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## "Breakin' In The Wild Ones"

A log of my efforts to start a couple of BLM adoptees on the road to willing communication and partnership...

This summer I took on the job of gentling a pair of BLM horses, one of them from my former state of Oregon. In times gone by (maybe in another life I've lived) the horses in this log would probably been "saddle broke" in a pretty rough manner. Here you will find a little bit of a different mindset, one that is based on the philosophy I have developed by trying to keep my ears open and my mouth shut when around some great horsemen and horsewomen. It is about using the nature of the horse to help him know and understand the world of humans. It starts on July 13th, 1998 (a Monday, thank goodness)...

**JULY 13, 1998 - The day is cool and cloudy and very muggy. The flies are thick on the faces of the horses and they are standing head to tail, swiping flies off each other's face. My approach doesn't elicit much response until I'm about 50 yards away and then they are watching. I climb the fence and raise the five foot long fiberglass stock rod I'm carrying. The red bandana tied on the end catches their eyes and they set up, ready to move. A few light flips and they are off down the fence, heading to the corner where they have been tossed hay on the ground for a number of months. I approach**

**slowly with the flag out behind me along the ground and take up a spot that is close but leaves them plenty of room to stand easy. They do for a few minutes but my presence proves too much and the red horse moves off with the brown close behind. I make no effort to stop them leaving and as they head back down the fence line they just came up. I head out away and stop them in the opposite corner. A couple flips of the flag and they are back down to the "safe" corner. Same deal... soft approach with the flag down... a big bubble and they stand for awhile longer than last time. This time the brown leads off down the other**



**fenceline out into the pasture, so I follow with flag raised and flipping it as I go. They circle around and head back to the "safe" corner again. I close the bubble on this trip and they stay longer but it is still too much for them so they head to the trees and brush in the far corner. I follow and they**



run, two or three turns around the whole pasture, avoiding the safe corner for now but finding me everywhere they think may be an escape. No hurry, just no rest until they hit the "right" corner again. Before I quit for the day I've a hand on the brown and the red stays close. He walks off once or twice but is turned by the flag held parallel to the ground and returns to swipe flies. It's a good start...



To read much more about this effort, please [subscribe to the Sage Horsemanship](#) web content.

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If you have any question or comments about what you find on the site, feel free to contact me at [sagehorseman](#)

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