



## BOOK REVIEWS

Title: Twisted Truths of Modern Dressage

Author: Philippe Karl

Publisher: Cadmos Books

Hardcover book, 9.5 in. x 11.25 in., 160 pages, illustrations in color.

Horse & Rider, September 2008 Issue.

This book offers an absolutely fascinating insight into training horses. In it, Philippe Karl explores the physical, anatomical and mental aspects of horses and the effects that different methods of training have on the way they move and behave. Clearly explained through the use of diagrams and photography, everyday problems faced by riders in the school are highlighted with exercises to help combat them. I particularly liked the use of "the rider feels the following..." with a list of what you might feel under saddle as this makes it really easy for the rider to identify problem areas.

Philippe Karl, a rider with the Cadre Noir for thirteen years and now a breeder and trainer, is highly critical of the world of dressage competition and of modern dressage training. He presents a Classical alternative to modern teaching methods, but if like me you are a dressage competitor, then don't be put off. There is so much to learn from this book and ultimately, his training methods are those of a classical master whose techniques center around a complete understanding of the horse. This understanding of horse anatomy and physiology helps the reader uncover the scope and limitations of a horse's locomotion and is essential knowledge for anyone who seriously wants to progress as a rider and trainer. The book earns a definite recommendation.

British Horse 2008

This book is a thorough, provoking publication by an author who is dissatisfied with modern dressage. It is a critical study, which starts with observations, then an analysis of modern practice, which leads to Philippe Karl's proposed alternative based on the philosophy of Lightness.

Nothing escapes scrutiny and criticism in this book, which is illustrated with the author's excellent drawings and photography - not even the "official" Scales of Training where serious shortfalls and notable inconsistencies are pointed out. I particularly liked the author's "revised" Scales of Training which includes "The School of Aids", "Mis en Main", "Balance and Cadence".

What is refreshing about the book is while being critical, the author gives clear, reasoned alternatives. Overall a very good read.