

# Logbook: Furian and Joep

Date	Furian	Joep
2011/10/02	<p>Spoke to Wilma, the owner, about Joep, a Fjord pony gelding, and her offer to have the latter exercised. Also discussed his laminitis. Agreed that Vicki and I could exercise Joep gently while he recovers (even though she was a bit hesitant because the vet had recommended that he be kept stationary in a stable without any substantial feed) and then normally. This could include groundwork and work at liberty as well as walks. Wilma suggested that we could also do this Furian (a Welsh Cob) if we wanted to. I accepted her offer. Both ponies are rather overweight. Joep is barefoot and Furian has shoes on his front hooves. An ordinary farrier takes care of their hooves every six weeks, which means that both ponies are quickly overdue for a trim, as they are now.</p>	
2011/10/03	<p>Took Furian on the lead into the small outdoor dressage arena (20m x 40m) and led him around. Took off the lead and just stood with him. Overall he is very sensitive and has little self-confidence, although treats encourage him to nudge for more. Moved away from him and he remained where he was before moving towards the grass fringing the arena. He is not allowed to eat any for fear that he will founder, so I moved him around the arena in both directions at liberty first at a walk and then a trot merely by raising the coiled lead in my driving hand and inviting him with my leading hand. He responds well to changes in my body energy, although he needs a bit more encouragement in the transition from walk to trot.</p>	<p>Because Joep is still clearly suffering from laminitis, I only walked him on a lead around the outdoor dressage and jumping arenas. At my urging Wilma had thankfully consented to him being left outside in the paddock with his mate for as long as possible each day, with the result that he is already walking significantly better than yesterday. The constant movement is doing him good, allowing his hooves to function as they should, thereby contributing to his recovery. Our priority at the moment is to facilitate this recovery by keeping him moving. Joep has far more self-confidence than Furian but is slightly less responsive than the latter.</p>
2011/10/04	<p>Rigged up a largish picadero in the outdoor dressage arena by simply dividing it in half with some surveyor's tape. Collected Furian from his stable and left him in the centre with his halter on to spend some time getting into the moment and assessing him. He simply stood and waited. I then approached him with the long lead. When he looked at it anxiously, I started stroking him wherever he would let me without putting his ears back (which was virtually all over) with my free hand, encouraged him with soothing sounds and lifted his forefoot. Then I repeated this on the other side, all the time holding the coiled long lead where he could see it. Furian calmed down. After a brief pause I lunged him at liberty as I had done on the first day. He has a favourite corner, which is where the exit is, so I had to support him more fully there. This was followed by another brief break.</p> <p>I then approached Furian with the long lead coiled in my hand but resting casually at my side. While reassuring him I started stroking him with both hands, one of which was still holding the rope. After a minute hesitation he allowed me to do this without difficulty, so I slowly unravelled the lead and draped it over his neck, so that the two ends trailed down towards the ground. He allowed this to happen as I continued to stroke and reassure him, until we just stood there, him with the lead draped over his neck. After a while I took the lead off his neck, deliberately bringing it over his head. This he allowed me to do without protest.</p> <p>Furian shrank at the sight of the driving whip, which seems to suggest that he may have been beaten at</p>	<p>With Joep the plan was to walk him around the picadero at liberty, again largely for the purpose of helping him deal with his laminitis. First though, I wanted to get into the moment and assess him, so I untied him in the centre of the picadero and left him with his halter on. Joep immediately went on a mission to find some food and he did in the form of the only blade of grass growing in the middle of the arena, which was followed by a visit to the lawn developing at its edge. Joep was clearly ravenous but he was not allowed to eat, so I went towards him to move him on using the same lunging signs that I had used with Furian. Instead of moving away, Joep moved towards me but turned away when I raised my energy and the coiled long lead to create distance between us.</p> <p>While walking around the picadero Joep discovered acorns on the ground in one corner, so I had to raise my energy again to get him to resist the temptation to stop and eat. Problems arose when I moved to halt him and change direction. Again he tried to approach me. This time I walked up to him without glancing at him and started stroking his chest and neck. He stopped but did not move back. As with Furian, I calmly stroked him wherever he allowed me to and raised his foreleg, repeating this on the other side.</p> <p>Again, when I tried to start lunging Joep, he turned towards me, so I slapped the coiled lead against my thigh and got a reaction I did not expect. He hurtled off around the picadero at a gallop. I immediately dropped my energy and moved away from him to slow him down. It took almost a full turn</p>

