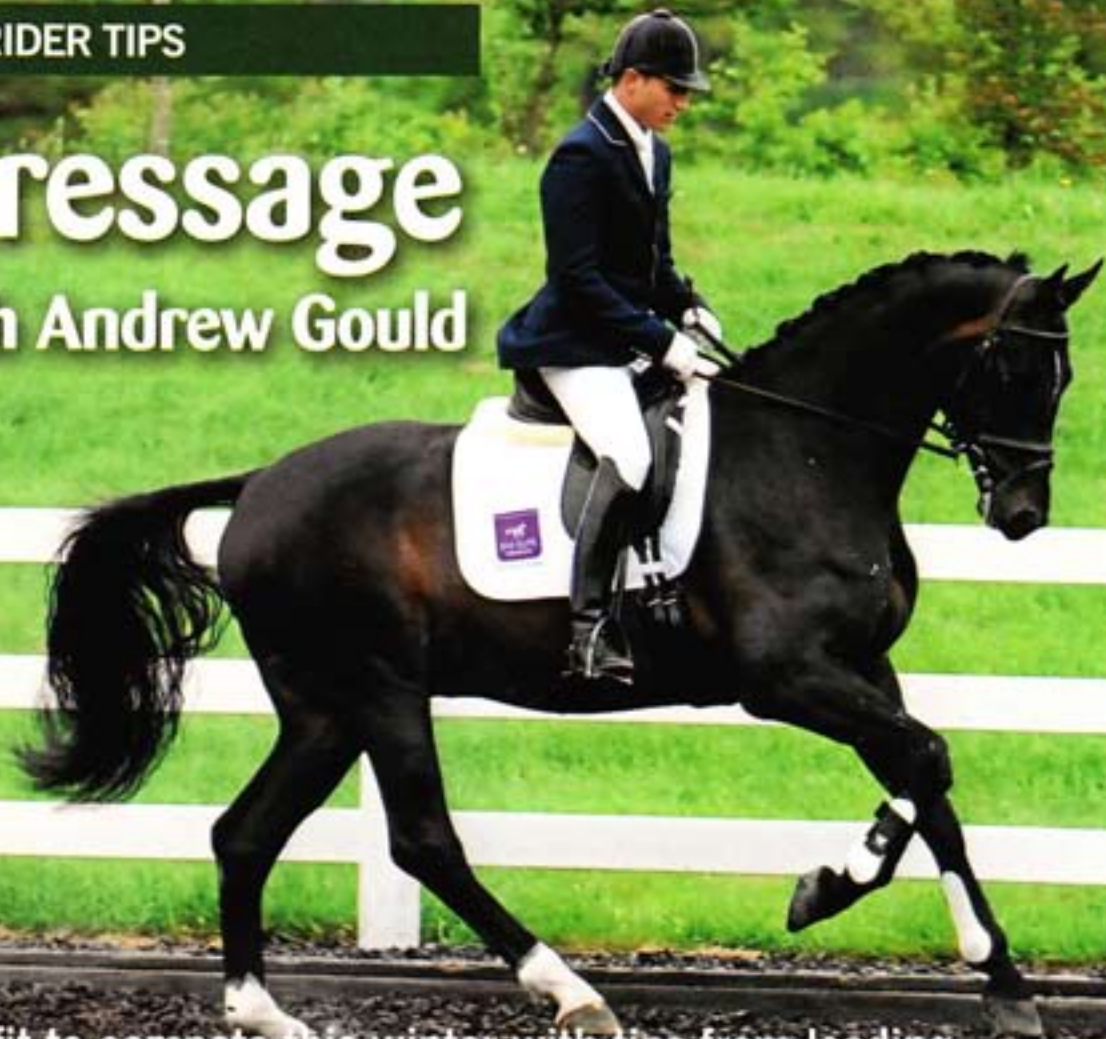


Dressage

with Andrew Gould



Stay fit to compete this winter with tips from leading dressage rider and trainer Andrew Gould.

Stable management

1. Make up a week's supply of haynets at the weekend to save time during the week.
2. Get clipper blades sharpened and winter rugs cleaned ready for the weather turning.
3. I often use old bed duvets as extra warmth under stable rugs during freezing winter nights. Make sure you secure them well and take them off during the day to stop your horse getting too warm. If you use a duvet cover, they are easier to keep clean as you can regularly wash the cover.
4. If a freeze is forecast, store a few buckets of water in the tack/feed room or horse box covered with old numnahs or rugs. Then you'll have instant, fresh water for your

horse in the morning when all the taps have frozen.

5. Sprinkle rock salt on the yard in potentially icy areas. It could save a nasty slip for horse or human.
6. I use Equine America's Fungatrol Cream as a barrier against mud fever.
7. In cold weather, I give my horses plenty of feed to ensure they don't drop any condition.
8. I always use Woof brushing boots as they are so easy to clean, whereas bandages tend to get wet and soggy.
9. I bed my horses on The Green Mile cardboard bedding which offers excellent insulation during the winter months whether horses are standing or lying on it.

Winter riding

1. Take your time warming up - both you and your horse. Consider using an exercise sheet and perhaps having a quick hack in walk before you start schooling. It is also important to 'warm down' your horses after exercise.
2. Winter can be a good time to work on basics and get some extra lessons.
3. Wear layers that can be removed easily if you get warm while working your horse.
4. Take a break, and while walking your horse, lift your shoulders then push them back and round. Lift up, roll back and relax. This will improve your posture and relax your hands.
5. Ask a friend to video you riding so you can watch yourself later at home in the warm. Make mental notes and correct any problems when you're next riding.