



Offa's Dyke Group of Endurance GB

## Newsletter- April 2018

[www.egboffasdyke.co.uk](http://www.egboffasdyke.co.uk)



### Chairman's Comments

What a difference 3 months makes! Back in January my message in the newsletter was full of optimism for the season ahead, and everything we were planning to keep you all occupied and improving in the sport! Well it seems to have never stopped raining – or snowing – ever since! Sadly March Hares fell to "The Beast from The East", and both our Novice and Pony Club training day and the Bwlch Raid Ride last weekend fell to the heavy rain we have had during the winter and particularly in the fortnight leading up.... Bwlch Raid had to be cancelled due to the rain before last year's event causing damage to the mountain tracks, but Saturday's rain would have anyway caused cancellation...

However Nicola managed to beat the weather TWICE so the whole season so far hasn't been a complete washout! There was the February Schooling Lessons (which were admittedly indoors!), and the Maryland Ride! How that was missed by the snow i have no idea – but it was the first time i had done it for several years (not that the tracks are unfamiliar to me!) and i had a great ride on Peponi – after which she had a nice long weather-induced rest! It was lovely being out and meeting everyone, and Peponi was particularly grateful to have the company of Reggie (Hannah Maskell) on the first loop and Mrs Tiggywinkle (Sara Williams) on the second loop after Hannah bailed out!

We are currently working full speed ahead for the Bluebell National and Fun Rides – both on 29th April – the route is agreed, we have a Ride Organiser in Mary Stubbs (thank you so much Mary!!), we have the Forestry Commission "Permission", and we are fine-tuning Risk Assessment and ride documentation and arranging all the Stewards (Abbi). The professionals and the hire equipment already arranged by Andrea. Ally is, as always, keeping an eye on the venue (which has been harrowed and rolled by the FC contractors), and putting up notices to make locals aware of the event.

We still have 3 more Fun Rides planned for later in the year – in July Black Mountains and Wye Valley rides, and the October Talybont ride. We have a committee meeting coming up on 16th April, so please be sure to let us know any other events you would like us to consider organising! I hope we will have news of some further events on the website/Facebook and in the next Newsletter!

Hope to see you at a ride soon – let's hope the weather cancellations are over for the year!

**Chris Wray**

# Committee Contacts

**Chair and Trophy Secretary**

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Nicola Davies

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## Editor's Comments

Hopefully all of your seasons have now began or at least are about to start. It has been rather a soggy start with many rides being cancelled due to either the venue or the route being too wet to use. Sadly Forest of Dean March Hares fell victim to this for the second year running. The forecast is beginning to show signs of improving with our next ride Bluebell less than 3 weeks away (fingers crossed!!). We have lots planned over the coming months with 1 national ride, 4 fun rides, 9 summer schooling lessons, a novice training day and a rider analysis workshop.

I'm very thankful I organised Maryland back in mid-February as the weather was much better then. 66 riders turned up on the day out of the 72 entries which was a very good turnout. Big thank you to Lesley Dunn, all the riders and all the helpers for a smooth running, successful ride.

Our Pony club and Novice training day which was scheduled for the first Saturday in April was sadly postponed due to the saturated ground conditions but has been re-arranged to Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May (half term week). This is a great way to find out more in a friendly informal way, details are on page 7.

Next up for me is organising the Black Mountains fun ride, forestry application has been submitted and I will need to start route recceing soon. As well as this I have organised regular schooling lessons from now up until next February! From now to September is being held at Lesley's Dunn and as usual the popular winter lessons are back at Usk College. Details can be found on page 13 for the summer lessons.

Hope you all have a successful and enjoyable season 😊

*Nicola Davies*

# Team Trophy Nominations

It's time to enter a team for the Offa's Dyke Team Trophy which will be presented at the awards evening at the end of the year!

Team Trophy –

Highest Points for teams of 3 combinations (3 riders, one horse each) in all types of ride except CERs. No limit to numbers of rides or distances. To be eligible, team names, riders and horses must be provided to Trophy Secretary (Chris Wray-c\_wray@tiscali.co.uk) by 27<sup>th</sup> April- **NOTE DATE EXTENDED**

*You've got to be in it to win it.....*

# Horse Welfare in Endurance

This is, or should be, a concern to all of us who have an interest in Endurance. Our sport relies upon our equine partners, and many of the rules are crafted around permitting horses to compete in a healthy and un-abused manner, without any drugs to enhance performance or disguise any health issues. We also need to bear in mind that to a proportion of the population our sport is anathema, and there is lobbying to and by animal charities to put an end to equestrian sport. Poor equine welfare in sport gives ammunition to such people and organisations, so we need to deny them examples and to uphold the best welfare practices and work hard to avoid any accidents, injuries or abuse to our horses.

