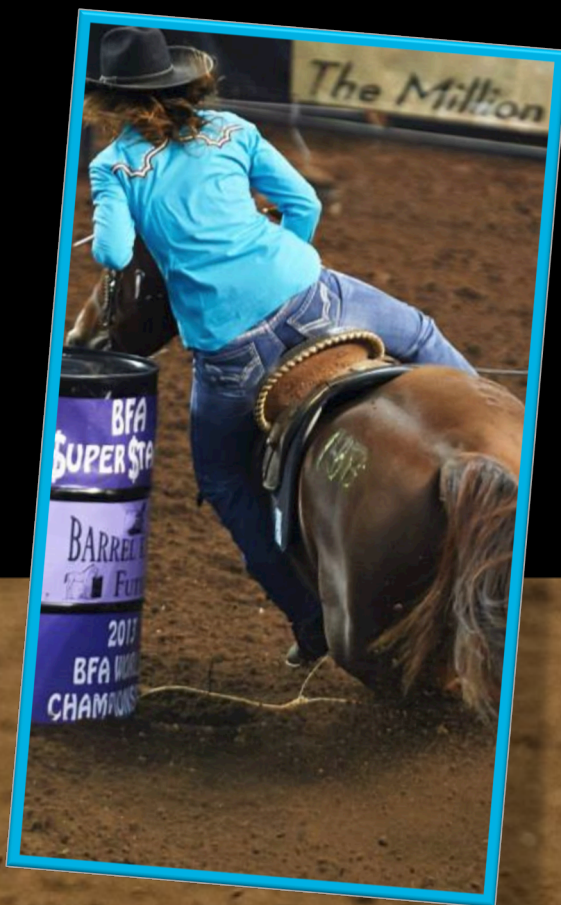


Training with

*Melli Montgomery*

“Working with horses is a step-by-step process.  
It’s like going over the ABC’s with them”.



Photos courtesy of...Josh Welsh

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As barrel racers we are constantly striving to create the perfect approach, turn and departure from a barrel. It is my goal to give some helpful tips that will help you and your equine partner achieve success. I focus mainly on futurity colts-taking prospects from the beginning and developing them into a seasoned futurity horse. I will discuss a number of topics that have helped me reach my goals.

I work very hard to make sure my colts are broke in every possible way including face, shoulders, rib cage, hips, laterally, speed control and mentally. Working with horses is a step-by-step process—being successful takes dedication and consistency each day building on yesterday.

First I would like to discuss having a horse move up through the bridle. Our job as leaders of our equine partners is to help them understand what we are communicating to them. I always start a horse walking in a circle, tipping their nose to the inside of the circle while moving forward. Some horses will panic, throw their heads up and get scared of this tight place. If your horse

panics, keep asking them to move forward and let your release be when the horse is soft and not in a panic state, while still moving forward. I work on this exercise every day with my colts—it's like going over their ABC's with them. It is a very quick give-and-take during this exercise. It is not a constant pull on the rein nor a loose rein—when they give, I give, over and over. To get around a barrel your horse has to move forward, therefore, most exercises I do are always asking for forward movement.

After my horse can calmly lope a collected circle, while moving up into the bridle, I will take them and work a barrel both directions. I start out at a walk, graduate to a trot and then a lope around the barrel. I always make sure I can do this away from the barrel first, so I won't create an association of panic when working at my barrel. Usually once I can accomplish this exercise away from a barrel, I will work one barrel for a couple of days and start patterning my horse at a lope.

View video demonstrations by Molli below...

Video I

Video II

Video III



Photo courtesy...Ashley Lenard

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