



# WYE VALLEY RIDING CLUB

*Established 1974. BHS Affiliated*

**Website: [www.wyevalleyrc.co.uk](http://www.wyevalleyrc.co.uk)**

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**COMMITTEE FOR 2018/2019**

Summer 2019

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Hi all, here I am late again but I have to admit it has been a hectic couple of weeks what with racing and Chepstow Horse Trials.

What a gorgeous week we have had, the sunshine and heat, it's summer at last, I hope it continues for a while.

Well better get on as members have been great with the number of articles I have received. Thank you all for your input it's much appreciated.

## **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

### **Club meeting, Wednesday 10 July 2019**

**Does my horse look fat in this?** Condition scoring is essential to maintain our horses at their optimum weight. A representative from Top-Spec will talk about condition scoring and feeding and will use 5 horses and a pony as examples. It will be held at the yard of Janet and Tim Peters. This is a members only meeting and there will be cake and refreshments (so no condition scoring for us!). Tim and Janet's address is Ty Cefn, Five Lanes, Caerwent, Caldicot, NP26 5PQ. SatNav will bring you most of the way, just keep going for another 100 yards or so and you should see the house sign on the left. Otherwise, detailed directions are here: **From Chepstow:** Take the A48 to Caerwent, Caldicot and Penhow. After a couple of miles you come to the "Parkwall" roundabout. Keep on the A48 towards Caerwent. After the last (third) sign to Caerwent you will see signs off the A48 to the right to Trewen and the road opens up on either side. Keep going along the A48 for about another half mile, where as the road narrows you'll see a sign to the left for Five Lanes. Turn left off the A48 here, into the lane just after four new houses, the phone box and bus stop. Then see below. **From Usk/Newport:** from the Coldra roundabout take the A48, signposted to Langstone. Continue along the A48 for just over 4 miles, through Langstone to Penhow. About a mile or so after this (just past the Waste Recycling Centre) the road goes downhill and opens out. You'll see dog-legged lanes off the A48 in both directions, and you should turn right to Five Lanes (signed). **From all directions:** In Five Lanes: about 15 yards after leaving the A48, follow the lane as it bends to the left, avoiding a turning to the right to Carrow Hill. After about another 50 yards the lane bends right (postbox on left) and then immediately after this you should turn left up a lane signposted to Shirefields. This is where it's easy to miss the turning because it looks like you're entering a driveway between a house and its garden! As a double check, you should avoid going straight on in the direction of Highmoor Hill. Once you've found the correct lane keep going up it for half a mile (some sharp bends) – it is the last house on the left before the open farmland. House name – Ty Cefn – is on wooden post on corner of drive. **Parking** will be signposted, and is likely to be in the next field through a gateway past the main entrance.

Mobiles: Tim – 07792 696219 01291 424977 Janet – 07717 507551

## Monthly Meetings Cont:-

There will be NO August Meeting

### 4th September

This will be a talk by Chris Adams from AdFitness The title will be "Getting Back On The Horse: Thinking Differently About Recovery From Injury". The venue will be the Beaufort Hotel in Chepstow and we will start at 8.00pm, those who wish to eat beforehand should arrive at approx 7.00pm.

### 9th October

We are in the process of arranging another visit from Russell Guire along the same format as last year only this time it will be a talk/demo on Gait Analysis with instruction on the 10th. We will let you have more details shortly.

### 6th November

This will be our Annual General Meeting which will be held at the Beaufort Hotel In Chepstow and will start promptly at 8.00pm. Further details in the next newsletter.

## MONTHLY MEETING REPORTS

### Monthly Meetings

#### How to get a Horse Fit on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019

*Speaker Nick Gauntlett*



Wye Valley Riding Club were delighted to welcome Nick to talk about how to get a horse fit for competition. Nick is a BE Master Coach and a Fellow of the BHS. As well as eventing himself up to BE 4\*, he trains riders at all levels from riding club upwards and has done training sessions for our club and others in Area 15. Nick gave an enjoyable and wide-ranging talk about how to get a horse fit including information and anecdotes about his experiences. This was followed by an interesting question and answer session where members could ask about issues relevant to themselves and their own horse. The account below is a short summary based on the notes I took on the night so may not reflect Nick's views completely accurately.