Unfortunately, the culture we generally have in the UK of great concern for our horses and other pets is not the situation everywhere round the globe. There has been particular anxiety in the last 5 years over the endurance practiced in the Middle East in particular. The FEI instituted the “Endurance Strategic Planning Group” in 2013 to address concerns that were being raised to them more regularly and more publicly. This produced many sensible recommendations, only a portion of which have been fully implemented. Since then, there has been growing publicity about poor welfare in the Middle East, and separately the Emirates Equestrian Federation were suspended in 2015 by the FEI, and a year later the 2016 World Endurance Championships were stripped from Dubai and re-awarded elsewhere.

The growing level of welfare issues, and the more widespread the publicity this has attracted has concerned your committee before, and we have in past years written to the EGB Chair to deplore the situation and ask that EGB throw weight behind reforms to prevent the situations that are giving our sport such adverse publicity. No apparent action came from EGB, and this January your committee resolved to be more assertive than we had been in the past, and we wrote a letter to the EGB Board, copied to EGB Groups and EGB Ride Organisers. This is reproduced at the end of this article.

Since the letter was sent, we have had much support from around the country, and only a very few dissenting voices. We were contacted very quickly by the EGB Vice-Chair, and EGB have publicly assured all the membership that horse welfare is the highest priority in our UK endurance, and have assured us that steps are being taken in many areas to advance the welfare agenda. Over several emails and meetings between your committee members and the EGB Board, it has been agreed that our concerns can be taken forward together. A small sub-committee will be working with the EGB International Director to develop proposals that the BEF (our national governing body) will take as proposals for rule changes to the FEI. Due to the progress we are making, we have suspended all actions we proposed or suggested in the letter, and are welcoming all comers to all our rides.

The purpose of the rule changes we will develop is to compel riders to compete with the welfare of their equine partners as their greatest priority - by curtailing their ability (and the horse, and it's trainer) to compete in the future if they do not, and their horses are repeatedly eliminated. The challenge is principally to address the culture of jockey-riders (who get 1-off rides), who are

instructed to win, by trainers who have (in some cases) hundreds of horses to replace those many that break down.

If you have any questions, or any ideas, that might help us in this, please address them to the Group Chair, or any other preferred committee member.

We will inform you of progress in future newsletters.

Following is the original letter that we addressed to the EGB Board:

To: EGB Board members

Cc EGB Groups committees, EGB Ride organisers

### **The lack of horse welfare in Endurance at some Venues**

For some years, the way Endurance competitions have been run in some Venues (particularly desert locations), has been of great concern to my committee members. We have previously written to the EGB Board to express our concern, and we have watched with interest this last couple of years how the changes introduced by the FEI have been taken on board by these Venues.

However, the changes introduced by the FEI appear to have had no discernible effect and the number of Catastrophic Injuries remains at an unconscionable level (I believe 7 already this season at Dubai and Al Wathba venues). The speed that horses are being raced at is ever increasing (some loops ridden at over 40kph), the ride completion statistics are horrifying (237 eliminations at last weekend's ride). Let alone the races these horses are being put through, and given the training they must also be undergoing, the training attrition rate must also be enormous, as evidenced by the number of new horses appearing in Group VII competitions each year.

Furthermore, my committee has great concern that the articles being written about this subject in the equestrian press will be taken up more widely and will soon result in the end of the sport of endurance riding.

The Offa's Dyke Group committee meeting held this week was taken over almost completely by discussion of members' horror of the above information, the apparent inability of the FEI to do anything about it, and a lack of condemnation of the situation and visible action to encourage remedies from EGB/BEF as our NGB to the FEI.

