colonic ulcers or right dorsal colitis (RDC).

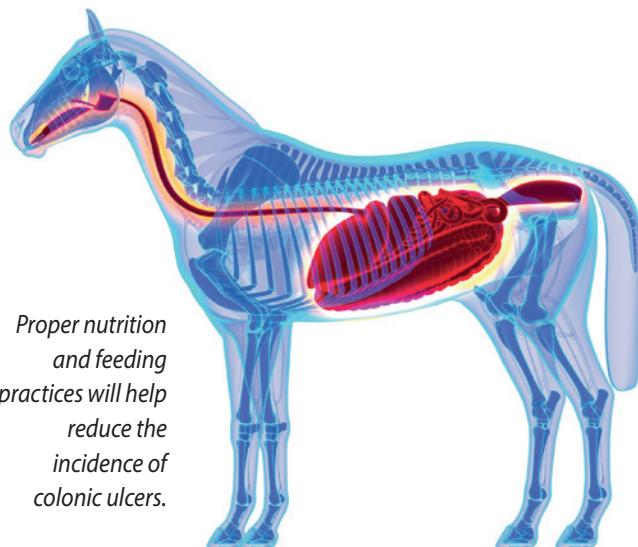
In a recent study of 545 horses tested for RDC, 44% of nonperformance horses and 65% of performance horses had colonic ulcers. Although they are not as prevalent as gastric ulcers, colonic ulcers are still a significant problem, especially in performance horses.

RDC seems to be closely associated with stress. When horses become stressed, their bodies release natural steroids that can, over time, irritate and damage the lining of the intestine. The more stress a horse is under, the more damage occurs. The administration of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as phenylbutazone (bute) and Banamine has also been connected to the development of RDC for much the same reason; they irritate the lining of the intestine and leave it open to further erosion.

In the early stages of RDC, a horse will present with several nonspecific symptoms, such as recurring episodes of colic, poor appetite, dull hair coat, and lethargy. As the problem gets worse, an owner might see a complete loss of appetite, fever, colic, and diarrhea. Left untreated, horses can develop dehydration, ventral edema (swelling under the belly and legs), and weight loss. Since these symptoms can be similar to other illnesses, such as Potomac horse fever and *salmonellosis*, it is best to contact your veterinarian as soon as possible so that they can rule out infectious causes and properly identify your horse's illness. The veterinarian will use a combination of your horse's history, blood work, and perhaps ultrasonic examinations to diagnose colonic ulcers.

If the veterinarian diagnoses your horse with RDC, you will probably be asked to make some dietary changes. These may include:

- Discontinuing the use of NSAIDs, per your veterinarian's directions.
- Reducing the bulk in your horse's diet for several months by replacing dry hay with an alfalfa-based complete pellet that allows the colon to rest. The diet switch should be done slowly over 7 to 10 days to allow the digestive tract time to adjust. (Once the colon heals, the horse will be able to return to a normal diet.)
- Feeding frequent small meals to ease the physical load on the colon.
- Adding psyllium mucilloid to the diet. It will lubricate the feed and shorten the transit time through the digestive tract. It also increases the water content in the intestine, which is beneficial. There is



Proper nutrition and feeding practices will help reduce the incidence of colonic ulcers.

some evidence that psyllium mucilloid increases the concentration of fatty acids in the colon and reduces inflammation.

- Providing additional omega-3 fatty acids to support healing. It has been shown that omega-3s block the chemicals caused by stress and reduce inflammation.
- Supplementing with yeast metabolites and *Saccharomyces boulardii*. They provide much-needed nutrients to the intestinal tissues, reduce inflammation, and support quicker healing.
- Your veterinarian may also recommend any variety of medications that coat the ulcer and protect it while it heals.

Generally, it takes 1 to 2 weeks to see a reduction in symptoms once the above changes have been implemented. Swelling in the colon should begin to decrease in 4 to 6 weeks. Your veterinarian will monitor your horse on a routine basis by taking blood samples and possibly performing additional ultrasounds until the ulcer is healed. Most horses recover well from colonic ulcers, especially if treatment is started promptly.