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	<p>some stage in the past. I placed the whip on the ground and then led him on the lead around before attempting to walk over it. He refused and neatly sidestepped the whip on the ground. At this point I picked up the whip and casually held it between us and waited. No negative response, so I walked backward leading him on the long lead with the whip between us but without looking at it or making a big deal of it. My focus was entirely on him and he came with me, first hesitantly and then a bit more lightly. I dropped the whip on the ground between us while we were moving like this but again he deftly sidestepped it. We tried this again a couple of times with the same result. The exercise ended when we both stopped and while looking at each other, I casually stroked his neck on both sides with the whip, which he allowed me to do without objecting.</p> <p>The session ended with a brief round of lunging, after which Furian followed me around the arena, as I gathered up some of the gear I had left lying around. On the way back to his stable I halted along the way and Furian paralleled my movements at every step. I feel that we have a connection of sorts and that we have made major progress in establishing leadership and trust.</p>	<p>of the picadero before he slowed down to a walk, when I then calmly moved him around the picadero at the same pace, until we came to the acorn corner. There I had to raise my energy again to prevent him from stopping to eat. Although I felt that I had not done much to achieve this, the result was equally startling yet again. This time Joep raced off in the opposite direction. When I tried halt him by raising my leading hand and moving forward towards his shoulder, he simply span around and galloped off in the opposite direction. Again I lowered my energy and backed off. It took some time to bring him down to a walk, after which I stopped and we had a break, although I had to keep Joep away from the acorns and grass, which I did simply by positioning myself appropriately at a distance.</p> <p>I then tried to walk Joep around the picadero at liberty again. We managed to do so in both directions without mishap, so I stopped and ended the session. Joep followed me as I collected my gear but I felt that the connection was a bit fragile, which feeling was proved to be correct by the fact that he did not stop cleanly when I halted while leading him back to the paddock.</p>
2011/10/05	<p>Took Furian into the indoor arena, where we first spent time just being with each other. Then I picked out his hooves and groomed him. He stood still with the short lead trailing on the ground while I did that and seemed to enjoy it. I then rigged up a picadero by running a tape across the width to leave us with a rough square at one end. From the start Furian was attentive as I lunged him at liberty from walk into trot and back, first anti-clockwise. In the other direction I noticed that his lead range was further down his side than I had expected, with the result that I found that I was braking him even though I was well back of his shoulder. This led to a slight bit of confusion which I soon rectified.</p> <p>Following a brief break I reintroduced him to the whip in much the same way as yesterday. Although apprehensive, he allowed me to stroke his neck on both sides with both the handle and the end of the whip. However, he still emphatically refuses to step over the whip and walks round it.</p> <p>We ended the session with another briefer round of lunging. He appears to be slightly unsound on the right. I have resolved to speak to Ineke (the owner and manager) to see whether we can arrange for Furian to spend a longer period in the paddock every day than only mornings. He is spending too much time in his stable, where he frequently huddles in the corner with his hindquarters to the door.</p>	<p>Joep is a source of concern. This pony seems to have been screwed up somewhere along the way. He was far more responsive today when I got him out of the paddock and brought him into the indoor arena. There I picked out his hooves and groomed him while he stood still without a lead.</p> <p>The lunging at liberty got off to a calm start without as much fuss as yesterday, although he again tried to approach me. Creating distance, however, did not produce the same frenzied effect as yesterday. He walked calmly to the left around the picadero, varying his speed as I raised and lowered my energy. Then I changed direction only to be surprised just before he completed the first round. At the corner he ducked under the tape where it was tied up the side and continued down the rest of the arena. I slackened the tape to let it sag and put traffic cones on both sides where it was tied higher up on the arena walls. When we tried lunging at liberty again, he simply walked up to the cones, nudged them aside and again went to the other end of the arena.</p> <p>This time I went with him after a brief break. First I lunged Joep to the left at liberty. No problem. Then I lunged him to the right, starting from the single external doorway, which was open at the top. We walked down the length of the arena, crossed over to the other corner and were proceeding up the opposite side, when suddenly he broke into a canter, cut across the arena towards the external doorway while I dropped my energy while moving away from him, and then he tried to jump the lower</p>

