

The video tape showed slow motion action as Vivian Wearing rode the cutting mare 'Kings Gayety' for the Queensland 7.30 News Report. While the commentator described her as the leading woman trainer for Western riding in Australia, Viv Wearing joked with us about the comments and suggested we watch her expressive facial contortions as she described a happy and unhappy horse to the news commentator. Although quiet and a little shy Viv's sense of humour is never far below the surface.

At 25 years of age she has had almost 20 years competition experience and, as the latest 'import' to Western Australia, brings with her this vast knowledge from many areas of horsemanship.

In January of this year Vivian moved to Shaydene Pastoral Company, Cardup where David and Penny Bunton stand the quarter horse stallion 'Bar Deck'.

"I had decided to make a move and it was a toss up between the States and Western Australia," explained Viv. "With friends like Penny and David and a horse like Bar Deck here it was hard to overlook Western Australia."

Once here though Vivian was horrified to find horses living in sand paddocks. Her first question was "Where is all the green grass?"

After having a chance to look around she is amazed at the number of horses in the outer Metro areas, which despite the sand seem to be in top condition.

Now in partnership with the Buntons, Vivian plans to join them in their venture to breed and show top class horses. The ten acre property is being developed as a concentrated area for breeding quality, not quantity, quarter horses. The arena will shortly be completed and Viv plans to have clinics and private lessons for beginners to advanced riders.

Although preferring to give private lessons Viv does feel there is a definite place for clinics. "The horse which is new to the arena needs to be ridden with other horses, he may go terrific out there by himself but he must learn that other horses do pass and some riders do cut you off unintentionally," she said. "The rider also has to learn that apart from riding around by himself he has to look where he is going and know what to do if someone gets too close or his horse is coming up too close behind another. So clinics are the natural follow through from the private lessons."



Viv (left) and Penny (right) inspect one of the 'Bar Deck' quarter horse foals

Viv, who has had much success in putting confidence in riders, believes in encouraging and building on the good points a rider has instead of belittling them, as some instructors do.

"I always say to my pupils," explains Viv, "if I ever tell you something and don't give a reason for it, then have doubts, because if I or any other instructor can't tell you why something is going to be better then I think you'll have trouble."

Some instructors will ask a rider to perform a movement which the horse is not yet capable of, therefore the rider gets uptight, the horse gets uptight and one fights the other. I never ask a rider to perform something that the horse is not physically or mentally capable of doing.

Deadlines are out. I don't set a date for a horse and say you must be ready by then because each horse is an individual. When it's

balanced sufficiently to go into collected work I can then assess it and see what direction I should take.

It depends on the horse and how balanced it is as to how far I can push it and how ready it is to get into a self carriage situation. In a Western Pleasure horse, that is your eventual aim, self carriage with the horse holding its front end up on its own.

In the long run you are better off taking your time with a horse, especially if it's babyish, rather than pressuring it and perhaps getting into that early two year old class and then losing that horse for the rest of its life because you have blown its brains by overpressure.

There are times when it's beneficial to some people to have their horse in training for a while. If they can see what they are reaching for or experience how it feels when they press the right buttons it is a big advantage to the

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"I believe that western riders need to understand the mechanics of the horse and to understand about paces and having correct paces."