My committee calls for the EGB Board to carry out the following, urgently:

- 1) Condemn publicly the welfare deficit in these Venues - to all in Endurance, all the BEF disciplines, and the equestrian press. To publicise a list of actions being undertaken by EGB and with the FEI to influence the correction of this welfare deficit.
- 2) Make urgent, assertive and repeated (if necessary) representations to the BEF and the FEI to put in place rules to eliminate the desire of competitors at these venues and others to ride without regard to the welfare of their mounts. We suggest they explore something along the following lines:

- a. limiting each rider to a maximum of 3 FEI mounts per year, to be declared prior to the start of each year
- b. recognising only “combinations”, each combination to be qualified separately starting from the final novice 80km (at under 16kph) through the FEI\* star rides – and the “Elite Rider” dispensation cancelled.

These approaches will encourage every rider to compete with the welfare of their mounts as a high priority, as their competing in FEI will be severely limited by non-completions.

Also insist that the FEI ensure that a strict investigation is carried out on any fatality, and lengthy bans (at least a year) for riders or trainers shown to have significantly contributed to the fatality by over-training or over-competing through speed and/or distance.

- 3) Announce and implement a ban on all riders, horses, and officials who attend any further ride in Dubai, Al Wathba and other venues with welfare deficit with immediate effect, from competing in any endurance event in Great Britain. This ban only to be lifted upon demonstration of adequate welfare improvements to specific criteria over an extended competition period at each venue.

The Offa’s Dyke committee has decided to implement the following action in support of what we call upon EGB to make above -

Entries to rides run by the Offa’s Dyke Group will not be accepted from any riders, horses, or officials who compete or officiate at Dubai, Al Wathba, and other venues with welfare deficit yet to be announced, from the date of this letter (or announcement of the further venues).

Further Offa’s Dyke Group actions were discussed, particularly if the EGB Board do not carry out the 3 requests above urgently. However we decided to postpone decisions until other EGB Groups and Ride Organisers had time to offer comments and suggestions. We continue to consider the following: a) cancelling our National Rides in protest were EGB Board action insufficient, and b) refusing ride entries for any horse or person who competed or officiated at a ride sponsored by (or with signage for) the entities that sponsor the Dubai and Al Wathba venues/competitions.

Your comments and suggestions are very welcome, and we will review these at a committee meeting during February – so that any further actions we decide upon will be known in time before the EGB 2018 season commences.

Yours sincerely,  
Chris Wray  
Chair, Offa’s Dyke Group of Endurance GB,  
On behalf of the Offa’s Dyke Group committee.

**New date**

# **Novice Training Day**

**Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May**

**(Half term)**

**@ Lesley Dunn's in Trellech, NP25 4QN**

(Subject to ground conditions being adequate to park trailers on the field)

## ***Provisional details:***

- **Introduction to endurance**
- **What to expect at a ride?**
- **Look at equipment**
- **Mock vetting etc.**
- **Group lesson by Sam Owen (BHS AI Stage 4, Advanced Endurance rider)**
- **Small hack in the forestry looking at regulating pace etc.**
- **Chance to talk to experienced endurance riders**

Open to Pony Club members aged 8 and over and anyone who would like to find out more about endurance 😊

If you don't want to bring your horse you can come along on foot as it will be an informative day.

Cost £15 with horse

Free without horse

**To book a place or for any enquiries:**

07968 928870 or [n.davies91@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:n.davies91@yahoo.co.uk)

# Tilford ride 11 March 2018

My goal was to do two 80km rides early in the year to qualify to take Aztra to the borders 80km ride in Scotland in July, so I wanted to find one early in the year. Tilford, near Farnham in Surrey is across sandy, well drained heathland, so is good going even when wet. It is popular: Mary Stubbs had forewarned me that it booked up very quickly, so I set my alarm clock for midnight the date it opened. I booked my place at one minute past midnight. By 7am it was fully booked.

Aztra's previous significant ride was 64km at the Red Dragon five months earlier, which she had done with ease. Tilford would be her first 80km and I got her fit with route checking for the Xmas cracker ride, trips to the Forest of Dean and lastly riding 60km of the Ridgeway route near Oxford.

With short days, crew Jane Smith and I wanted to allow time to identify checkpoints so we arrived the afternoon before. Nothing was marked, not even the venue, but in searching for them we had plenty of opportunity to admire views of the North Downs and the many, wealthy, horsey properties. The venue was small and there was no overnight camping, so we stayed nearby. Aztra has learned to eat and drink away from home and was in good form the next morning.

