

a variety of makes are used. David puts New Zealand rugs on any horses which chew their rugs as the smooth, tough canvas is much more difficult for a horse to get hold of with his teeth than the softer material of a jute or woollen rug.

### Young Instructor of the Year

No hay nets are ever bought as they make their own with binder twine. The technique was brought to David's establishment by Jonathon (Jon) Evans, after he had completed his training at Windmill Hill Riding Academy, Stratford-upon-Avon. Jon, who works on a Working Pupil basis, takes the final part of his B.H.S.I. examination in April. He was judged Young Instructor of the Year last year and, at Sheepcote, he is in charge of the yards as well as assisting David with training the horses and instructing the riders. Jon is very enthusiastic about the training of the horses and takes an active part in schooling the five year old Hanoverian stallion, *Gladiator*, and the loose schooling of three year old Hanoverian stallion, *Dalibor*.

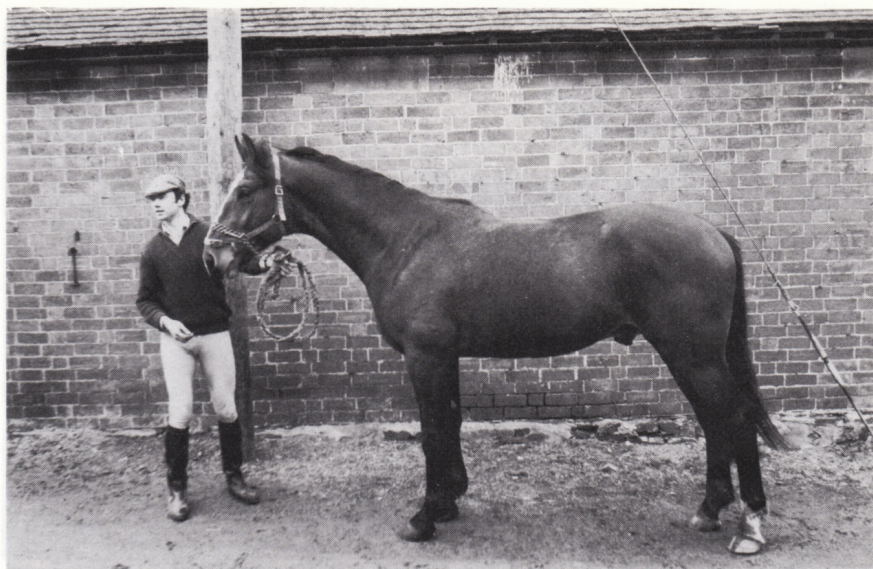
### Working Pupils

Four girls work under Jon's supervision, making five members of staff in all. They, too, are on a working pupil basis and have at least one hour's riding instruction a day. They help with exercising the horses and have many opportunities to watch David working them in the school. The staff do not instruct classes as a general rule as this Centre primarily aims at the training of horses and riders on an individual basis.

Two of the girls, Barbara Hatton and Sarah Reeve, are working for their B.H.S.A.I. and, in company with the other two working pupils, Sabina Jennings (who is on a 3-month dressage course) and "Bunny" Retell (a Dutch girl who recently passed her B.H.S.A.I. but is staying on for more experience) they are keen to make the most of the opportunity to learn about dressage from David.

### Accommodation

Each member of the staff has one day off every five days. They work in exchange for their tuition and only pay for their board and lodging. They are accommodated either in the village or in the Lodge or the caravan



These three photographs illustrate features of the 3 year old colt, *Dalibor*, which impressed David sufficiently that he bought him unhandled last year. He is already over 16 hands high and the top photograph shows that he is a very compact horse and possesses great natural balance. In the second photograph, David shows that, even as a 3 year old, he has 11" of bone. In the third photograph, he is pointing out the freedom in the horse's jawbone which will enable him to flex his head and neck freely. Without this "open" angle in the jawbone, it is difficult to get a horse on the bit. It is hoped that *Dalibor* will pass his good features on to his progeny when he is used at stud.



