

# Horsham and District Riding Club



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## REPORT

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**Event:** BHS Riding Club National Winter Championships      **Date 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2010**

**Location:** Hartpury, Glos.

**Special Note:** Many thanks to our support crew for their help over the weekend, it was much appreciated !

We had two senior teams competing at these championships, novice dressage and novice showjumping teams who had already won the Area 13 qualifier to be there.

Hartpury is a fantastic venue. About a 3 hour drive away so we always travel up the day before and overnight the horses in the luxury stables. We also stayed on site in student accommodation. Hartpury has three indoor schools and at least three outdoor huge arenas. The organisation for the 48 teams and nearly 200 competitors, was great.

Having settled the horses in to their beds on the Friday evening, we set off for the local pub for supper and to discuss tactics for the next day. Then back to the college for a sneak preview of the show jumping course before retiring for the night.

Saturday is always an early start as both competitions started at 9am. Our first riders were first on in the dressage, which was held outside, and 6<sup>th</sup> in the running order for the show jumping, held indoors. Everyone plaited their horses then either warmed up or helped their fellow team mates. There was some serious competition and the day was certainly going to be a challenging one!

### Dressage Teams

In the dressage, two team members ride a prelim level test (they cannot have any BD points) and two ride a novice level test (allowed up to 124 BD points) . Anna Gorringer and her lovely chestnut thoroughbred "Eric" set the standard for the day with a flowing novice test. Eric can be lively and tense but he controlled his nerves well for a very respectable score of 64.8%. Liz Lane and the sometimes unpredictable "Lockie" settled really well in the busy arena and did a lovely consistent, rhythmical novice test for a great score of 68.4%, which was good enough for 6<sup>th</sup> place out of 42 riders.

Heather Reay and her coloured mare "Lady Boiro", were making their senior championship team debut. Despite some early lapses in her concentration, Lady then settled nicely into a rhythm and the test got better and better. We felt she was rather harshly scored at 57.81%, we were very pleased with her effort. Finally Pami Nixon on the handsome grey horse "Oliver" completed our quartet. He has definitely got the "look at me " factor and scored highly for his canter work and 8 for his paces, to finish on 65.8% and 8<sup>th</sup> place individually.

This meant the team had got a very commendable 7<sup>th</sup> place out of the 21 teams taking part.

### Show Jumping

The team were made up of four riders who jump 2'9" in the first round and then 3' in the second round. You can discard one score in each round. The course was really up to championship standards, with fences well up to height, scary fillers everywhere and flowers decorating all the wings !

Pami Nixon and "Oliver" were first to go and set us up with a great clear round. Then Liz Lane , who had come into the team for the unfortunate Vicky Allen whose horse was lame, made a brave attempt to get "Lockie" round. He is a very sensitive horse and just needed to have a look at two fences first before successfully jumping them at the second attempt! Hayley Dumbrell and "Eclipse " then kept the team's hopes alive with another good clear round.

And last to go was AJ Harwood Stamper on the 5 year old "Louis" who had been in bed all morning fast asleep. He had never seen anything like this before in his short life but gained in confidence as the round went on for 8 faults.

After lunch the course was raised and everyone jumped again. Pami completed a great day with another clear round on Oliver, securing our only double clear of the day. Liz and Lockie were now venturing into unknown territory at this height and having got as far as the fourth fence before he asked for another look at the course before jumping it, Liz wisely decided to call it a day. Hayley then jumped what was one of the best rounds of the day but was unlucky to tip the pole at the first fence for four faults. Finally AJ and Louis were now beginning to enjoy themselves and really flow round this large course but just got a bit too enthusiastic at the planks and upright, for eight faults. So the team were not in the ribbons but they had all jumped well given their inexperience at this level for most of them.

Everyone came home tired but delighted having had such an enjoyable weekend. The weather had been quite kind, the team spirit was brilliant and the horses had performed well, with the less experienced ones having definitely grown in confidence after their first "sleep over " at a championship !

Report by Max Gayler  
Chef D'Equipe