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Sent: Saturday, October 31, 2009 11:31 AM
To: Zoe NurturalHorse
Subject: Bitless Bridle Consumer Reports



The Nurtural (*Leather 'Impressive' bridle tested*)

General Rankings (out of 5 stars):
1= poor 2= satisfactory 3=good 4=excellent 5=outstanding

Base Price (not including shipping):	Good
Versatility (disciplines):	Outstanding
Quality of Materials:	Excellent
Ease of Use (adjustments, riding):	Excellent
Durability:	Excellent
Cleaning:	Excellent

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Made Horse Hot Horse

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Comments:

The Nurtural is a cross-under bridle design, with several improvements over 'flaws' of standard cross-under bridles with the use of rubber grips on the noseband, a solid crown piece and a patented circle-x.

With the Nurtural bridle, the hand cues are sent through the reins into the nose piece. As the cue becomes stronger, that signal funnels through the cross-under straps. If the cue is excessive, the horse will then feel the pressure across its poll. **The Circle-X feature and solid crownpiece nearly removes all risk of the rein straps becoming uneven, a major plus when it comes to equal pressure and control.**

The textured rubber on the underside of the noseband prevents the noseband from slipping out of place. This is a feature especially appreciated as pressure remained equal across the nose, helping to 'anchor' the noseband in place- we never experienced a problem with it riding up the nose when properly adjusted.

Because the cross-under straps cannot become uneven during riding, the bridle is especially safe and control is enhanced.

In Use:

The horses and riders responded well to this bridle. **Hot horses were controlled and relaxed quickly in this bridle. The Nurtural proved to be able to handle the tasks of controlling horses through varied jumping and schooling exercises with control equal to, or greater, than in a bit.**

While dressage work can be accomplished in the Nurtural, we generally preferred side pull style bridles for this particular discipline. Otherwise, this bridle was highly effective, never compromising safety or control.

It is ideal for western and english disciplines alike.

Conclusion:

The Nurtural bridle is ideal for those who want to school without a bit or are avid trail riders. The design is extremely durable, and the hardware is top-notch. **The bridle probably has the best control of the designs we have tested thus far, in the case of run-away or resistant horses.**

Many riders will appreciate the variety of colour and material options available - **truly an all-around bridle.**

The Great Nurtural Bitless Experiment: The 'Hot' Horse

October 2009

Lady came to me as a hot **13 year old off-the-track Thoroughbred with a history of anxiety under saddle**. She pranced throughout entire rides, and would not stand still- when asked, she would 'stumble' to the ground, eventually leading to several broken bones through previous riders as they fell under her. That was 3 years ago. **For 3 years she sat as a pasture ornament, too hot to risk safety**. Years before that, she served as a broodmare to produce racehorses. In the early summer of 2009, she was given to me. I knew upon seeing her that this was an otherwise athletic horse, one with great potential. **I also knew there was a bitless experiment going on at Cinch. So came, perhaps, one of the biggest breakthroughs in Lady's under-saddle career.**

I had already been introduced to the Nurtural bitless bridle riding one of the other test horses, and had had positive results. **Though my previous beliefs would have otherwise told me to stick a bit in her mouth on her first ride in 3 years, I went with my gut and fitted the bitless to her. I have never regretted that move...**

I quietly hopped on, expecting to be jigged, or perhaps even bolted upon- nothing. As we walked, she began to prance. A soft, quick brace on the reins was all that she needed to settle down. She walked out freely. As she worked through her paces, she would use her underline, and begin to prance. A soft whoa on the reins, and her demeanor changed to the beneficial. I was ecstatic!

Hoping this wasn't just a fluke, I continued to work in the Nurtural bitless bridle. There was much to work on. Her turns were unbalanced and she expected to be asked to run every time up. **As each session progressed, she gradually became softer. She became more balanced. She began to tune in to the rider.**

Seeing how she was beginning to excel under saddle, I decided to introduce a bit- a simple French link snaffle. She tensed. She turned her head into the air. She pranced. She bolted. She was more apt to spook. Her teeth have been checked, chiropractic and veterinary checks done. She passed all the tests. **Something about the bit yielded her uncooperative and anxious.** Perhaps she was expecting to be off to track again; perhaps she had associated the bit with discomfort. Whatever it was, the bit was not the answer. **I tried several more times, changing bit styles to no avail.** Giving up for now, I decided bitless was the best route.

...It has been a mere 3 months that I have owned this mare. Her training has improved tenfold. She now jumps more confidently, is incredibly responsive, and will even begin to bring herself into an outline after a while. She is still 'hot', but it is manageable and a positive attribute rather than a negative with the bitless. **I can rate her and bring her back from a dead gallop much faster than can be attached when a bit is in her mouth** (generally, it was almost impossible to bring her back in a bit except by circling).

I am happy to report after her short return to work, **she is now calm enough to move completely off seat and legs, and will stop without any rein should you ask her. All this is thanks to a tool which I shunned just a year ago.**

Some days I am surprised that I did try bitless on my hot horse. It is something most people would never fathom doing. **This single horse alone has shown me that horse people really do need to keep their minds open.** Had I not been willing to change my way of thinking, chances are Lady would never have been able to be ridden again.

Perhaps we are "never afraid of what we know" (Anna Sewell), but maybe we need to bridge past the stereotypes and misconceptions. **Bitless isn't just for dead-broke, calm horses, but it can be used on virtually anyone. All you need is an open mind, and a willing attitude.**

See all 4 studies online. Link from www.nurturalhorse.com