Do you see the smile? How could you miss it! But go beyond that wide smile, the baby blues and soft hands and you find an astute businessman with superb marketing skills and enough energy to light the whole of Australia.

Clinton Anderson is a boy from Oz who has taken on the Yanks and beaten them at their own game. Last year his business, Downunder Horsemanship, grossed US$10 million. He has sold more than three hundred thousand of his training DVDs, videos and books, has two weekly television shows and has attracted hundreds of thousands of American horsemen and women to his horsemanship clinics.

By MaryAnne Leighton
To the AQHA, (Horse Back Riding Program),

I would like to thank the Staff and Board at the AQHA for having this wonderful program.

As I do not show or ride western, only English, this gives me something to work towards while doing the thing I love most. I would like to say the quality of the garments are lovely and people have said what a great idea it is.

I have a mare MissNRule Q-51221 she is 4 ½ years and I have broken her in myself and she is going well. I also have a colt Bellgara King Jazz Q-58331 he is 1 ½ years and I have just made a start on him. He came from QLD and is such a lovely little guy, so well mannered for his age. I am going to have a heap of fun with him. Then I have my old girl The Stables Miss Jessie Q-9991, she is 24 years. I have had her for 20 years and have grown up with her by my side. Over the years she has given me so much pleasure with everything I have done with her. She is one in a million I can not convey how much I love her. Everyone just loves her and over the years people have wanted to buy her, but I would never part with her. She has given me the best part of her life. I can only hope I get as much from the other two as I have from her. They are the best horses to have without a doubt.

Regards,
Yvette Thorbury

“IT’S MAGIC”
AUSTRALIAN HALTER SHOWCASE

Thank you to each and every member of the Australian Halter Showcase Committee for making the 10th Anniversary Show the success that it was. Once again as in every year for 10 years now the members of the AHS Committee have put on a MAGIC show. The competitor numbers were HUGE this year and the amount of work that each and every Committee Member had to do was done yet again with that same friendly- ness that you see every other year.

Every year these same people come up trumps with this great show.

We are sincere when we thank you all,
Pam, George and Sarah Neal
Snake Valley Quarter Horses.
and ask questions of Al Dunning. Returning to Australia in 1997 to show off his new American wife, Beth, Clinton also competed in the NRHA Open Futurity on Mindy. The pair won the first go-round with a blistering run and subsequently placed third in the final, one point behind the winner and a half a point behind his mentor, Ian Francis. Cheryl Anderson said, ‘When he first started competing in reining, Clinton sent Mindy to Ian for six weeks’ training. Ian accepted her, knowing that Clinton would do his best to beat him in the Futurity. Ian was still helping Clinton at the Futurity itself and it meant so much to us that he would do that, we saw it as a sign of Ian’s true sportsmanship although Ian himself could see nothing unusual in what he did.’

**THE CLINIC KING**

Clinton is a self-confessed clinic junkie and when he returned to the USA in 1998 to work with (and ask questions of) top reiners Pete Kyle and Mike Boyle, it became clear to him that there was more money to be made from conducting clinics than from training horses. He said he was amazed at how little the Americans expect when their horses are trained professionally – what Australian trainers accomplish in sixty days takes six months or more in the US. Some American trainers have many more horses in training than they can possibly handle so owners are forced to accept slower progress, longer training times or the work of an assistant rather than the personal attention of the top man. So in 1998 at the age of 23, with just $1000 in his pocket and ‘unable to get credit even to buy new undies’ he started a clinic business, struggling to get it off the ground. Knowing he would have to work harder and smarter than anyone else to succeed, he voluntarily gave demonstrations at horse expos, provided
Clinton is adamant that he did not invent the training he uses; he just puts his own spin on it and markets it better than anyone else. His timing in setting up his business was impeccable and he tapped into a section of the market that is largely ignored by other clinicians. The advent of Clinton's clinics coincided with America's baby boomers having the time and the cash to spend on themselves after their kids have left home. Most of his clients are women aged between 45 and 55, many of whom have never owned a horse and are woefully unprepared to handle the challenges presented by 500 kg of potentially unruly horseflesh. Recreational riding is more popular and more widespread in the USA than here in Australia and Clinton concentrates on helping ordinary horse owners solve their own ordinary horse problems in a commonsense manner, so that they and their horses gain more enjoyment from training and riding. He does not train show riders and he only demonstrates with problem horses. He is a down-to-earth, straightforward teacher who has amassed an impressive following; his clinics have attracted around two thousand fence-sitters and at US$25 to $45 for each fence-sitter – work it out.

Clinton is ruthlessly honest with clinic attendees; if something is not going to work he says so, if a horse is dangerous or not suited to what the owner wants it to do he says so and they love him for it. He has endless patience, is open and receptive to new ideas and continues to admire and study the systems of many other trainers.

