



Lessons with Gigi Nutter

Video

Instruction

Program

Objective

VIP is designed to improve performance through consistent, tailored instruction for riders unable to take regular lessons in person and those seeking an objective second opinion. A video taped ride with voice-over narration offers a student the instructor's visual perspective combined with detailed explanations and techniques for improvement.

VIP lessons offer dedicated students the opportunity to review lessons repeatedly which reinforces primary teaching points and aids retention. When riders clearly understand training areas requiring attention and how to correct faults, improvement is rapid and dramatic.

Price

The cost for each video lesson is \$75.00 which includes:

- Complete review of submitted training tape.
- One (1) blank VHS video cassette tape or DVD.
- Production of video lesson tape with voice-over narration.
- Shipping and handling to any US address. Original and lesson tapes are returned.
- Follow-up through the dedicated **VIP** e-mail address VIPLesson@bellsouth.net.

Payment must be sent with lesson tape. Make checks payable to Touch 'n GO Farm.

Mail lesson tapes to **VIP Lesson - 192 Banning Road, Whitesburg, GA 30185 USA**

Guarantee

Every **VIP** lesson comes with a customer satisfaction guarantee. If a video tape fails to play properly or you don't feel the content of the lesson was sufficient, return the lesson tape and receive a prompt refund*.

*see Refund description for details.

Requirements

A usable video submission.

The most important concept to remember when submitting a tape:

“An instructor can only comment on what she is able to see.”

A clear, steady, well-lit video offers far more information than a jerky, blurry tape shot in a cave. I do not expect riders to hire a professional videographer but a little preparation goes a long way. For more information regarding tapes for submission, read the video primer “Shooting from A to C.”

Instructor Release Agreement.

A *signed* Touch ‘n Go Farm Instructor’s Release Agreement must be submitted with the first *VIP* lesson tape. Any tape received without a completed Instructor’s Release Agreement on file at Touch ‘n Go Farm will not be processed.

A positive outlook and an open mind.

One of the reasons most professional instructors do not offer video lessons is the high potential for misinterpretation or uneducated criticism. By their very nature, dressage riders are detail-oriented and constantly critique every aspect of riding down to the smallest element. This personal trait can promote a healthy quest for excellence or manifest itself as a destructive excuse to condemn anything new or unfamiliar.

As the old adage suggests, “Many roads lead to Rome.” My approach to training is based on over thirty years experience as a career, professional instructor who has worked with numerous internationally respected trainers. This education and experience has consistently produced successful horses and riders of all levels. Having studied various “schools of thought” in dressage training, I tend to tailor techniques most suited to a specific horse and rider team.

I understand that you may view your *VIP* lesson with a riding buddy or another instructor. They will probably feel compelled to offer comments, positive or negative. In truth, we all have acquaintances that can look at a tape of the last Olympics and find nothing but fault with some of the best riders in the world. Others perpetually smile and comment, “That looks beautiful” during the worst ride of your life.

VIP lessons are for your benefit and study. Regardless of intentions, others who watch a lesson may offer opinions and interpretations that only serve to confuse the complex issue of training a horse. When a training concept is unclear, several options are available:

- Write me directly at VIPLesson@bellsouth.net.
- Call me at 770-832-TROT (8768). It is best to schedule a time via e-mail.
- Or, explain your concern into the camera during the next lesson tape and I will be happy to elaborate.

*C*ontent

What should you include in a *VIP* tape? The simple answer is an accurate depiction of a typical ride. I can provide the most help when I get to see a rider in everyday work with their horse. Here are some Dos and Don'ts to consider when you get ready to have your friend film a ride.

Do make every attempt to shoot a continuous ride. Time spent on each gait, exercise, number of repetitions and direction is all important information. Walk breaks offer a chance for additional comment....leave them in.

Do start filming after the warm-up. An exception would be the *first* tape you submit where reviewing your warm-up technique is helpful.

Do try to limit the filmed ride time to 30 minutes. Most horses do not require or want to be schooled for much longer. This time would not include warm-up, cool-down or hacking out.

Do try to shoot a ride when the horse is in a regular working program....not after two weeks of stall rest.

Do wear riding attire that helps the camera pick up detail such as:

- Light colored breeches
- Riding boots (rather than chaps/paddock boots)
- White/light colored wraps or boots for the horse on all four legs.

