

Day Three:

Day three of the Robert Dover Horsemanship Clinic started off with a new routine of workouts with Bob Gutowitz. For our strength training we had to give each other piggy back rides to the middle of the arena then wheel barrow to the end. Then Jan Ebeling instructed the riders again and one of the exercises he used with the riders was slowing down to almost a walk then pushing forward again. Each time he would ask the rider to quicken the amount of time between the transitions to really get the horse listening to you. Riders also practiced shoulder in on the long side while in canter in order to put the horses more on the outside rein and to balance them. He emphasized the importance of getting feedback so that you always know the things that need to be improved. Next, Debbie McDonald generously took the time to instruct the riders. One exercise that proved very effective was leg yielding to the wall after a half pass on the quarter line in order to make sure that the horse was really reacting to the outside leg. A consistent message of hers was "getting 'it' (as in whatever exercise you are doing) done with the leg first". After all of the rides, Ken Braddick educated us further on how handle the media. His main point was that they want to hear a story when they interview you. Not only how you got to be where you are, but also the horse, because each horse has a story too. Dr. Rick Mitchell at Still Point Farms gave our next lecture, yet again an amazing facility that Tuny Page generously let us use for this particular event. He informed us on the things we need to be aware of when purchasing a performance horse. The goal of an examination is to identify the task that the horse has to do and its capabilities. He covered the detailed process in which you need to go through in order to make sure the horse gets a thorough examination. The day ended with a party hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Boyer, which was filled with great food, fun music and a time to get to know everyone!

-Allison Hopkins