There were only three entries in the 80km class and four in the 64km class, but the shorter classes were busy. Our route was in 3 loops of 33km, 16 km and 33 km with a vet-gate at 49km. I rode the first loop with Bella Fricker and a young rider on Warrens Hill Bronze Nadir. Bella's horse kicked the one behind if she wasn't at the front and Aztra was in race mode. Bronze Nadir wanted to go faster than any of us so we were all jostling for the safest position and a slow enough speed; quite a challenge. The going was lovely and sandy and the hills were pimples compared to those at home. It was clear why it is a popular ride.

We started the 2<sup>nd</sup> loop alone and were soon joined by other riders, but the markers disappeared across the heath. As we went back and forth looking for them I felt Aztra's motivation drain away and as the others went off in a random direction she stopped, refusing to go anywhere. I got off and ran beside her for a while (was this rewarding stopping?) and once we came across other random riders she agreed to go along, but not with much enthusiasm. She vetted immediately, and we went out alone on the last loop.



I am grateful to the 64km rider and her demotivated horse who caught us up. We nursed them round most of the last loop and they didn't mind my idiotic 'ter-OTT!!' 'yee-hah's and 'c'mon guys! there's a leopard right behind!!' attempts to get some ACTION. Markers? Apparently there were marker vandals, but by now the organisers didn't seem to mind from which direction we approached the checkpoints across the heath. It was a stunningly beautiful route, although frustration registered higher than appreciation of nature. Aztra vetted with a HR of 52 at the end and we claimed our rosette gratefully.

One 80km ride down, the next all organised. Scotland here we come 😊.

But of course, pride comes before a fall. 6 days after taking early retirement to play Ponies, I fell off Miss Money Penny at home, getting my knee stretched backwards round a fencepost and rupturing various ligaments. I am pottering around on crutches and a knee brace whilst awaiting surgery, and Aztra and Miss Money Penny are looking forward to having their season at leisure.

**Charlie Fleming**

***We wish Charlie a speedy recovery!***

## **Other Group Fun Rides**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Ride</u></b>	<b><u>Group</u></b>
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> April	Cleeve Hill Fun Ride	Cotswold
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> April	Pembrey Fun Ride	South & West Wales
Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June	Cwm Sirhowi Fun Ride	De Cymru
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> August	Radnor Forest	Mid & North Wales
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> August	Wentwood Fun Ride	De Cymru
TBA September	Pembrey Fun Ride	South & West Wales

**De Cymru group have arranged**

**'An Evening with Sally Toye - Ultra Endurance Athlete'**

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> April @ Lysaght Institute, Corporation Road, Newport**

Sally has ridden in the world famous Mongol Derby and Tevis Cup USA. Join us for an evening of entertainment in which Sally will share her tales of thrills, spills and top tips for success!

Doors open 7pm, Talk starts 7:30pm

Refreshments available

Under 18s & EGB members £5, Adults & non members £8

Further information: [www.egbdecymru.co.uk](http://www.egbdecymru.co.uk) or Tel: Liz Watts 07890467427

# Maryland Fun Ride

A few words from a "first timers" perspective..... firstly a little background.... 3 years ago, we bought my then 11 year old daughter Becky her first ever pony "Bunny" a 6 year old,14.1 Welsh Section D mare... after she had been having weekly lessons for 2/3 years.

After literally walking holes in my shoes, I convinced my husband that I NEEDED a quiet plod to accompany them(I was 44 at the time, no previous lessons!) 4 months after Bunny, I had Ruby, a 7 year old,14.3 Welsh Section D mare.

Becky would correct me on my posture, hands etc, and we got by... I was doing rising trot on my second hack! ... For 6 months we just walked and trotted everywhere, but my New years resolution was to canter, which I did in the forestry in Cwmcarn (our local hack) in the April. However in the May, a pre-existing back problem

resulted in me going into hospital and having spinal surgery and rods and screws put in.... this put me out of the saddle for 6 months! Just as I had the all clear after Christmas last year, Bunny fractured her outer splint bone... which put her out of action, so we didn't really get back into riding until the end of last summer.

I love cantering and galloping at every opportunity... we're very lucky to have the forestry relatively close by... I have watched the EGB De Cymru group set off from near my home in Abercarn and also the Easter fun ride from the Shooting club in Mynyddislwyn, always fancied it, but wasn't sure if I was competent or if the girls had to be super fit.

The Maryland fun ride came up on my Facebook, and a friend of mine encouraged me, so I rang Nicola and explained my reservations regarding my riding ability, the girls fitness, my worries about how the girls would behave, how other riders would be with us, and on, and on!