Nick spoke about fittening a horse to be ready for a major event like Badminton but also covered goals more relevant to riding club members – particularly in the question and answer session. He said that it is important to have a goal, this might be to qualify for and go to the Riding Club Event Championships or it might be to do dressage or show jumping at a particular level or just to have an all-round horse that will find

the work you do easy and comfortable. It is important to ensure that the correct muscles are strengthened, and this will be different for a dressage or show jumping horse.

Traditionally the event season finished in October and horses had a holiday until the New Year. The fittening plan would be 4 months. For whatever level we were working to it was important to have a clear plan. This will include a mixture of schooling, hacking, fast work, jumping and rest days. The actual programme will depend on the individual horse and its level of fitness at the time. If you are preparing for a major cross country event, prior competitions, dressage, SJ and XC, will be included in that plan.

Roadwork in walk and trot on the flat and up hills is still important for fittening. When the horse is fit enough, fast work can be introduced, and Nick uses a purpose-built gallop. One can vary the speed, distance, intensity and terrain depending on the horse's fitness and its type. It is important to have variety in all of these - they use other gallops at times in order to have steeper or flatter terrain. Nick's yard uses interval training with 3 x 3 minute sessions with 1 min recovery in between each 3 minutes. A horse fit enough for Badminton will do longer sessions. Some horses have to be taught to gallop and it can be helpful to work with another horse to do this.

They use a heart rate monitor to monitor progress. There is a maximum heart rate for each horse which should never be exceeded (220 minus the horse's age) and they aim for the work to increase the rate to more than 70% of this maximum to increase fitness. *(NB: The numbers are from my notes so please treat with caution!). If a heart rate monitor can be borrowed or hired, it will help to get an idea of your horse's level of fitness.*

It is possible to get a horse fit without a purpose-built gallop by marking distances around a field and use a stopwatch to calculate speed at different paces.

Stamina is also important; a horse should be able to do a medium canter for twice the length of a typical XC course. Jumping efforts and changes of pace tire a horse more than just cantering. Nick suggested that it is useful to think of jumping an imaginary course in order to learn to judge speed. If the weather is bad, this can also be done cantering around a school.

Nick also explained that rider fitness is also very important and a good rider (who isn't themselves exhausted!) can help a tired horse complete a course. Many riders do other fittening work such as rowing, gym work etc as well as strengthening exercises such as Pilates.

Nick's enthusiasm for the sport and depth of knowledge was obvious. I took away his advice that each horse needed to be treated as an individual and needed a tailored fittening plan, schooling programme and feeding regime in order to bring out their full potential.

***(Reporter: Liz Pitcher)***

**Charity Fundraising  
Evening for Midlands  
Air Ambulance  
Wednesday 3rd April  
Speaker Mary Seldon**



Mary Seldon from the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity, MAAC, gave a fascinating insight into the operation of the air ambulance in general and their work to help us equestrians, when we might need them most. Jan. one of the charity volunteers, also gave us some guidance on what we should do as riders to keep ourselves safe.

Sarah Orchard organised a raffle and had done a marvellous job in contacting local businesses, equestrian

and otherwise, who had generously donated some fantastic prizes. £375 was raised for the Air Ambulance which is entirely funded by charitable donations and needs to raise about £9 million every year. It costs £25,000 each time a helicopter goes on a mission and although £375 seems very little in



comparison to that, every pound counts!

Midlands Air Ambulance Charity operates and funds three air ambulances and other rapid response vehicles covering six Midlands counties including the three closest to us; Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and Worcestershire. They operate from 3 airbases including Strensham in Worcestershire and undertake about 2,000 missions every year. The helicopters are very small, and each carries a crew comprising a pilot, two paramedics or a paramedic and flight doctor, plus full life-support medical equipment. A recent new helicopter cost £6.5 million when fully equipped! The charity also funds the cost of all the crew including training their own paramedics. The doctors have the relevant specialist expertise such as A&E medicine or anaesthetics.

