



Frank Bell Horse Whisperer

Abused Horses

Dear Frank,

Recently I purchased a 3 year old T-Bred Quarter Horse mix named Bama. The previous owner was very abusive in their training, if he did not run fast enough during lunging he got beat with the whip, if he was non-responsive or nipped during saddling, applying halter and/or bridle, or foot care, he would receive a fist to the face or barrel. I have owned him for four months and so far have been able to lead him to and from the pasture, put on his saddle, halter, and bridle I have even rode him five times. At times he is still difficult to accept the bit, and totally refuses to lunge. He still nips from time to time, and appears to love to nuzzle his head against me during certain portions of training. Are there any suggestions or words of encouragement you can offer me? Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Sincere thanks,
Wesley A.
Grove City, Ohio

Dear Wesley,

I admire your desire to help Bama and it sure sounds like you've done a great job. I can offer a few suggestions that have helped thousands of others. I've developed a set of exercises that vastly improves horse/rider relationships and communication while building confidence for both at the same time. It's called my *7-Step Safety System* and is being used worldwide. You can read about it in a three-part series of [Western Horseman articles](#) published a few years ago. I encourage most people to start there, then if they like my approach order one of my packages, ideally the [Getting Started Package](#). This will give you the information and tools to succeed with your horse and bring Bama along until he's a relaxed confident mount. This foundation video will teach you how to lunge, what I call 'drive your horse.' Bit acceptance is covered in my [Solving 7 Common Horse Problems](#) video. Try a little molasses on the horse's lips, then on the bit. AND what kind of bit are you using? Horses hate shanks, curb bits and these types of bits are not conducive for use with my system. Instead, use a mild snaffle bit. You'd also want to make sure that the horse's teeth are causing problems. There is a lot to all this. I'd suggest finding someone competent to help with the bridle selection for your horse or ride as we do - with a rope halter tied into reins. Safety is my #1 concern for both the horse and rider and safety is only accomplished when the handler is riding in confidence. If we're not riding in confidence, then we're riding in fear and the horse knows it immediately. I promise you my system will have you and Bama riding confidently if you pay close attention and apply the principles. Read the many testimonials on my site to see what successes people are having.

I grew up in Toledo!

Safe Riding,