



WYE VALLEY RIDING CLUB

Established 1974. BHS Affiliated

Website: www.wyevalleyrc.co.uk

Volume 7 Issue 2

COMMITTEE FOR 2016/2017

Spring 2017

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Hi everyone, what a lovely few days we've had, maybe spring has actually sprung. The countryside is looking green and the daffodils and primroses in the hedgerows and verges are spectacular, I even saw some celandines at Black Rock this afternoon, I haven't seen them for years, one of my favourite wild flowers when I was a child.

Exciting News

We have been looking into having Wye Valley Riding Club jackets and have been talking to the company who provide them for Southerndown Riding Club, they would be showerproof blouson type jackets in Bottle Green with our logo embroidered in gold on the front and Wye Valley Riding Club embroidered in gold on the back. The price would be £23.00 + VAT giving a total price of £27.60, which we think is very reasonable and they are of good quality. The sizes are:

Small - 36 inches Chest

Medium - 39 inches

Large - 43 inches

X Large - 47 inches

XX Large - 51 inches

If you are interested Pam Davidson will be dealing with the initial order, so let her have a completed order form which is at the back of this newsletter together with a cheque or note of BACS payment to her at The Garstons, Rosemary Lane, Stroat, Chepstow, NP16 7LX

We were thinking of organising either a BEACH RIDE or a FUN RIDE in the summer and wondered if anyone would be interested. It's something different especially the Beach Ride would make a good day out. If you are interested could you let myself, Pam Davidson or one of the committee know and if there is sufficient numbers then we could arrange something.

CLUB COMPETITIONS

Good Friday Dressage Show

On Friday 14 April the club is holding an open dressage show at Usk College, with Intro, Prelim, Novice, Elementary and Medium

classes. Please support our show, and bring your friends. Special rosettes awarded to the highest placed WVRC member and members will receive points towards the WVRC Dressage Trophy. Easter eggs for class winners. Points will also be awarded in the BRC Grassroots League. Details and an entry form are available on the www.wyevalleyrc.co.uk Entry £9 per class for members and £12 for non-members. Schedule is also attached to this newsletter .

We are also looking for helpers on the 14th, writers stewards and scorers if you are able to help the please contact Peter Buist on 07802 688939.

SHOW JUMPING AND DRESSAGE SHOWS AT HOWICK 2017

The dates below are for our 2017 shows at Howick Farm by kind permission of Colin Jenkins and Family, and will be evening events. They will be for members and NON members. They are great fun and run to suit all types of rider and horse be it inexperienced to the more experienced. Entry forms and costs will be sent out nearer the time.

Wednesday 24th May: Dressage

Wednesday 21st June: Show Jumping

Wednesday 5th July: Dressage

Super Saturday 16th September: Show Jumping All Day.

TRAINING

We have some great training organised for our members. All sessions will be groups of no more than 4 riders and are open to riders and horses of all abilities.

7th April 2017 at 2.00pm flatwork with Lizzel Winters at Severnvale Equestrian Centre
£22.50 Book with Lindsey

23rd April 2017 at 10.00am flatwork with Carole Broad at Usk College Members £20.00
Non - Members £25.00. Book with Laura

12th May 2017 at 2.00pm flatwork with Lizzel Winters at Severnvale Equestrian Centre
£22.50 Book with Lindsey

13th May 2017 at 10.00am jumping with Katie Williams at Greenacres Farm (contact Laura for directions) £20.00 for members and £25.00 for Non - Members. Book with Laura

11th June 2017 at 10.00am flatwork with Carole Broad at Usk College Members £20.00
Non - Members £25.00. Book with Laura

9th July 2017 at 10.00am jumping with Katie Williams at Greenacres Farm (contact Laura for directions) £20.00 for members and £25.00 for Non - Members. Book with Laura

Contact Laura Jones-Griffiths on ljonesgriffiths@gmail.com, 07557 646191 or 01633 400072

Contact Lindsey Gaunt on Lindsey.gaunt@googlemail.com or 01291 680065

Have enclosed a flyer for Laura's training so you can pin it on your noticeboard.

BRC Grassroots Training

27 May, Showjumping training with Jon Rogers (UKCC level 3, accredited professional coach) at Leyland Court EC. £25. For further details and booking information see the training section of the [BRC website](#).

Combined Training Area Qualifier

To be held on 22 April at Leyland Court EC and organised by Riders 2000. If you are interested in being a team member, please contact Julian Holmes on Julian.holmes4@virgin.net, or 07873 34685

MONTHLY MEETINGS

5th April

Help! Do I need a vet?