Proper nutrition and feeding practices will help reduce the incidence of colonic ulcers. Horses that lead stressful lives, or those with a history of colonic ulcers, may benefit from continual supplementation with yeast metabolites and *Saccharomyces boulardii*, which are beneficial to the maintenance of digestive tract health.

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Tips for Blanketing a TRACE-CLIPPED HORSE

By Max Corcoran



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When deciding strategies for blanketing your trace-clipped horse, consider the type of clip he has, his internal thermostat and the climate.

His Internal Thermostat

Although some people blanket according to exact temperatures, it's best to let your horse tell you his needs: Feel his ears to determine if he's cold (they'll be noticeably colder if his temperature drops); slide a hand under the front of his blanket to check that he's not hot and sweating. Do this frequently, especially when you first start blanketing him, and familiarize yourself with his internal thermostat. In cold weather, a sweaty horse can catch a chill easily, so it's safer to underblanket than overblanket.

Climate-Based Wardrobe

The basic wardrobe of a trace-clipped horse who is stabled indoors and lives in a moderate climate should include

- a medium-weight stable blanket
- at least two inexpensive, lightweight sheets
- a lightweight, waterproof turnout blanket or rug.

If you live in a northern, colder climate, you may need even more sheets and blankets for layering. If you live in an especially cold climate and can afford it, consider buying an additional, heavyweight stable blanket and a heavier turnout rug for chillier days. The type of barn you have can also play a role in your blanketing strategy. If it's enclosed and draft-free, you may need to blanket less than if the stalls open to the outside.

Strategy

I always use a lightweight sheet under a horse's blanket, replacing it with a dry, clean

You've trace-clipped your horse and now you're trying to decide whether or not to blanket him. The answer depends on three factors: the type of trace clip he has, his internal thermostat and the climate.

Type of Trace Clip

My general rule of thumb is to replace the hair you've taken off with an equal amount of blanketing. If you've shaved a narrow strip across your horse's sides, you won't need to blanket as frequently or with as heavy a blanket as you would if you shaved a substantial amount of hair from his neck, shoulders, sides and belly.

In addition, when you blanket, try to cover areas that you have clipped. If you've clipped the neck or face, buy an attachable hood or stocking-like Jammies™ for him.

one every week or so or whenever the horse gets damp. I layer over this sheet according to the temperature and each horse's comfort level. For cool temperatures (below about 55 degrees F, again, depending on your horse), consider clothing him in just a sheet. If the temperature drops closer to freezing, add a layer—another sheet or a medium stable blanket. For extreme cold, you may want to add a heavier quilted blanket.

Turnout

When deciding how to blanket a horse who's outside, evaluate the weather conditions and the temperature. Wind, precipitation and general dampness all contribute to the toll on your horse's system. The damper and windier it is, the more heavily you should blanket your horse. If it's sunny and your horse has access to a windbreak, it's OK to turn him out briefly without a blanket. For longer or overnight turnout, colder temperatures and/or damper conditions, use a lightweight sheet and turnout rug. Layer under the rug as the temperature and weather conditions worsen.

Depending on the time of year you clip your horse, his blanketing needs may change as his hair grows. In general, he will need the heaviest blankets just after being clipped. As his hair grows, monitor his comfort level and adjust your blanketing routine accordingly. And, in most parts of the country, the spring temperatures should be warm enough that you won't need to blanket anymore.

Max Corcoran worked as Karen O'Connor's groom for 11 years, traveling with her to two Olympic Games, two World Championships, two Pan American Games and countless international events. Based at Southern Cross Equestrian in Reddick, Florida, Max is the current USEA president.

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- Delivers a highly bioavailable source of natural vitamin E that is preferentially absorbed and retained in the tissues.
- Does not contain other minerals and vitamins that might cause imbalances.
- Supplies natural vitamin E in an affordable manner when long-term supplementation is required.



**Simple solutions,
scientifically proven[®]**



PHExtra 2021

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