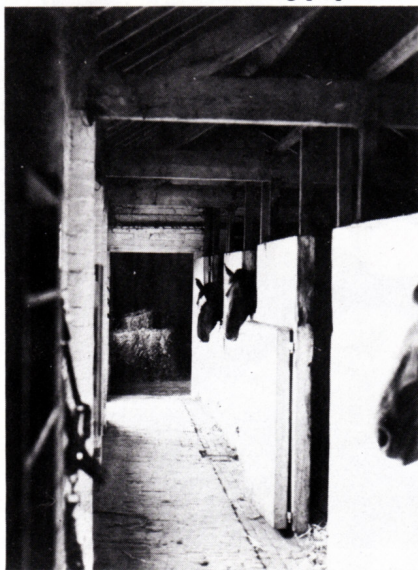


This photograph shows the stallion boxes on the left and the main stable building on the right, with outside steps leading up to the loft. Sheepcote, Mrs. Leila Buckley's house, is in the background.

on the premises. Meals are provided at the Lodge for those who live at the Centre, with the main meal in the evening, and those who live in the village have their lunch with the others at the Lodge.

### Friendly Atmosphere

Serena Morgan, the resident housekeeper, sees to all the catering and regularly includes in the menu fresh vegetables which she grows in the Centre's own kitchen garden. Serena takes charge of the resident students and does much to enhance the pleasant, friendly atmosphere of the establishment. She finds time to ride in the school and assist in the instruction of the working pupils.



The interior of the main stable building, with the feed room at the far end of the aisle which runs along the front of the indoor boxes. Some of the glass in the windows on the left has been removed to ensure the supply of fresh air to the horses stabled there.

David starts riding his first horse of the day at 8 a.m. and gives each horse the minimum of forty minutes' work each day. To assist with the training of each horse, a member of staff either leads it into the school ready for David to ride or may be allowed to ride certain of the horses to warm them up for him. Another student will ride the previous horse on a long rein for about fifteen minutes to cool it off before returning with it to the stables. Generally, he rides ten horses each day and this method allows him the maximum amount of time to concentrate on their training. A lunch time break from 1-2 p.m. gives him the opportunity to talk with the staff and discuss how the horses are going. (Sometimes the indoor school is hired during lunch time by people who bring their own horses over to school them while the building is not otherwise in use.)

### Good Hacking

The afternoon is given to riding instruction for the staff, individual private lessons to visiting pupils with their own horses and to exercising the rest of the horses. Those that were ridden in the morning are strapped by the staff. Once a week, the school is used by the local Riding for the Disabled Group.

The countryside around the Centre does provide some good hacking but access is mostly via the main road, if only for a short distance, so the horses have to behave reasonably well in traffic. "Their riders do have to know what they're doing," Serena commented, "as these dressage horses are all fit and naturally bouncy!"

The horses are hot shod on the premises by visiting farrier, Alan Williams, who calls three days a month. The veterinary surgeons are Messrs. Helme Adams and Watkins of Hereford.

### British Horses

Although David looks primarily to his German-bred horses to make their mark on the dressage scene, he does have some very promising British horses as well. One of these is *Nerina*, an 8 year old, registered Part Welsh Cob mare, who shows tremendous activity and, after one year's training, is performing half-pass, ten metre circles in collected canter, flying change of leg in canter serpentines, two-time flying changes and canter pirouettes. She is by *Nerium*, an H.I.S. stallion out of a Welsh Cob/Shire mare. (*Llanarth Neruda*, also by *Nerium*, is another Part-bred Welsh Cob who is showing promise in dressage.)

### Steady Rhythm

Another part-Thoroughbred horse is *Opportunist*, a 16.2 h.h. chestnut, who is working in a collected frame with canter from halt and performing flying changes. David was well pleased with him. "Compare his work with the way he went the previous day," he said, "and not with the way that the other horses are going."

