

I decided to spend my training grant on a lesson with John Bowen. I had been considering attending his clinic for some time, and winning the grant prompted me to ring Suzie Dawe, who very kindly got me slotted in at very short notice,

I loaded Webster (Ragtime Aristocrat) into the lorry and we set forth to Saxelby, where we were warmly welcomed by Marian Ansty.

The lesson focussed on how Webster carried me and how I could make that as easy as possible for him. We started with the scales of training (of which I managed to remember 2) John asked me how I thought my balance was and I thought it was ok as I was not falling off, but I suspect he thought otherwise, however, I did have good elbows (hooray)!

We did lots of walk trot transitions with me thinking about my position and contact, this was extremely difficult as my right leg appeared not to belong to me and did nothing I was telling it to do! When we moved on to the canter – what a surprise – after years of thinking I sit when going into canter I discovered I am actually rising! How did I manage that? With much effort on my part (I needed a wrench) I finally managed to turn things around. My stomach and shoulders were also under John's spotlight with the former needing to be more forward and the latter back. Poor Webster, he is very long suffering and must now be sighing with relief after all these years and thinking "at last she is sitting on me properly".

By the end of the lesson my right leg was agony. However, the lesson proved very fruitful and worthwhile and my better position has already been noticed.

Webster is continuing to make progress despite the rider.