

Keep Your Trainer Safe

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It has come to my attention via a mild concussion, torn rotator cuff, and sprained wrist, that the general horse population may not know how to keep their horse professionals safe. I'd like to expound on this subject.

If you have a training need for your horse or for yourself, you need to be aware that "Trainers" and "Instructors" have different specialties. Trainers work with horses and Instructors work with people.

Further, both trainers and instructors have specialties. Some trainers work with young horses, green broke horses, horses transitioning from a snaffle bit to a leveraged bit, or to improve certain skills sets such as reining, working cow horse, trail pattern work, etc. Some instructors work with youth or adults - with riders on their own horses or on school horses.

Just because a person instructs or trains does not mean that the person specializes in problem behavior in horses - such as bucking, rearing, biting, kicking, striking, not trailer loading, pulling back when tied, or other dangerous or disrespectful behaviors. If you have a need for this type of help, you need to ask your trainer or instructor whether he or she specializes in that type of training. **Please don't assume that your horse professional has the experience to handle that type of horse - OR wants to possibly be hurt (or worse) by handling that type of horse.**

Your horse professional will readily refer you to several trainers who are prepared and willing to handle a horse with problems. Check out my article, *A Horse's View of Natural Horsemanship*, on our website, www.barnesranch.com

Beverly Swanson, our webmaster and dressage rider adds (Piaffe Design & Marketing Solutions, www.piaffedesign.com): "My trainers have always said that if your horse has a behavioral problem – no matter how small you think it is – tell your trainer BEFORE asking him/her to handle your horse."