

Horsham & District Riding Club

National Riding Club Championships- Seniors

LOCATION:	Lincoln	DATE:	12 – 13 September 09
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Horsham made their annual journey to Lincoln for the National Riding Club championships for show jumping and dressage, having qualified teams for the senior novice dressage, intermediate, open and style jumping.

We arrived at Lincoln late on Friday night after a rather tortuous journey with heavy traffic and a broken exhaust causing several hours delay. Before you are allowed to put the horses in the overnight stabling all passports are checked to ensure vaccinations are up to date. Unfortunately one was 7days late, five years ago ! So Sonia Marfleet's horse was quarantined and not allowed to take any further part in the proceedings, so our intermediate team were down to three. Not the greatest of starts so the weekend could only get better!

The weather could not have been more of a contrast to last years, when we were up to our knees in mud and having to be towed into and out of the lorry park. This year we had beautiful sunsets and Saturday dawned to a cloudless blue sky and sunshine – yippee! The twelve dressage arenas and four showjumping rings looked a picture with manicured grass but the ground was quite hard this year.

Show Jumping

First to start our 2009 campaign were the style jumping team. Everyone jumps one round over a 2' 9" course. There are two judges who score you a bit like dressage. You have to demonstrate control (in a snaffle), balance, rhythm and line into fences and style over them. Jane Silcock and Forever Hopeful did very well and came 10th individually. Lucy Kenward and Jane's other horse Temple Oracle also did a good round. Ruth Burgess and her young five year old at his first national championships, Chestnut Friday did a very respectable round, and Anna Gorringe had a few problems with Farmers Choice who was very tense in the atmosphere. Not quite good enough for a team placing this year but a good competition to improve riding standards and get us all back into riding in snaffles !

Our Intermediate showjumping team jump two rounds. The first over a course at 3' which included an impressive treble of coloured rainbow fences – very spooky! Jane and Lucy both did good rounds with just one down each, but unfortunately Emma Perrin with the less experienced Spellbound had a few problems, particularly with fences coming away from the collecting ring and had three refusals. As we were down to a team of three anyway this put pay to our chances so we did not jump the second round given the hard ground.

For the first time for many years we had qualified an open show jumping team. They compete in the prestigious main ring and the fences were very imposing, standing at 1.10m and going up to 1.15 in the second round. They looked massive and had very wide spreads and so it was no surprise that clear rounds were few and far between. Our team of Ros Head and San Suave Prince (8 faults and retired), Lucy Kenward and Penny Taneborne's Pepsi (12 and 8 faults), Lizzie Gorringe and Bright Future (4 and 12 faults), and Sam Gates and Trojans Tern (4 and 12 faults) had been practicing hard since the qualifier and it paid off as they finished a well deserved 9th place.

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Dressage

The novice dressage team, who had been supporting the showjumpers in the morning, got underway in the after noon. Everyone rides prelim 14, and the best three scores count. Unfortunately we only had three riders anyway, due to various team withdrawals.

Ruth Burgess rode a nice test on her young horse, although he looked a little more tense than in the style jumping. Sam Gates completed a successful day to finish 9th individually, to add to her 9th in the open jumping and Tiffney Tasney did a lovely smooth test for individual 6th. The team weren't placed this year but it was a great effort given we were lacking a fourth rider.

The Gorrige sisters also qualified for the open dressage as individuals. Anna rode a tactful novice test on her boy , who was still too tense despite two hours of hacking since the style jumping! Younger sister Lizzie had a busy day. Having been in the open jumping team in the morning, she was also in the elementary individual competition where she did a very good test for 8th and also rode in the individual riding test but was not placed.

Well done to all ten riders and a huge thank you to all our support crew. It was a very enjoyable weekend with good competition and a great group of people under clear blue skies – what more could you want ! - See the pictures in the gallery section of the website!

We then passed over the baton to our juniors for the Sundays competition.....see separate report.

Report by Max Gayler, Chef D'Equipe.