*Creditor*, an 8 year old Thoroughbred ex-racehorse, is working in a steady rhythm, main-



The farrier, Alan Williams, preparing the hooves of the stallion, *Rigoletto*.



taining regular paces and working towards a rounder outline. He has learned nearly all the exercises, including half-pass, canter from halt and flying changes.

### Dressage Prospect

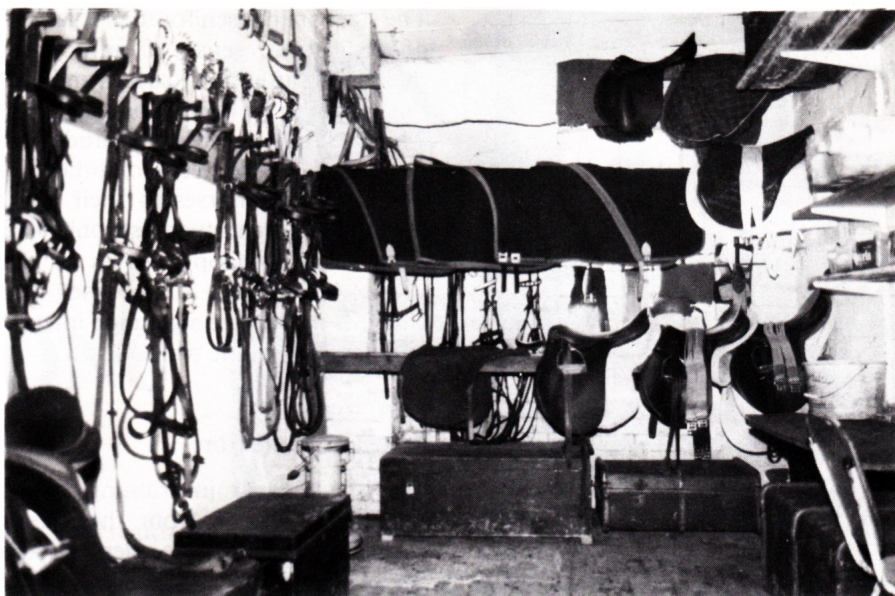
Of the four German horses that David bought last year, one is a well-grown, brown, four year old Hanoverian mare who has been receiving early basic training before, hopefully, breeding a foal or two for her owners, Mr. and Mrs. Ladbroke. She will probably be covered by the dark-bay, stallion, *Rigoletto*, who stands at the Centre. In the meantime, she exhibits the equable temperament of the German-bred horses and is taking to her early training with no problems.



The water buckets are stood inside two car tyres to prevent them being knocked over. Having previously held cooking oil (they were bought cheaply from the local fish and chip shop) they are slightly deeper than conventional buckets.

Certainly David's most outstanding dressage prospect at the moment is *Riduna Rigoletto*, owned by Mrs. O'Gorman. The *Riduna* prefix is the French name for Alderney where Mrs. O'Gorman lives. This seven year old, dark bay, Westphalian stallion, is a real eye-catcher, with his powerful, cadenced stride and commanding presence.

The fourth German-bred horse is *Dalibor*, a three year old, bay colt, also the property of Mr. and Mrs. Ladbroke. He is loose schooled each day in the indoor arena and shows great promise, with a natural, floating action. He has already learned



The tack room.

obedience to the voice, changing paces and turning about and coming in to a sustained halt at command. When David went to see him as an unhandled two year old, he was immediately impressed by the young horses' natural balance while galloping and twisting and turning loose in the field. He already stands 16.2 hands high and is in no way a heavy horse, while having tremendous substance and 11 inches of bone.

### Communication

David stressed the value of breeding from the right sire. "If a horse has good natural paces and good action, he will go much further than one that has not but which has received the

same training by the same rider. There is a saying on the Continent, 'It is the sire that rides the horse!' In other words, breed right and you'll ride right."