Clinton's TV series is slick, professional and fully contested the America's Cup in the States. Three round yards are set up in an indoor arena and it is fascinating to watch the different styles of each trainer. Particularly interesting is the contrast between the traditional American way of roping the 2YO, getting the saddle on and riding as soon as possible and Clinton's modified Jeffery Method of patient groundwork, sensitising and desensitising and teaching lateral flexion before ever stepping up into the saddle. Who else but Clinton had a screaming chainsaw and then leaf blower, cracking an Aussie stock whip then standing on four logs? Who else but Clinton had a freestyle ridden demonstration while waving a bale of straw and four logs? Who else but Clinton has a smaller gooseneck for his horses?

He believes everyone does one thing extremely well so if he sees someone doing something better he will change. He also actively encourages his students to visit other clinicians and to learn from everyone the way he does. He uses no gimmicks at his clinics and there is no requirement for attendees to buy special ropes or halters, although he sells a lot of them anyway along with his professionally produced books and DVDs.

**MADE FOR TV**

In April 2001, Clinton became the first clinician to launch a weekly made-for-TV training program broadcast on a satellite station. ‘Downunder Horsemanship’ is RFD-TV’s most-watched equine show, voted second-most popular show on the entire network and it is watched by four million viewers. Clinton cleverly plays on his Aussie-ness and the Yanks love it. He has retained his Aussie accent, calls everyone ‘mate’, the Downunder Horsemanship logo contains a kangaroo wearing an Akubra and his theme tune is the song that Alan Bond’s crew blasted from their stereos every day when they successfully contested the America’s Cup in the States. Clinton’s TV series is slick, professional and entertaining and it was available on Australian television I too would watch it. The hour-long weekly broadcast is supported by ‘The Best of Downunder Horsemanship’, a weekly half-hour show comprised of the most requested past episodes plus new question and answer footage. This show was offered in response to viewers’ requests for more of Clinton, a request he is only too pleased to fulfil. Clinton has no trouble attracting personal sponsors who are delighted with the exposure they receive from his two TV shows and from sharing his star billing at horse expos and tour appearances; his profile is so high it influences the purchasing decisions of millions of horse owners.

**THE ROAD TO THE HORSE**

Clinton is the only trainer who has won the Road to the Horse colt starting championships twice, first in 2003 and again in 2005. Road to the Horse is a uniquely American event where three big name trainers are invited to break virtually unhandled young horses in three one-hour sessions over two days, in front of an audience of five thousand. At the end of the three hours each trainer works his 2YO both ways at a walk, trot and canter, negotiates a small obstacle course and completes an optional freestyle demo. Three round yards are set up in an indoor arena and it is fascinating to watch the different styles of each trainer. Particularly interesting is the contrast between the traditional American way of roping the 2YO, getting the saddle on and riding as soon as possible and Clinton’s modified Jeffery Method of patient groundwork, sensitising and desensitising and teaching lateral flexion before ever stepping up into the saddle. Who else but Clinton threw a bright pink Pilates exercise ball and plastic trays into the round yard along with a tarp, a bale of straw and four logs? Who else but Clinton has a unique Australian experience to give a freestyle ridden demonstration while waving a screaming chainsaw and then leaf blower, cracking an Aussie stock whip then standing on his horse’s back and shooting a gun? He won. In the promotional Road to the Horse DVD, the only trainers that Clinton refers to are his Aussie mentors, Gordon McKInlay and Ian Francis. None of the big name American trainers he has ever worked with get a mention.
Clinton competing at the 2006 AmQHA Congress on Nic N Smart

Clinton competing to win the Road to the Horse. Standing on the filly he broke in 3 hours, shooting a pistol.

REINING FUTURITY WINNER

Unlike other US clinicians, Clinton also shows his horses and he competes against the big guns of the reining world. He believes he needs to keep up with what is current in the show world so he can share it with his students. Ten years ago he placed third in the Australian NRHA Futurity and last year he won the Ohio Reining Futurity and competed at the AmQHA Congress. American NRHA Futurity Champion, Bob Avila, said trainers respect Clinton because he competes against them and is not afraid of people looking down on him if he does not win. When he is at home Clinton rides every day, no matter what, even though it is a juggling act to run clinics and to show but that is what he wants to do.

In conversation with Clinton I hear the voice of his mentor and friend, Ian Francis, in his turn of phrase and his unrelenting honesty about himself. Clinton credits Ian with much of his knowledge and success. He said, ‘Ian is a phenomenal hand and I think he is the best and most under-rated horseman in the world. When I first went to the States I moved away from Ian and rode with people like Bob Avila, Todd Crawford and Bob Loomis. Five years ago I asked Ian to help me with a clinic and when I watched him I remembered just how good he is. Now I fly him to the States every year to do clinics for me. There is a perception in Australia that the American trainers are better but in reality they are not at all. They may win the big futurities but they can only do it on great horses. Ian can take an average horse and make it look great – he could make a hollow log look like a broke hollow log. No one gets horses softer and more broke and he has the most phenomenal feel for a horse. I teach a lot of the stuff that Ian taught me.’

Clinton has written the foreword for the book, ‘Living the Legend – Ian Francis’ which is due to be published later this year.