Nicola assured me that everyone would be supportive, that nobody would whizz by, and that we didn't have to feel pressured to keep up with everyone and it was perfectly acceptable to go at our own pace.

The day before the ride, I asked on the page if anyone was going around at a leisurely pace that we could tag along with, and a lovely lady called Debbie offered for us to tag along with her as she was in a group of 7 with horses and riders of mixed ages/abilities.

The morning of the ride I was a bag of nerves (I am a born worrier) what if my mare tanked off and I lost my daughter? What if I fell off? (I'd offered to do my colleagues shift the next day), what if we got lost?

Well, I need not have worried at all!

We signed in, and were given our bibs, which we wore with pride! We were all ready to go, but there was no sign of Debbie. There was no signal on my phone and the girls



were getting fidgety, so we set off with another lady, her horse was quite forward and I didn't want to hold her back so told her to go on, but as she faded into the distance, I did feel nervous about getting lost.... which was totally unwarranted as when we got to where she had gone out of sight, there was sawdust indicating the direction. A few individual riders came behind us at different parts of the ride, but we just pulled the girls to the side and let them past... Not one of them sped off. All was going well until we were on the country lane and we came across something (not really sure what.. chickens or a funny smell)and we couldn't get the girls past! At that point, a group of horses and riders caught us up, they helped us by going past first and we followed them without a hitch! Got chatting, and it turned out to be Debbie, we also unexpectedly met some motorbikes and my daughters mare was very nervous, but Debbie kindly placed her horse between the bike and my daughter so that the situation didn't escalate... so kind, Thank You Debbie.

When we got down to the riverbank, Debbie asked if we wanted to canter, but we declined and let them go off. That track alongside the river was so beautiful, we felt completely relaxed and safe, and we had some lovely canters along there.

Later in the ride, we met some more lovely people, who offered us to tag along with them as they were going at a leisurely pace too.

and so we walked with them for quite a way, it was a father and daughter who had travelled from Cheltenham, really lovely people.

Towards the end, we met my husband and our dog (they had been walking around to pass the time) and he took a few photos and then videoed our final stretch.

We went to hand our bibs in and collect our Rosettes... and there I was at the grand age of 47 having my first one!! I couldn't smile wide enough!

To hear my normally typical grumpy teenage daughter say "Mam, I loved that, I would definitely do that again. Thank you for taking us Dad." Was just the icing on the cake for the most amazing day! It was the perfect introduction to fun rides... it was as good as we'd been told, and more. Thank You to all of the fellow riders that we met for being so kind and friendly, and

I would like to thank Nicola and everyone else involved and let you know that all the hard work that must have gone into planning and running these events is truly appreciated, and a real eye opener.

It was so well organised, marked out and most of all... memorable and enjoyable. We cannot wait for the next fun ride!



***Thanks again from  
Melanie & Becky Derrick  
Bunny & Ruby***

# *Forest of Dean Bluebell National Ride Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> April*

***Mainly forestry tracks with some road work.***

**Venue:** Coleford, Glos, GL16 7EG

**Classes:**

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. 65km GER     | 5. 40km GER Nov |
| 2. 50km GER     | 6. 32km GER     |
| 3. 50km GER Nov | 7. 32km GER Nov |
| 4. 40km GER     |                 |

**Entries open:** Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March

**Entries close:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April

**Entries to:**

Chris Wray,  
Pentrewheeler Farm  
Cwmcarvan  
Near Monmouth  
Gwent  
NP25 4PL

**Enquiries:** 01600 860938

[c\\_wray@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:c_wray@tiscali.co.uk)

**\*Helpers needed for Forest of Dean Bluebell\***

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> April**

We have some roles left to fill on the venue. If you are not riding or perhaps know someone who may like to volunteer please do get in touch.

Remember rides cannot run without our volunteers.

Please contact Abbi Tennant if you are available to help either on [abbi\\_tennant@hotmail.com](mailto:abbi_tennant@hotmail.com) or 07873755827.

# Summer Schooling

I have organised some schooling sessions over the next few months with Carole Broad FBHS and Sarah Spencer Williams BHSI, HT, UKCC L3. They are very kindly going to be held at Lesley Dunn's in Trellech, NP25 4QN (by Maryland venue). Directions will be provided with booking.

