

# FOUNDER

**Founder**....That one word in the Equine World is enough to cause panic, and yesteryear it should have. Thankfully it's 2009, not 1909. Humans have mastered controlled flight, we've walked on the moon, and we can "chat" instantly with people on the other side of the world. After all, it's 2009! Oh, and we can usually reverse founder! But not with 1909 ideas or methods. We have to use 2009 techniques and protocols.

Why then are farriers and vets stuck in 1909? Is it a conspiracy by Horses and their owners to keep these professionals in the pre-INFORMATION age? (I doubt that's why) Could it be farriers and vets are unteachable to new INFORMATION? (Maybe some are, but I doubt this is the reason) Could it be the NEW INFORMATION about Horses and their actual needs contradicts much of what was once "common knowledge"? As I see things...BINGO.

Now, I know that things I have learned over my 42 trips around the sun are a "fact". So how am I going to respond in years to come when some wet behind the ears hot shot PROVES my 42 years wrong? I hope with grace, and would like to believe I will continue to live outside the box enough to accept new information and not become what I currently loath. I also know I'm not the sharpest hoof knife in the shoeing box, so I am willing to learn new things today, IF they make sense and **my** Horse would suffer no ill-effect from what I've learned.

Enter Keith Seeley, CJF II. When I started my apprenticeship with Mr. Seeley several years ago I had a lot to overcome because of what "I KNEW" about Horses. I mean, my dad and uncle and their father taught me all about Horses. I worked off the back of Horses for 15 years in Wyoming. I just knew things about Horses! Like the fact they HAVE to be shod if you're gonna be riding them. I also knew that if a Horse foundered there was little chance that Horse would survive and if it did, it would only be a pasture pet. (See, at one time I, too, was stuck in the past and in the Shoe Box)

I thank the Good Lord every day he wired Keith's brain outside that box, as do many, many owners of recovered foundered Horses. The getting out of the box is the first step one has to make to understand WHAT and WHY a Horse can usually be "cured" of founder.

If you are willing to step outside that shoe box keep reading. If not, read on -- something might "click" anyway!



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Let's start with this: *What is Founder?* First, let me say, it is NOT a death sentence anymore. What founder is, is the "downward rotation of the coffin bone". That's it! That is all founder is. Simple, right? WRONG!

A Horse -- and this means the entire Equine system -- must suffer the effects of acute laminitis before founder can occur. Does this mean all acute laminitic Horses founder? No, but it seems most do. What is laminitis? This, too, has a simple definition with a complicated recovery program.

The definition? As defined by [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) *inflammation of sensitive laminae in the hoof of a horse, caused by stressful events, as trauma, infection, or parturition.*

That is just the definition. The effects are far more complicated. The effects range from mild discomfort to full blown can't-stand-up lameness. Once a Horse has foundered it affects the entire Horse -- not just the feet. This is why just putting on Heart-bar Shoes does little to nothing to fix the founder. Cutting tendons, or nerving, does nothing to address the Foundered Equine System.

There can be several signs a Horse is in distress that would lead a person to suspect founder has occurred: lameness, founder rings, sweating, rapid loss of weight, abscesses, "grumpy" behavior, and maybe all of the above at once.

Are these the only signs? NO, but it seems these are the more common signs rotation has occurred. So how do we as Horse lovers determine rotation has, in fact, occurred? We have to be able to see the inside of the hoof, usually radiographs (X-rays) are sufficient. However, the radiographs should be taken in a manner that actually show the actual alignment of the internal structures.

Most farriers and vets will take one foot and place it on a pad 4 to 6 inches above the ground. This is to allow for targeting of the X-ray machine. (1909 style) While elevating the subject foot is necessary; the opposing foot needs to be elevated to the same level. By following this procedure one can see the TRUE alignment of the internal structures with "normal" weigh bearing effects. (2009 style)

Once the radiographs have been taken the information needs to be read correctly, as well. When I attended a Horseshoeing school I was taught "how to read" X-rays for founder. (1909 style) Like other farriers and vets I was taught to look at the angle of the coffin bone (p3) in relation to the external hoof wall, (to



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help identify the hoof wall, a shoeing nail is taped to the top of the hoof). We (farriers and vets) are then told if these two angles do not match Founder has indeed occurred. Even then this just did not make any sense. If looking at the hoof wall angle verses the angle of P3 tells of rotation then to fix this issue all one need do is remove hoof wall. Does that make ANY kind of sense to you? Welcome to 2009!

Keith Seeley\* along with Tommy Lee Osha and Dr. Robert Bowker started taking a new approach to reading this information. (actually they started this back as a team in 2001) They came up with the idea of looking at the alignment of all of the bones in the lower leg (long pastern, short pastern, coffin bone and navicular bone). They determined this alignment -- or rather misalignment -- of these bones actually show the severity of rotation AND give the blueprint of how much correction is needed in the trim to address the reversal of founder.

It should be noted that "just the trim" is NOT all that is needed to help reverse founder, the trim is just the beginning!\*<http://www.keithseeley.com/TrimAffect.htm>

The entire Horse and its environment must be considered in the treatment protocol. I could go on and explain the entire process of the protocols involved, but there is no single answer. Each case -- heck, each FOOT must be considered a different case. This, I believe, is why so many farriers and vets are unwilling to invest the time to study hundreds of cases so they can begin to understand WHY and HOW the protocols must be adapted to each FOOT. Once "you" step outside the "shoe box" you begin to understand there is no such thing as a "one size fits all" or "do it this way" can apply to the Equine world, let alone the Equine hoof world.

If you have a Foundered Horse (you have my sympathy) and don't like the idea of putting down (I call it killing) your Horse, I offer you a chance to save him or her and more than just hope for a full recovery. It's all up to you! I will do my part and will be pleased as punch to help you and your Horsey. There is provable hope, not just a pipe dream. All you need do is contact me!

I look forward to being put out of business when they find a vaccine for laminitis and from what I understand that day may come. But until they do, I'm here and ready to help your Horse. Thank you for reading this far. Now .....PICK UP THE PHONE! Your Horse is wanting to RUN! Again.

## **"IT'S ALL ABOUT THE HORSE"**



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