Imagine this setting as a backdrop for a horse enterprise at Tamworth.

Contact Elders Tamworth 02 6766 5566
Auction Friday 25th May at 2pm.

RE-LOCATING TO TAMWORTH?

KILMARNOCK
Historic Private Property

• 3 bedroom cottage with verandahs.
• Large shearing shed, large hay shed both built along traditional bush lines.
• Covered classing race and cattle yards.
• Water supplied by well, adjacent to creek in garden.
• 40 HA of nice soils running from basalt to granite.
• 400 nature trees have been planted in 05/06.
• This habitat recreation has seen bio diversity revisited.
• The property has been destocked since 2001, soft broad leafed grasses, native salines and sweet herbages have reappeared.
• The property is situated at the head of a picturesque valley.
to be launched at the end of this month, and he has ordered thousands of copies of the book to sell in the USA where Ian also has a following. He said, 'I value Ian. He has a unique ability to see things from a horse’s perspective and he is the best at getting a young horse to do things without force. Personally, I think he’s the best in the world.’ Clinton now wants to turn his hand to cutting and he plans to return to Australia for two months every year to train with Ian.

In turn, Ian says, ‘There are several things I admire about Clinton. The first is that he had a dream bigger than Ben Hur and he pursued it and did not allow anyone or anything to deter him. Secondly, he is genuinely trying to bridge the gap between the idealism of Natural Horsemanship and the harsh realities of competitive horsemanship and, thirdly, he retains a respect for, and appreciation of, those of us who took the time and interest in him when he needed it.’ He added, ‘Someone asked him why he still works so hard and he said it’s because he doesn’t want to get to 60 and still have to work as hard as Gordon and I still do. Whilst the implied criticism stings I have to recognise that he does see a bigger picture.’ We also have to recognise that the American horse market is huge; there are many millions more horses and riders in America than there ever will be in Australia and Australian trainers will never be able to make the kind of money that is possible over there. Gordon McKinlay explains, ‘There’s a living to be had here and that’s all,’ so when Clinton is asked if he will move his business back to Australia, his response is, ‘Why would I?’ Why, indeed.

PILLAMINDI DOLL
Q-30678

Mindy and Clinton have an enviable relationship and the word is that she would walk on water for him. She is a 13YO chestnut roan mare who was bred by Cathy Marsh of Quir-ran-Lea Stud near Gympie in Queensland. Her sire, Pillamindi Roc, is a reining futurity winner and in training with Ian when Clinton worked there, and her dam is Spinifex Doll – and there are no prizes for guessing who she

FLASHBACK IMAGES
PRESENTS THE PAST IN PHOTOGRAPHS

Now available: Early Quarter Horse Industry photos by Pete-Anne Tenney 1967-1983
For information contact: Susan Carlson, 1374 Harvey Siding Rd, Harvey Siding, Qld 4570. phone: 07 5483 1885 or 0437 494 668
is by. In 1999 Clinton flew Mindy to the States where there are some who believe she is a bigger star than he is. She features in his Walkabout Tour shows where he proudly promotes her as his Aussie Quarter Horse and she is so popular that she has her own doll – you could only get away with that in America – sales of which have gone through the roof since it was introduced eight months ago. Before she left Australia Mindy produced one filly by Gordon McKinlay’s stallion, Clover Pinaroo Q-951. That filly, Down Under Aussie Gai Q-41995, is now owned by Lexie and Peter Bastable, and Mindy was again in foal to Clover Pinaroo when she flew to the States. That foal was another filly, Jillaroo Doll Q-48813 and in the US Mindy is also the proud mother of a 2YO filly, High on Cat Nip, by Highbrow Cat whose birth was deserving of a special episode in Clinton’s TV series entitled, ‘Mindy has a foal’ (this episode is also available on DVD). Mindy also has two embryo transfer foals due this year by Smart Chic O’Lena (service fee US$22,000).

Clinton is 31 and newly single. He currently lives on 100 acres in Ohio but will move to Texas in the near future. He says that, although he has been in the USA for nine years, he is only just getting started and he wants to keep learning, to keep growing and improving and to keep helping people. He said, ‘Every successful person, including me, got a helping hand somewhere and I want to be able to help as many people as possible, what I want to offer is what Ian Francis and Gordon McKinlay showed me.’ Clinton has boundless energy and drive and is a marketing maestro, believing that the best marketing man, not necessarily the best horseman, is the most successful. From being a one-man band he now has a loyal and supportive staff of thirty, including a television production team, and after selling more than three hundred thousand copies of his books, DVDs and videos, all those American trainers who cursed him for asking so many questions now beat a path to his door so he can produce training videos for them. Commenting on Clinton’s success, Gordon McKinlay said, ‘I am very, very proud of him. He’s just one in a million.’

A one-in-a-million boy from Oz with ten million reasons to smile.

MaryAnne Leighton

PHOTOGRAPHER / WRITER

Phone: (07) 5573 3974 or Email: ma-leighton@austronet.com.au