Emma from the Abbey Veterinary Centre will be giving practical equine first aid information. We hope to see you at the Anchor Inn, Tintern at 8pm on Wednesday 5th April. Non-members are welcome to come for a £5 fee.

3rd May

Your committee is still working on a great meeting for May, and details will follow shortly.

MONTHLY MEETING REPORTS

Report on talk by Rod Fisher, February 8th (Reporter Julian Holmes)

We were delighted to welcome Rod Fisher, the official team vet for the GB Para-Olympic Equestrian Team who gave a very fascinating talk on the 2016 Para-Olympics in Rio from a vet's perspective.

Rod explained that the preparation for the forthcoming Olympic games begins only a few short weeks after the previous Olympic games complete; Rod also gave an overview of the mechanics of the team selection which takes place at different venues in March, April and July.

The level of score that can be achieved in the dressage competition is linked to the extent of the riders' physical disabilities and the grading of the disability ranges from 1a being the most disabled, to level 4 which is the least disabled.

Rod gave details about the individuals within the dressage team of Sophie Christiansen, Ann Durham, Lee Pearson, Natasha Baker, Sophie Wells and also the reserves who were Natasha Dickinson and Erin Orford.

Rod confirmed that the expectations on the GB team are high because the team has always

won a team gold since 1996; however since London 2012, the opposition has become stronger. GB still has the strongest team but the gap between GB and the other countries has narrowed.

In terms of the travel arrangements the final preparations involved routine blood tests, checking of the vaccination status and there was a long list of 1,200 possible drugs that were allowable and Rod commented that it was necessary to separate the list out into the simple category of "can I use this?"

There were also dietary changes to contend with such as only being able to use Hay transported from Kentucky.

Rod explained about the approach and close monitoring of the horses and the range of exotic diseases that it is possible to contract and that while the testing of samples finishes 14 days before leaving for Rio, the team found itself in the position of needing to chase results right up the day before they were due to leave! There were also practical issues in that the team farrier had to travel to do the shoeing in a 1 day round trip and the team also had a lame horse right up the last minute.

The team travelled together because this helps the team bonding; it also means that the documentation is all kept together and very importantly, a professional driver was employed which made a huge difference. Rod explained how travelling herring bone for long periods of time would result in lameness in the horses due to the way that they have to brace themselves, so the team horse transporter travelled them forward facing.

The aeroplane carried 34 horses and all the equipment and they were transported from the stables 3 at a time in what is known as a jet stall which is very similar to a partitioned trailer; the jet stall was then loaded into the hull of the plane by the use of a large scissor jack before being locked into place.

The heart rate is the best measure of how worried the horse gets but Rod also spoke about how other measures such as temperature, humidity, pressure, oxygen, carbon dioxide, ammonia, dust (from the hay), sound and vibrations all played a significant part in the monitoring. The flight took 11 hours and upon landing, the horses were loaded onto a lorry where they had to stay for 2 hours while the officials looked through the equipment and the drugs – Rod commented how his black wound powder was viewed with great suspicion!

Rod said the stables were very good, the horses had their temperature and heart monitored twice a day and how weight and hydration was most important.

Rod was able to confirm that the team had the best coffee machine in the vicinity and was in great demand by other people on the site! In terms of other facilities, Rob observed wryly, that the toilets were positioned with a steep grass slope down to them which was ironic given that a large proportion of the users would be disabled!

The horses were assessed daily for lameness and stiffness and each had an individual physio-plan. Any shoeing issues were dealt with by the team farrier who had his own bodyguard!

All the horses were walked in hand and there was a sand road from the stable which all the horses thought was great for rolling in!

Much time was spent on acclimatisation and preparation and there were six areas to use for working the horses. The team had its own saddler which was found to be very necessary as there was the constant requirement to make adjustments due to the weight changes experienced by the horses.

Rod needed to manage vet related problems as they arose and he commented that the veterinary clinic was extremely well equipped and fit for purpose.

During the competition there was the requirement to provide ongoing medication, observe during the warm up and be immediately available to provide any emergency treatment. After competing, the horses were helped to cool down by the use of fans, ice and water.

During the competition itself, Sophie Wells who was the last to go won the individual gold medal and this was in spite of large birds landing on the centre line during the test! The medals themselves also have the details written in braille and they also rattle differently depending on their type!

There was a great deal of press adulation and in total, the team won six golds, four silvers and won team gold which was a better result than London 2012 and far better than everyone had hoped for.