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		<p>part of the door. Fortunately, the latter is slanted inward at the bottom, which meant that he first hit the door with his hooves, thereby saving his knees by the time they knocked against it.</p> <p>We both stood still for a while before I moved to him and attached the long lead to his halter. I then led him around the arena and he followed like a lamb with no evidence of any injury suffered. After a few minutes I stopped the session and started collecting my things. All the while Joep followed me staying close to me with his head near my arm whichever direction I went.</p> <p>Are we dealing with the fallout of a 'join up'? Or is there something else going on?</p>
2011/10/06	<p>Again started with Furian but this time in the outdoor arena, where he proved to be rather apprehensive as there was a bit of a breeze, and Anaïs and Daantje were cantering in the adjoining paddock. First I released him and he immediately and uncharacteristically walked off to one side of the arena and stopped. I found it quite difficult to get into the moment and this was also reflected in Furian's response. Initially, the contact was stilted, so I put him on the lead and led him around the arena, as movement is essential if we are to help him get his weight down. He seemed to calm down somewhat, so I released him and after a quick break I tried to move him around the arena at liberty. Still a bit skittish, he broke into a trot and I found myself spending the first few minutes reassuring him and easing him back into a walk. Then Rambo, a ginger and white cat put in an appearance, which was enough to send Furian into a mild panic. But only momentarily, because I started laughing immediately and he picked up on that and turned to me. It couldn't be that bad if I thought it was funny, he seemed to think. We had contact.</p> <p>The rest of the session went well. Furian comfortably walked and trotted around the arena at liberty in response to my cues. This was supposed to end the session but on the way towards the gate Furian spooked at the white lead coiled up in the grass, so we had an impromptu reassurance session, which ended up with him allowing me to rub his neck and back with the lead, alert but accepting. A brief bit of neck-rubbing with the whip marked the end of the session.</p>	<p>My primary concern with Joep was to check whether he was sound after his encounter with the arena door yesterday. He had appeared to be fine out in the paddock but a trot in the arena would reveal any lameness. I first released Joep and he uncharacteristically stayed put and looked at me instead of wandering off in search of something to nibble on. It was easy getting into the moment with him.</p> <p>Then I led Joep around the arena on a lead, allowing him to stop and smell the sources of other horse scents. After a few rounds we had a break and again he stayed where he was looking at me rather than wandering off. We had contact.</p> <p>Starting to walk around the arena at my prompting was consequently a calm affair. Joep happily went into trot and then back into walk in response to me raising and lowering my energy. Contact collapsed when I moved towards his front and then back to slow him down and bring him in. There must have been something wrong with the energy that I brought to bear, because he responded by speeding up and breaking into a canter. I lowered my energy moved back and he came back down to trot, walk and then halted as requested.</p> <p>We ended the session with another few rounds of walk and trot but this time I lowered my energy and moved backwards before I moved towards his front. This had a better effect and he calmly halted. We stood watching each other before he moved towards me. I stopped Joep before he could reach me, then turned around and walked towards the exit with him following me like a puppy.</p>
2011/10/07	Took Furian for a walk of about 2km in the forest. Although a bit apprehensive in the beginning, he quickly settled down and walked happily at my side without any hint of the spookiness which he was said to exhibit when he went out on a trail ride, and which was supposed to be so bad that a whip was required to get him to move forward.	Took Joep for the same walk (also on his own). During the first part of the walk he constantly wanted to stop and eat the grass which we passed. Finally, he gave up on those attempts and settled into a comfortable walk at my side.