

Carriage driving as a dialogue

What is the current situation?

Carriage driving with horses was the most everyday thing in the world up to the area of motorization. Transportation of people and loads was done mostly via horseway.

In the post-war years, the horse lost its importance. Riding was practiced only by a small elite and very exclusively and driving as a sport was practiced only very occasionally by former cavalry officers or some farmers.

In the years around 1980, the sport of driving experienced an enormous upswing. The strong increase of national and also international tournaments led to extensive regulations, which have developed into real law books over the years.

Unfortunately, in driving - as in equestrian sport as a whole - the relationship between the active riders and their sporting partner, the horse, has not developed to the same extent as the rules and regulations. Quite the contrary: the horse became more and more a piece of sporting equipment without any personal connection. Because the experience of coachmen, farmers and former cavalry riders was also no longer passed on and taught, we see images in competitive sport today that often no longer have much to do with horsemanship and genuine love of horses. The verbal and non-verbal communication between rider and horses, which is absolutely necessary for driving, is recklessly neglected to the debit of the horses, and mutual trust is only rarely present.

What do we have to do?

If we want to preserve the horse as a sporting partner for future generations, we cannot afford the undesirable developments of recent years for much longer. It must not and cannot be the case that we impose behaviors and lessons on the animals that do not correspond to the natural movement processes and patterns. Just as we must not allow horses to be presented at competitions with insufficient training. Outside the show scene, we see more and more often that horses are kept like dogs exclusively for "walking". Once a day for 20 minutes at walking pace at the stable halter led along the fastened field way back and forth can be no animal welfare form. In the meantime many people see it in such a way. Another point that finds hardly attention nowadays: horses also can grow lonely if they cannot communicate with kind comrades in the herd group or alternatively with their humans over longer periods. And this brings us to the real problem. It is not a matter of continuously talking to the horse, treating it like a toddler or verbally turning it into a puppy. Talking to the horse, or rather communicating with it, entering into a dialogue with it, means above all listening to the horse in a figurative sense - it usually has a lot to say to us!

What is available?

We have to learn again how horses express themselves to us and how we can understand their language and thus react to their likes and dislikes. Only then is it possible to use all that the horse offers to us due to its natural disposition in connection with centuries of breeding and selection for a specific purpose. Real horse lovers do not see the horse as a kind of larger cuddly cat, but a working animal that wants to be cherished and cared for but not humanized or pampered. As with us humans, too little proper exercise not only leads to an unflattering figure, but damages the entire body. From the joints over the musculature up to heart, lung and the entire cycle everything gets out of balance and sooner or later leads to physical and not rarely also to psychological problems. The knowledge necessary for species-appropriate horse management used to be passed on from generation to generation and, above all, was practiced. And this is exactly what matters! No video - no matter how good it is, no power point presentation and no book alone can replace the practical handling of the horse. Only by combining theoretical knowledge and practical exercises we can enter into a dialogue. And for the practical exercises I am available with over 50 years of experience in horse keeping, riding and carriage driving.

To whom is the offer addressed to?

First of all, I would like to address drivers who are already actively driving with their own team. I will not offer driving courses for the acquisition of the driving badges, I will not provide horses for practice and I will not break in horses. Also "cramming" dressage tasks, training in cross-country obstacles or cones courses definitely is not my goal. This, of course, limits the group of people in question, but I really am interested in helping those who spend their free time driving and who place absolute priority on well ridden, obedient horses that are willing to perform and who honestly trust their riders. It doesn't matter whether they are purely hobby or competitive drivers. What is important for success is that the subject is dealt with intensively in advance and that we have the same goal: Undisturbed harmony between horse and rider!

If you have your own training ground available or can use extensive forest or field paths as an alternative, I will be happy to come to you by arrangement. Training courses for up to five teams/pairs daily are also possible. The training should take place on at least two consecutive days. For individual training, our facility in Königsbronn-Zang is also available. In addition to our own 40 x 80 m driving arena, a 20 x 40 m riding arena and a lunging circle, as well as extensive grounds with well-kept forest paths, a limited number of boxes are available on the neighboring farm. Truck and stable tent can be accommodated directly on the premises, water and electricity is on site. I would be happy to discuss dates and costs of a course with you by phone. Write me via +49 173 5757733 a WhatsApp, I will be happy to call you back.