Rod explained that on the return journey all the drugs and empty containers had to be checked again. The journeys before and after the flight were undertaken at night time because it was cooler and there was also less traffic; when the team got back to Europe, they spent the evening in *Liège* and set off for *Dartford* in the early morning and it was at this stage that the team split up for the remainder of the journey home. At this point the only remaining task was for debriefs to be conducted with the various official governing bodies.

We would like to thank Rod for his fascinating and informative insight into the crucial work that the equestrian team vet needs to do at an international competition and we look forward to welcoming him back at some point in the future.

8th March Meeting (Reporter Laura Jones-Griffiths)

Once again The Anchor pub in Tintern provided the venue for our monthly meeting. This time the title of the meeting was **“The Equine Core”** and was presented by Hannah Sheehan.

Hannah qualified from the European School of Osteopathy in 1998 and has been working in the veterinary field ever since. Hannah then completed a post graduate course in animal osteopathy from the Osteopathic Centre for Animals in 1999. Since then Hannah has been working closely with veterinary surgeons treating both large and small animals for various conditions and problems.

As Hannah introduced the subject she explained her interest in good biomechanics and a balanced horse and emphasised that producing a horse was very much a team effort dependent upon farrier, physical therapist, instructor and rider input as well as well-fitting tack.

The talk moved on to explain what the horses core actually is and why it is important to strengthen it before we can expect our horses to be able to perform for us. There were lots of diagrams and images to illustrate the points she made and helped us to understand anatomically what she was talking about!

For me the main points from this session which provided food for thought were:

Carrot stretches really are worthwhile and for those who get bitten then target training can be used just as effectively.

The benefits of thorough grooming (think of it as a good massage) not just for mud

removal but to help increase circulation and muscle coordination of both the horse and rider.

The benefits of working on different surfaces. Varying the surface on which we work our horses benefits muscle, tendon and ligament strength and improves our horse's coordination and proprioception.

This was an interesting and educational session from which I'm sure all who attended will be able to apply something to their own horse.

Report on Team Dressage, Kings Equestrian Centre, Bromyard, 29th January 2017 (Reporter Julian Holmes)

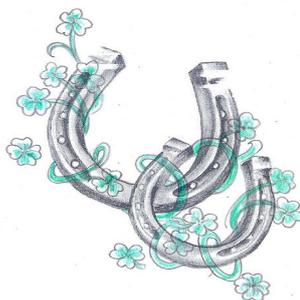
The WVRC was delighted to be able to field a dressage team for the Intermediate Winter Dressage Qualifier which was hosted by the Golden Valley Riding Club at the Kings Equestrian Centre in Bromyard on 29th January. The team consisted of: Lindsey Gaunt, Elementary 49 riding Treason Cassidy; Laura Jones-Griffiths, Novice 34 riding Kilbeg Banner; Julian Holmes, Novice 30 riding Tewdric; Claire Corney, Preliminary 7 riding Dunmore Dan. January is always a particularly difficult time of the year for horse owners and competitors due to the lack of daylight and inclement weather and at one stage the team members were considering whether or not to proceed due to only having three people in the team however, after a few enquiries, a fourth team member was secured which was Claire Corney much to the delight of the rest of the team.

Dressage area qualifiers present an unusual set of circumstances in that all the team members compete at vastly different times of the day and it is quite normal for members to arrive, complete their test and then leave to go home without actually seeing other members of the team. Everyone however was very sympathetic to this and it did not detract from the team spirit in any way.

It was one of those days which involved most types of weather beginning with frost, then light rain during the morning progressing to heavier rain by the afternoon and those with the higher level tests drew the short straw not least because they also had to contend with the fog on the way home!

Overall the team produced a respectable 8th position out of 14 and there was plenty of potential to improve upon the scores for future qualifiers so all team members felt positive about prospects of success at a later stage and will be looking forward to the next challenge.

Best wishes to our team of Laura Jones-Griffiths, Debbie Watson Julian Holmes and Bronwen Daniels who are going to Keysoe to compete in the BRC Winter Novice Show Jumping Championship this Saturday 1st April. GOOD LUCK, WE WILL BE THINKING OF YOU.



ORDER FORM FOR WYE VALLEY RIDING CLUB JACKET

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Phone No.....

E.mail.....

Size:

Small: 36in.....

Medium: 39in.....

Large: 43in.....

X Large: 47in.....

XX Large: 51in.....

Cost: £27.60 inc VAT

Please send order form together with cheque for the cost made out to WVRC to:

Pam Davidson, The Garstons Rosemary Lane Stroat Chepstow NP16 7LX

OR

Send payment by BACS to Wye Valley Riding Club Account No 43520782

Sort Code 522126 putting your name and Jacket as reference., then send your order form to Pam noting you have sent a BACS payment.