The main aim is to get a specialist rapid response team to the scene of the incident to assess and stabilise the patient and then to transport the patient to the nearest hospital with the appropriate clinical specialism. An air ambulance can reach 90% of the region within 8 minutes. Callouts include road traffic accidents, cardiac arrests, farming accidents and sports injuries (which include horse riding). These can occur in remote areas where it is difficult to get a normal ambulance at the scene quickly, if at all.

Sarah told us that in 2018 there were 54 callouts from the Strensham base for horse riding incidents. A helicopter responded to about half of these and one of the rapid response cars the others. In one case, unfortunately, the patient died at the scene.

One of the volunteers, Jan, a veterinary nurse by profession, talked to us about how we can ride safely - covering topics such as wearing hats and Hi-Viz clothing and always carrying a phone. She advised us that ideally, one should not ride on one's own but if you do, make sure someone knows where you are going and how long you expect to be. She also talked about the importance of reporting incidents to the BHS. These might include unsafe driving, uncontrolled dogs etc. A helmet camera could be useful in recording what happened.

One of the prizes was a visit to the MAAC base in Strensham which I was lucky enough to win. I am looking forward to doing this during the summer so I will be able to report back in more detail later this year.

**(Reporter: Liz Pitcher)**

## **When does 3x 6 = 7?**

When it is the Wye Valley team result of the British Riding Clubs Intermediate Dressage qualifier! Three team members came 6<sup>th</sup> in their section in the team competition, and the team as a whole came 7<sup>th</sup> out of 17 teams entered. One of the Vale of Arrow teams won overall.

The event was held at Coleg Gwent, Usk Campus, on 23 March 2019.

For this competition one competitor rides a Prelim test, two do Novice tests, and one does Elementary. Our team consisted of Laura Jones-Griffiths with Luna III, Lindsey Gaunt with Dimucci, Janet Peters with Landsome T, and Jackie Budd with Wingman. Ann Wilson competed as an individual. It was a lovely sunny day with a great atmosphere.

The organisers used the outdoor arena as well as the indoor, and the scorers were super-efficient, which meant that everything was finished by 3.30pm. Thanks are due to Vale of Usk Riding Club for hosting, and especially for fitting so many lorries and trailers into the car park, which was quite a feat.



Janet Peters

WVRC Team Coordinator

## **BRC National Champs Senior 90 Challenge**

My horsey goal for 2019 was to qualify for a championship. Without knowing that I had already done it!

I gained the qualification at Sapey in October but wasn't aware till early in the New Year.

I was well chuffed and then the training and prep competitions began leading up to the date in May for the Championships at Aston Le Walls.

I must admit I was most apprehensive about the journey there. It's the furthest that I've travelled with Troy and there sure is some muppets on the road to make my travels interesting! But after a close call and a que of traffic we made it with time to spare.

The place was huge! And first job was finding the declaration tent, if anyone has a chance of going then leave time to find this tent!

The most nerve wracking part is walking the course. Working out the twists and turns. And NEVER have I come across a bounce jump in a showjumping course, it was the most bizarre thing I've seen and the alternative route wasn't much better! Watching the first few competitors (luckily I was a later time) didn't feel me with confidence. The bounce jump was causing problems and the judging was hard with eliminations coming easily. It would be

gutting to go all that way and only jump a couple of jumps and get eliminated.

Walking the cross country course I swear is just a test of the riders fitness before you've even got on the horse. Northampton is very flat compared to home which stands us in good stead. But there was a lot of technical questions I hadn't come across before such as a large step up onto a bank over a house and then drop off the bank.

So now I think I know what i'm doing I better get my horse ready!

Troy seemed well up for the challenge, jig jogging all the way along the walkways to the warm up arena (we managed to park as far away as possible it seems) To warm up we had to negotiate brakes and what we were going to do. He was feeling well and carrying me forward, maybe too much so at times.

