



CWLDG

CENTRAL WESTERN
DRESSAGE GROUP INC

Anke Hawke

Balanced Dressage Clinic

Clinic Dates: 18–19 April 2026



It's not about perfection. It's about building something that feels good for both of you.

About Anke

"I got pretty far in dressage, but at some point I realised that chasing scores and doing things "the proper way" was actually making my horse sore and stressed. It didn't sit right with me. He was trying his heart out, and I was following all the rules—and still, something wasn't working.

That's when I started looking into classical and academic training. It just made more sense. It's slower, more thoughtful, and it's all about helping the horse move in a way that keeps them sound and happy. It changed everything for me.

These days, I work with horses and their people to help them find that same kind of balance. I love watching the penny drop—when the horse relaxes and moves better, and the rider starts to feel confident and connected. That's what keeps me going."



You will need a groundwork / academic cavesson.

Not a lunging cavesson with a lunging rein attached, and not a cavesson that's part of the bridle either.

Different Styles

Good
& not so
good



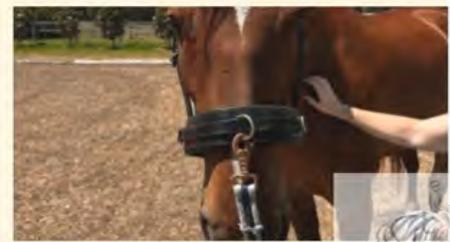
Lovely fit with lots of adjustment options



Very soft, ideal for a sensitive fine horse



Too heavy and bulky hinges and material don't work together.



too wide and heavy



"I use it primarily for in-hand work and academic groundwork, where I'm working close to the horse and giving very precise signals, rather than for lunging on a circle."



EQUIPMENT

A GOOD CAVESSON SHOULD

- sit comfortably around the bridge and sides of the nose
- allow you to guide the horse from the centre of the nose, like leading a little toy train
- encourage soft communication through body language, not pulling

♥ Why I love a good cavesson

For groundwork, lunging, academic work, and first steps in education, a well-fitted, well-made cavesson is one of the best pieces of equipment you can own.

It gives clarity without force and teaches the horse to follow a feel rather than brace against pressure.



Cavesson

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- A cavesson sits on the horse's nose, not in the horse's mouth like a bit.
- When you gently guide the nose, you can also change the direction of the horse's skull at the top of the neck.
- You want the ears to stay level – that means the horse is turning softly, not twisting or over-bending.
- If the ears tip or one ear drops low, the horse is bending too much or twisting the neck.
- A common mistake is pulling the head too far in toward the chest.
- When that happens, the horse can't turn correctly and will lean on the outside shoulder to keep its balance.



directley on the horses nose



away from the eye



The outer rings and the bosal ring can be used for bitless riding.



middle ring is used for groundwork long work



What to Expect

This clinic will be a little different from our usual format.

Anke's sessions are gentle but practical, tailored to the horse in front of her and the goals of the rider. Whether you are competing at Prep/Prelim or schooling higher movements, the focus is on building balance, clarity, and softness - for both horse and rider.

You may work on:

- Lightness and self-carriage
- Rider seat and balance
- Soft, correct groundwork
- Improving transitions, bend and straightness
- Understanding the why and biomechanics behind the aids

Equipment Requirements

- Your usual tack — snaffle bridle and saddle
- A cavesson if you have one (but no stress if not!)
- Dressage whip
- Comfortable, safe footwear
- A notebook if you like jotting things down
- An open mind and a sense of humour

If you're already doing groundwork or long rein work, feel free to bring that gear too.

You don't need to be fancy. You just need to be curious.

Why a good cavesson matters (especially for groundwork)

One thing Anke has learnt over and over again is that a well-fitted cavesson can make all the difference when you start groundwork or lunging.

A cavesson isn't just "another piece of tack" — it's a communication tool. When it fits properly, it gives you clear, direct influence over the horse's nose and poll without getting into the mouth or jaw.

That means:

- softer ask
- clearer direction of the skull (what the Germans call Stellung)
- better balance and posture from the start

"I really appreciate it when people come to my lessons prepared with a cavesson — it tells me you're thinking about groundwork in a functional way. But I also see a lot of cavessons that are either too big, too small, or too loose and sliding around. Fit matters. The cavesson should sit still, not wobble, and it should suit the shape and size of your horse's head."

A good cavesson:

- doesn't pinch
- doesn't twist into the eyes
- allows the horse to stay relaxed through the poll and jaw

- supports true bending and soft, correct direction of the skull — like when you look left or right to check your side mirror in the car

"And yes, quality cavessons are an investment. But if you're doing regular lunging, academic groundwork, or bitless riding, a well-made cavesson is worth every dollar."

The Art of Riding Store

<https://theartofridingstore.com/gb/3-cavessons>

Bent Branderup

<https://www.bentbranderupproducts.com/en/Bent-Branderup-Cavesson/SW10000.8>

RebalanceEquestrian

<https://www.etsy.com/au/listing/683641074/rebalance-soft-academic-cavesson>



How do I Enter?

An email will be sent to members in late February / early March with full booking details, including a registration form, costs and bank payment information.

Member entries will be processed first. Places will be limited.

If places remain available, the clinic will then be opened to non-CWDG riders, as long as they are an EA member (competitor or participant level).