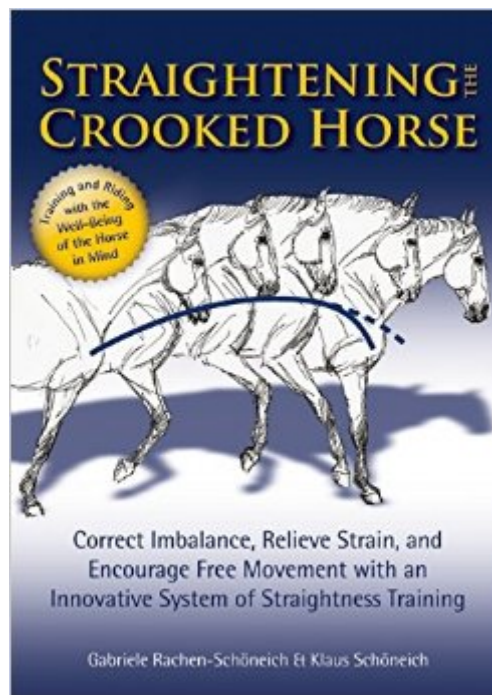


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Straightening The Crooked Horse: Correct Imbalance, Relieve Strain, And Encourage Free Movement With An Innovative System Of Straightness Training



Synopsis

It is well known that the horse naturally carries more weight on his forehead than on his hindquarters. This forward center of gravity, combined with an often unrecognized, inborn crookedness from poll to tail, can greatly inhibit training and ultimately affect the horse's physical soundness and willingness to perform. In fact, Gabriele Rachen-Schoneich and Klaus Schoneich attribute 95 percent of all locomotive problems, in both sport and leisure horses, to this inherent crookedness. For over 25 years, Rachen-Schoneich and Schoneich "along with expert riders, trainers, veterinarians, and other specialists" have concentrated specifically on this theory at their international training center in Germany. There they have worked with "and successfully "cured" through appropriate gymnastic training" more than 4,000 horses with straightness problems related to: incorrect or insufficient training; bad riding; veterinary misdiagnosis; poorly fit tack and equipment, and other causes. Now, the couple describe their techniques, not only for addressing the symptoms of crookedness in an already schooled horse, but also for dealing with the "innate problem" in unbroken youngsters. Readers learn how using groundwork with green horses can "straighten" them and increase their "carrying power" before they are backed. You'll see how, with sufficient attention to gymnastic training on the longe and in hand, the eventual transition to work under saddle can be handled smoothly, easily, and without ever sacrificing correct locomotion.

Book Information

Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: Trafalgar Square Books (October 1, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1570766495

ISBN-13: 978-1570766497

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 6.8 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars See all reviews (25 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #468,333 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #69 in Books > Medical Books > Veterinary Medicine > Equine Medicine #444 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Pets & Animal Care > Horses > Riding #459 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Individual Sports > Horses > Equestrian

Customer Reviews

This book took 85 pages to tell you over and over that horses are crooked and need to be

straightened. Then when you FINALLY get to the part that's supposed to tell you how, they say that every horse is different so they can't really tell you how! It never delivers on actually telling you what to try. The only two tips I gleaned were "tip his head to the inside" and "poke his shoulder until it moves out". The photos were not helpful either. Clinton Anderson says the same thing in his groundwork videos, but actually shows you what to do. I ride dressage and read extensively, and this book seems nothing more than a promotional effort for the authors' stables in Germany. Save money and buy something else!

I have a very crooked horse as a result of an accident and am always looking for exercises to help him improve. This book is fascinating in two ways: firstly it argues that many problems we experience with our horses are due to crookedness. Many examples they give apply to my horse - rushing, panic attacks, tripping. Secondly the book describes a somewhat unorthodox method of straightening. I had expected descriptions of fairly traditional schooling exercises, but instead it describes rehabilitative exercises with a focus on groundwork. The authors recognise that many riders will balk at their recommendations for their style of lungeing and their use of rein aids, as they seem to contradict the classical riding principles. However when I re-read Colonel Podjaski's comments on straightening, I agree with the authors that everything they describe and recommend fits within the principles of classical riding. The disappointment for me is that they don't detail the groundwork element of the program. This seems to be because they really believe a trained professional is needed to be effective and to avoid actually harming the horse. I can understand this and don't condemn them for hesitating to encourage the average horse owner to attempt the exercise. But unfortunately most of us won't have the opportunity to take our horse to a professional trained in the approach advocated in this book. I see the book more as an awareness raising book than a 'how to' book. However, the ridden exercises are well described and I am sure everyone can benefit from reflecting on why we use aids in the way we do, and whether we need to be more conscious of the need to be flexible in how we apply the aids and to listen more to what our horse is doing and how he is responding to our aid.

The key to balance in riding is to achieve balance in the horse. Frequently we acquire horses that have already developed patterns of unevenness that we continually battle. Here lies in this book some key management tools to begin the process to the ambidextrous horse. Read on and carry these thoughts for your lifetime in your work with horses regardless of discipline.

This is basically a lengthy add for their conditioning system and training barn. The authors maintain that every horse is born crooked and only their system will put the horse right. According to them other methods of training will not address the individual horse's needs. Only a careful evaluation done by the Authors will reveal what must be done. Good argument for conducting a careful evaluation of each horse and tailoring training to the individual so I will give them a star or two. No specific information or instruction regarding how they go about actually straightening a horse. I guess we had all better pack up the ponies and head to Europe!

This book is more than a little difficult to read and understand, at times. However, making the effort is worth it, because it explains the background reasons for so many problems owners have with their horses. Whatever your horseriding background, learning to spot and rectify a horse's natural crookedness will improve his athleticism, obedience and working life. Scattered throughout the book are lunging and ridden exercises which will help to achieve that goal. Especially valuable in the book is a description of crookedness based on a description of the horse's "dominant leg", which I found much easier to get a grip on than standard terms such as "right-bend horse", "hollow left", etc, which can occasionally mean a different thing depending on who is using them!

I have spent thousands of dollars trying to figure out what was wrong with my horse. The best lameness vets just said it was a neurological problem and there was nothing I could do. No one could explain why my horse was doing what he was doing or what it was I was feeling. This book described my horse exactly from being left or right sided, to dragging his rear toes. I only wish they would have gone into more detail how to work with your horse on your own since I can't travel to Germany. Before you give up on your horse you have to read this book. I had my horses teeth done at an equine dental school and that was a big part of his problem causing neck pain. Best money I've spent on a book in a long time.

This book is well worthwhile for riders or trainers who are already familiar with the concept of a horse being "straight" on curves and compound curves but want to know more about how it works, and the nuances of improvement. As an equine physical therapist, I'd like to add that the handler should also make sure that there are no muscular problems causing the horse to favor one muscle group over another, and remember that we humans have CAUSED a lot of left-sidedness by doing everything from the left.

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