Were called up to the start line for the showjumping. The butterflies are kicking in and a quick recap of the course. Time to focus. Starting bell goes and we come round to the first jump. He locks on and I know he knows what his job is. 1 to four goes well. Negotiate the double tidy. Spread, skinny and another spread. All good. Time for the dreaded bounce. Let Mr Troy do his thing. (Thank god for gridwork training at home!) Then last fence number 10 and straight onto the cross country. At this point I wasn't aware that I had gone clear round the Showjumping.

Nice basic fences to ease us in the first few fences. First question was a drop and then a step followed by skinny. He made it look easy and I knew he was listening. A chance to lengthen over the next few fences and then another drop and skinny. Round to roll tops, double house and table top. Then the bank with house, the one I was dreading. But I didn't need to worry bit of encouragement and clear. Next the water. Always can be interesting. Log then water but we mustn't go too deep as one wouldn't want to get their toes too wet! Then wakey wakey a corner jump out the water ! Last two for the home stretch and home over the finish line! I was beaming and Troy got a big pat. In fact he was still jig jogging I think he wanted to go again!

A Double clear and only 8.4 time faults on the XC (we haven't got the longest of legs!) placing us 34th out of 110. Although a ribbon would of been nice I was well chuffed with our performance.

In all a very good day and well worth the journey. Though must admit Troy had some well deserved carrots in his dinner and I think i've earned myself a gin! :)



*(Reporter: Kat Burton)*



## Rain did not stop play

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> of June was the area 15 horse trials qualifier at Sapey Cross Country. Wye Valley sent 6 riders, 2 individuals in the 80 and a team of 4 in the 90.

Having been informed the day before by the BBC that there was to be no rain in Bromyard I was unprepared in the clothing department for the pouring rain! This also made the ground super slippery which made the twisting SJ course quite testing. The cross country course took a new route around the familiar jumps which rode well but threw up a few new challenges.

In the 80 Tim Peters and Sprite did a fantastic job to finish 4<sup>th</sup> despite an unexpected dismount in the SJ warm up! Better to do it somewhere it doesn't count I say! Emily Nicholson and Tantilly-lace had a great start with a fab dressage score but luck was not on their side later in the XC.

Emily and her lovely spotted horse in the dressage, with a sub 30 score.



Tim in the water – Sprite's favourite

Photo courtesy of Top Shots Photography

The 90 team consisted of Debbie Watson, Julian Holmes, Kat Burton and me. As a team we came 4<sup>th</sup> which was fantastic considering this was Debbie's first run at 90cm and Kat's normally super reliable horse Troy was off colour. Julian put in a solid performance with only one down in the SJ. Luna and I would have finished on our dressage score had I not gone a little too fast XC....oops! We finished 7<sup>th</sup> individually and I now know that I can ease off the gas a little!

So although it was a day of mixed fortunes the club certainly didn't let the side down. Thanks also has to go to Janet for organising the motley crew and also the volunteers who travelled up for the day to help so that we could compete. These included: Pam Davidson (Area Steward and Organiser in Chief); Peter and Elaine Buist, Ann Wilson, Liz Pitcher, Sarah Orchard and Rebecca Green.

Next stop is the show jumping qualifier at Pencoed on the 16<sup>th</sup> June – can't wait!

**(Reporter: Laura Jones-Griffiths)**

## BHS Challenge Awards

Gaye Nicholas (who gave the talk on goal setting at our February club meeting) is one of our local **BHS Challenge Award Trainers**, and she has briefly outlined these new awards below. For further information, contact her on [Gaye.Nicholas@gmail.com](mailto:Gaye.Nicholas@gmail.com) or look them up on the BHS website <https://pathways.bhs.org.uk/challenge-awards/>

Gaye says:

I thought I would briefly introduce these awards and see if anyone thinks this is what they would like to follow up on.

They have been introduced by the BHS for the Recreational rider to help them improve both riding skills and horse care and for those people who have been goal setting for the season ahead, they might be a way of measuring improvement.

There are intro packs for both riding and horse care. This is followed by Bronze, Silver, Gold and the new set - Platinum - again in both riding and horse care.

