



Frank Bell Horse Whisperer

Fjord Bucks at the Canter

Hello Mr. Bell,

I have a 5 year old Norwegian Fjord. He has a wonderful disposition and he's very gentle. I have had him for two years and my riding experience is limited (about 3 years solid). My problem is this: almost every time we get into canter and reach a fairly fast speed, my Fjord will drop his head and buck his back legs out. I realize that he is excited and happy to be out on a ride, but I am almost getting tossed off! I have no idea how to break this bad habit but it is scaring me and I am apprehensive about cantering him in case I get tossed off. My legs and feet shoot back and I lose control of the reins because I panic. Do you have any advice for me? Thank you so much. Your website has been very informative.

Sincerely,
Dawn Winter

Dawn:

You need to ride your Fjord in a round pen and relax, stay out of the horse's mouth, don't bounce, etc. Just allow it to happen. I'm guessing that your nervousness is translating right to the horse. Push the horse at liberty first through his gaits in the round pen or a small area where the horse can comfortably go through his gaits and watch closely for cross cantering or a bad attitude. The horse should be able to do it all with a good attitude. When that is all working well, then you'd get on and just push the horse through the trot and let him find the canter. Allow as many strides as he wants then back down. If all's well, up again and more strides until you are OK and horse doesn't want to buck. If that head goes down, give it a jerk back up with one rein, your hand extended out front and a shhhhhhhh noise. If necessary, circle the horse into a one rein stop and disengage the hind quarters aggressively. This procedure is well covered in my "[Discover the Horse You Never Knew](#)" foundation video.

I'm assuming you do no groundwork prior to riding? That being the case, if you'd learn my 7-Step Safety System, you'll take 80-90% of the risk out of the ride and probably stop the bucking. Again this is all covered in my Discover The Horse You Never Knew video. Check into our "[Getting Started Package](#)" which includes the information and right tools to proceed with the 7 Steps. Safety is my main focus.

Happy Trails,