He firmly believes that the German-bred horses, with their excellent temperaments, strength, stamina and athletic build offer more to the dressage world than the English Thoroughbred with its lighter physical frame and generally more unstable temperament.

When I asked David what he considered were the important factors in keeping his horses fit and well, he replied: "Communication is what counts, and feeling when your horse has had enough or is ready for more in his training session. The horses never



Working pupil, Sarah Reeve, exercising Mrs. Buckley's 18 year old hunter. Mrs. Buckley's horses are in David's care and are exercised and schooled for her when necessary.





"Bunny" Retell riding *Wassett*, one of Mrs. Buckley's horses, in half-pass at the trot.

suffer boredom as they are constantly stimulated, mentally and physically. In the stable, we follow the principles of good stable management, although I do not believe in sacrificing the things I consider most important for the sake of excess 'spit and polish'.

The staff are chosen for their qualities of dedication, sense of purpose in their work, attention to detail and also the ability to fit in with one another. This requires a selfless attitude, an awareness of the needs of others as well as of the horses in their care. Noisy, indifferent students would lead to restless, unhappy horses in the yard. Above all, of course, our students must have a genuine interest in dressage and the will to learn."

### Talented Instructor

While success in training horses comes principally from the rider's ability to communicate, mentally and physically, with his horses, other factors such as self-discipline and humility play an important part. Riders who attend David Pincus' Dressage Training Centre have the opportunity to learn about the art of dressage from one of its most outstanding exponents in Britain today. This inspiring and talented instructor has a great deal to offer British riders. His knowledge and



Serena Morgan riding her young horse *Holly* in half-pass at the canter.

experience have been enhanced by dedicated learning at the principal centres of dressage training in the World and his undoubted ability as a rider and trainer of horses has been acknowledged by some of the leading dressage riders of our time. □

### HORSE RIDERS' RIGHT TO USE PATHS THREATENED

Is there a danger of walkers becoming the new élite of the countryside? The Byways and Bridleways Trust thinks so. The latest edition of its journal, *Byway and Bridleway*, condemns calls which are being made for a "Walkers' Charter" believing that they will concentrate attention on one category of rights.

#### Access to the Countryside

Such rights over footpaths would be at the expense of others using byways and bridleways and, says the journal's editorial, "will greatly reduce the public's rights of access to the countryside".

The Trust is particularly concerned over a recent suggestion by Mr Andrew Bennett, MP, for a charter for walkers when he hoped new

militancy would form the basis of future legislation.

#### The Law

Says the Trust: "The law does not provide rights for walkers as such but for the public and it provides that in some places the public shall go on foot. In others by horse, cycle or motor vehicle.

"Many of us exercise our rights not only on foot but by other permitted means, especially if we are no longer sufficiently young or healthy".

#### Little Commitment

In order that the greatest number should share in the countryside, the editorial dismisses any attempts to create a new privileged class of walkers and looks to the Government and local authorities to carry out their duties under existing law. This would ensure that provisions in the Wild Life and Countryside Act would be implemented to enable all users to have better access to the countryside.

"The Government and local authorities," the editorial goes on to say, "have shown little commitment

financially or morally to the public's right and innate human need to experience the countryside."

It believes that a charter for all path users might give the public the muscle it lacks.

#### More Members

The Trust is shortly to embark on a campaign to recruit more members through its branches. A pamphlet has been prepared outlining the Trust's objectives encouraging all countryside users to join. Among its objectives are those which seek to keep open, preserve, improve and develop byways and bridleways. One of its main tasks is to ensure that definitive maps compiled by the county councils and London borough councils, and other records of public rights of way, are kept accurate and up to date. The Trust concentrates on the routes themselves rather than the interests of any particular group of users.

The address of the Byways & Bridleways Trust is 9, Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, London, S.W.1. □

**Keep well informed on all  
HORSE AND PONY EVENTS**

**HORSE and HOUND**

**EVERY FRIDAY**