You don't have to start at the bottom and work up - you can pitch it at the level you feel you are at - ie you might start at Bronze riding and Silver horses care.

You don't have to do both. You can just work on horse care or you can just do riding. They don't involve tests, exams, tension, stress. They are just a fun way of learning in a relaxed informal atmosphere.

**Downside** - to do the challenges you have to be a BHS member -either gold or silver. If you are a RC member they will give you 30% discount on BHS membership and £5 off the work pack to do the challenges.

It all sounds a bit complicated but if you think you would like to know more, get in touch or go on to the BHS website and take a look at the booklets :))

Janet Peters  
April 2019

## Summer show jumping area qualifier, Pencoed College, 16 June 2019

The summer area show jumping qualifier organised by Riders 2000 took place at Pencoed College in one of their fields. The weather was less than summer like but at least the suggested thunderstorms failed to materialize. Our 80cm team comprised Julian Holmes with Troy, Laura Jones-Griffiths with Luna, Tim Peters with Sprite & Debbie Watson with Diamond. The team finished a credible third in tricky conditions on grass & have qualified for the regional championships at Hartpury in August. Diamond had her jumping boots on and helped by no pilot navigational errors this time finished 1st individually. [She was a real star, with a very nimble jump off round to be the fastest of the three! Ed.]

We look forward to our August outing! This will be to the Regional Riding Club championships for Wales and the South West, at Hartpury on 17 August. 1st individually. [She was a real star, with a very nimble jump off round to be the fastest of the three! Ed.]

We look forward to our August outing! This will be to the Regional Riding Club championships for Wales and the South West, at Hartpury on 17 August.

Debbie Watson  
June 2019



## Wye Valley Riding Club

### Dressage 22 May 2019

#### Results

##### INTRO B

Jane Smith Milo 61.52% 1st: Clare White Kingstralongford 61.30% 2nd: Emma Cassidy Joey 60.65% 3rd

Ann Wilson Rose Quartz 55.87% 4th

##### BD PRELIM 12

Jaci Crocombe Rocky 71.48% 1st: Natalie Parsons High Flyer 66.11% 2nd (Coll 67):

Ellen Morgan Firefly Of Runswick 66.11% 3rd (Coll 66): Chris Brooks Old Forge Boy 64.07% 4th

Julian Holmes Troy Flashman 62.78% 5th: Ann Wilson Rose Quartz 58.33% 6th

Sarah Canning Johnny Knoxville 57.96%

##### BD PRELIM 13

Emma Jane-Mathews Jubilee Harvest 72.88% 1st:: Jaci Crocombe Rocky 68.08% 2nd:

Laura Jones- Griffiths Luna 63.85% 3rd: Clare White Kingstralongford 63.08% 4th:

Chris Brooks Old Forge Boy 61.35% 5th:: Ellen Morgan Firefly Of Runswick 60.59% 6th

Sarah Canning Johnny Knoxville 60.00%: Julian Holmes Troy Flashman 59.61%: Ann Wilson Rose Quartz 46.15%

##### NOVICE 24

Lily Williams Mister Roseberry 74.23% 1st: Laura Jones-Griffiths Luna 70.58% 2nd

Emma Jane-Mathews Jubilee Harvest 68.46% 3rd: Janet Peters Fleur 65.19% 4th

### Show Jumping Results from 19th June 2019

**Class 1, 70cm** Beth Hogan The Mathieson 1st Highest WVRC Member:

Hannah Crocombe Bella 2nd Jaci Crocombe Rocky 3rd

**Class 2, 80cm** Laura Jones-Griffiths Luna 1st Highest WVRC Member:

Hannah Crocombe Bella 2nd: Lois Thornber Merlin 3rd: Beth Hogan The Mathieson 4th:

Annie Lewis Nibeley Forever 5th: Jaci Crocombe Rocky 6th

#### **Class 3, 90cm**

Annie Lewis Nibeley Forever 1st Highest WVRC Member: Carlyne Baldwin Merlin 2nd

Laura Jones-Griffiths Luna 3rd: Jaci Crocombe Rocky 4th: Hannah Crocombe Bella 5th