Do ride as you would normally train. A video lesson is not a test. Prepare your horse for movements with exercises you typically use.

Do use your normal schooling sequence. For example, if your horse performs better when you work the canter first, then trot....film it that way.

Do ride in a relatively unobstructed area. Trees, jumps and barrels make everyone's job tougher.

Don't constantly start and stop the recording.

Don't overtax the horse in an effort to show me everything in one tape. Prioritize your training concerns and express them as clearly as possible.

Don't shoot the lungeing, warm-up or cool-down periods unless something is substantially different during those phases of training from your schooling session.

Don't keep your thoughts to yourself. Talk as you ride and let me know what's on your mind.

Don't forget to read the "Maiden Lesson" section for first-timers.

*F*ormat

Tapes may be submitted in the following formats (NTSC only...no European PAL):

- VHS
- Mini DV
- S-VHS
- 8mm, Hi8 and Digital 8
- CD-V
- DVD and mini DVD

*C*onsiderations

Instructor comments and feedback are not immediate. Therefore, you should do a bit more planning in order to realize the maximum benefit of the lesson. For example:

- A few days prior to filming, make a list of your primary concerns. Write them down! Then review the list just prior to heading for arena with your camcorder buddy standing by.
- Tell me your concerns. Either send your notes with the tape or just explain them into the camera at the beginning of the tape (1-2 minutes).
- Review the last video lesson before you make another tape. Subjects discussed and suggestions for improvement will be fresh in your mind and you can mention what seems to be working (or not) during taping of the next lesson.

Instructor and Student cannot converse during a lesson. That being said, we *will* maintain two-way communication through the lesson tapes. So, plan on talking while you ride. You don't need a script but let your thoughts and feelings be known. I value your input and need to hear your impressions as you ride. By the way, unless you are plugged in to a sound system it helps to speak when you are *close* to the camera.

Remember that you can ask follow-up questions via e-mail at VIPLesson@bellsouth.net. If the subject merits greater explanation, schedule a phone call via e-mail.

The instructor can't ride your horse during the lesson. I do not ride my student's horses very often anyway. Ultimately, you are the one who will train your horse. Understanding of training concepts occurs much quicker if I can ride your horse *through you* during the lesson.

VIP - Maiden Lesson

We have all been through our share of “first times.” Each new experience begins with some level of apprehension..... or fear of the unknown. Remember the first day of class in a new school? A first lesson with a new instructor? Riding in a clinic with a trainer you never met? Your first trip down centerline?

Relax. *VIP* lessons are convenient, simple and focused on your individual needs. They should also be FUN! Read these suggestions and I assure you that your first lesson will be a positive and productive experience. Using the writer’s reminders.....

Who? – is going to be your camera operator? Once that is decided, let them know what the tape is for and give them our primer “Shooting From A to C.” Also decide who is going to provide the camcorder.

What? – are you going to film for the first *VIP* lesson? This is where the first lesson is a bit different than the rest. I would like to watch your ride from warm-up through cool down. That includes work on the lunge line if that’s part of your routine.

Talk to the camera as you work and describe what you see and feel. Let me know what you think is good, bad or confusing. During warm-up, explain how long you typically warm-up and when you know your horse is ready for work. Then school your horse as you normally would.

Once you feel the day’s work is complete, use the cool-down to summarize your feelings about the ride. Tell me what you would plan on doing for the next schooling session and why. I will listen while I watch the cool-down.

The difference in your first *VIP* lesson and those that follow is the beginning and end. Later lessons will not include warm-up or cool-down periods unless I specifically request to see them again. The first lesson should be 45 – 50 minutes. No more than one hour.

Where? – are you going to film the lesson? An indoor ring? If so, how is the lighting at the time of day you wish to film? Outdoors? What is the weather forecast?

Where is your camera operator going to sit/stand while they film your ride? Does that location seem well suited to capturing good video AND audio?

When? – are you going to schedule this taped ride? Does the day you and your camera operator choose work equally well for the facility owner and other boarders?

Why? – are you going to so much trouble to do this? Because you love to ride, love your horse and find the sport of dressage fascinating. Great, so do I. Together we will improve your understanding of dressage training which will help you realize your goals in riding.

How? – That’s my job.....to show you how.