Lesley has a lovely new 42 x 27 arena with parking in her field (with the exception of severe weather). Groups available to cater for all abilities and needs. You are welcome to go for a hack in the neighbouring forestry after your lesson.

The group have purchased some new coloured poles which are being delivered in the next week or so. We are lucky to have Sarah Spencer Williams taking some lessons too with the hope she will provide us with some exciting polework exercises.

Possibility of small jumps if there is demand also.

There will also be flatwork only lessons.

You can do whatever you like :)



The sessions will be in groups of a maximum of 3 and cost £24 for an hour for Carole and £19 for Sarah.

Dates are:

Sunday 15th April

Sunday 22nd April- Sarah

Sunday 20th May- Sarah

Sunday 27th May

Sunday 10th June- Sarah

Sunday 24th June

Sunday 8th July

Sunday 19th August

Sunday 23rd September

Why not book a lesson and see how you get on 😊

For more information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Nicola- 07968928870 or n.davies91@yahoo.co.uk

# Bluebell Fun Ride

## Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> April

***Mainly forestry woodland and tracks, with less than 1km road work.***

**Classes:** 1. 7 km  
2. 14 km  
3. 25 km  
4. 33 km

**Venue:** Worcester Lodge, Coleford, GL16 7EG.

**Start times:** Between 10:00 and 12:00.

**Entry fee:** £10 for EGB members, £15 for non members.

**Entries to:**

Chris Wray,  
Pentrewheeler Farm  
Cwmcarvan  
Near Monmouth  
Gwent  
NP25 4PL

**Enquiries:**

c\_wray@tiscali.co.uk  
01600 860938

**\* ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED ON THE DAY \***

**(Except Pony Club entries)**

# Cannock Chase

I have only ridden at Cannock once before and that was many years ago, so I was looking forward to riding there again this year. However, the weather was doing its best to put me off and looked horrendous for the day of the ride, torrential rain the day and night before and heavy rain forecast for later in the day of the ride...along with sleet and possible hail..... yuk, yuk, yuk!!!..... BUT thankfully - they were wrong!! Yes, it was torrential rain the day before, Yes it was torrential rain until 5am on the day of the ride... but as we set off just after 6am it was drizzle..... and that continued to the venue..... and an hour into the ride (for a couple of hours or more) the rain stopped and the sun shone!!! Yay!

We arrived at the venue in plenty of time - lovely hard standing parking with a good flat trot up area so I was glad I'd loaded extra hay 'just in case' . Sekora was on her toes, this was her first ride of the season after a winter of intensive schooling both on the flat and jumping, so she was fit, well muscled and definitely up to the challenge of 66km through mud and deep puddles IF we could keep her calm and keep control of the speed. She passed the vetting, we quickly tacked up and were soon making our way out of the venue and over an extremely well marked route (LOVED the fluorescent "pink" markers!).

Cannock Chase route is made up of well used tracks through shrubs, trees and undulating common land, lots of walkers, runners, bike riders and dogs..... everyone very friendly and ready with a smile. The first loop rode well if not a little too fast, I was struggling a little with my braking system, but lots of opportunity for change of pace and steady canters. Plenty of good crewing spots which were easy for Rob to find, although with all the water around it would have been easy to self crew!

We were soon trotting back into the venue for our half way vetting. We found a good grass spot for Sekora to stale, removed tack, threw on a rug and wandered over to vet. A good pulse of 40 which was the same as her starting pulse and a sound trot up meant we were soon on our way back to the trailer for food and a chance to try and remove some of the thick, black mud she and my tack were covered in. It was deceptively cold so the extra rugs packed came in very useful and washing was kept to a minimum.

I thought the second loop would be harder work as the tracks were looking the worse for wear from all the horse traffic of the morning, but amazingly there was a solid bottom to them and Sekora and I got to enjoy the company of Alice Lotten & Kizmet for most of that second loop which rode extremely well - much more sedate on the second loop which soon saw us back at the venue and vetting before the rain started again in earnest. A final pulse of 36, sound trot up, average speed of 13kph and a G1 rosette to take home.

Excellent ride. Really enjoyed it, extremely well marked, well laid out venue and lots of smiling happy helpers and vets. I can highly recommend it for next year.

