



Frank Bell Horse Whisperer

Ex-Race Horse Gets Excited at Shows

Hello Frank,

My name is Belinda and I'm from Cornwall in the UK, I have an ex race horse – thoroughbred, Irish 15.2, when I began to ride him he always wanted to gallop, and unfortunately had lost a lot of weight so I had to build him up and try to calm him down. Although perfect to handle he took a while to settle into all the paces rather than only gallop! I am really happy with him but I have hit a stone wall which was a point you have made on your web site:

"Large groups of horses, loud speakers, flags, etc., all mean go fast to the ex race horse. Help them learn to tolerate these distractions, intelligently. Don't overload the horse."
We have been to two shows (last summer) and both times it was almost as if I didn't exist, I could not get his attention at all and he was all over the place either trotting along or not moving an inch. The shows weren't huge and it's a problem because you shouldn't be there if you are not competing, and until he calms down I wouldn't like to get in the ring with him. Do you have any tips for working with him to help us? We also have a real issue of him wanting to lead constantly when out with other horses. You mention making him uncomfortable when riding or leading, how can you do this? I don't use a crop as he has an obvious real fear of it and there must be another way!

Any tips you might have will be greatly appreciated.

Many thanks,
Belinda Waldock

Dear Belinda:

This is not uncommon for ex race horses and that is exactly why I produced my video, [*Retraining the Race Horse*](#). These horses have a huge propensity to get over-excited at the smallest stimuli, which immediately sets them off. Therefore you need to create a similar situation at home before heading to the challenges of crowds, loud speakers, flags, and all the hub-bub of events. You need to help him deal with a variety of challenges at home before the BIG EVENT. GET IT? You see, the excitement of crowds etc. is just too much now. Order the video along with my foundation work, [*Discover the Horse You Never Knew*](#). This will give you the information and tools to help your horse become a calm, self-assured winner.

Happy Trails and Safe Riding!