***Gill Talbot & Sa'da Sekora***

# Black Mountains Fun ride

## Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July

@ Trewysgoed, Forest Coal Pit, Near Abergavenny, NP7 7LW

Lovely ride with a mixture of quiet country lanes, forestry tracks and open mountain. Route options of approximately 19km and 29km (12 & 18 miles) you can decide at the checkpoint.

Start times between 10:00 and 11:30

### Entries to-

Nicola Davies,  
Pentre Hendy,  
Twyn Allwys road,  
Govilon,  
Abergavenny,  
Monmouthshire,  
NP7 9RT

Enquires: 07968928870

[n.davies91@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:n.davies91@yahoo.co.uk)

*Please send entry along with a large SAE to receive maps and ride details or download from the website.*

**LIMITED PARKING SO ENTRIES IN ADVANCE PLEASE**

**\*Helpers Needed\***

If you can spare a few hours to help at this ride I would be very grateful.

# Rider Analysis Workshop

**16<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

**At Weir End Farm, Weir End, Ross on Wye, HR9 6JY**

Aimed for all levels of rider to help improve position in the saddle and thus be able to help our horses with being able to support ourselves for the long hours we spend in the saddle so they can perform at their best.

## **The rider analysis:**

- **Evaluate your position on your own horse**
- **Work on exercises to help improve your position and horse's way of going**
- **Use instant video feedback and the latest software so that you can see the difference**
- **Provide you with a detailed feedback form outlining key areas to work on**

This is a flatwork session only and will last around 45 minutes per rider. This will be a sole session each. You will need to bring your own horse as this is to be a ridden 45 minute exercise. Once in the arena you will be instructed in three different gaits and on circles so that the camera and the sensors can capture how you distribute your weight and sit in the saddle. You will then be shown video/photo feedback and be given pointers to work on.

The price is £75 per person. Please note there are only **12 spaces available** and it is on a first come first served basis.

If you would like to book please contact Abbi Tennant at [abbi\\_tennant@hotmail.com](mailto:abbi_tennant@hotmail.com) or call 07873755827.

# Wye Valley Fun Ride

## Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July

**Venue:** Howick Farm, Itton, NP16 6BL

A lovely fun ride with a mixture of forestry tracks private farmland a few quiet lanes. Lovely views over the River Wye and Severn. Route options of 7.5km lead rein, 20km and 30km.

Start Times: Between 10:00 and 11:30

**Entries to:**

Sarah Rogerson  
11 High Street,  
Aylburton,  
Lydney,  
Glos,  
GL15 6BX

**\* NEWS \***

Lead rein entry fee **ONLY £5**  
(Children only)

**Enquiries:**

Sarah- 07568 072235 but after 6pm plus weekends  
s.l.r@hotmail.co.uk

**\* HELPERS NEEDED \***

# At Stud

## Warrens Hill Zpirit



Arabian stallion at stud. Amazing endurance pedigree. The only son of Supreme Champion mare, Franzara. By Warrens Hill Star - 3/4 brother to EGB senior champion Warrens Hill Rubyn and successful FEI mare, Warrens Hill Kizmet. Star was also a half brother to leading endurance sire Chatanz being by Warrens Hill Destiny out of Champion arab race mare, Chatelaine. Zpirit (stable name Scrappy Doo) has never competed but he has bred some lovely offspring - there are photos on my facebook page. He is a lovely, kind, athletic horse. Iron grey (he did look black when younger). Around 15-15.1 h.h.

Zpirit is tested SCID/CA and LFS free.

Possibility of natural service for a walking-in mare by special arrangement, but we are no longer taking visiting mares.

£200 per insemination dose from West Kington stud.

Contact Lesley:

01600 860746

lesley@wh-arabians.co.uk

**[www.wh-arabians.co.uk](http://www.wh-arabians.co.uk)**

# Dates for your Diary

<b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Schooling @ Trellech- Carole Broad
<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April</b>	Schooling @ Trellech- Sarah SW
<b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Forest of Dean Bluebell National
<b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Forest of Dean Bluebell Fun Ride
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Schooling @ Trellech- Sarah SW
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Schooling @ Trellech- Carole Broad
<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May</b>	Novice Training Day
<b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Schooling @ Trellech Sarah SW
<b>Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Schooling @ Trellech- Carole Broad
<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July</b>	Black Mountains Fun Ride
<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July</b>	Schooling @ Trellech- Carole Broad
<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July</b>	Wye Valley Fun Ride
<b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> August</b>	Schooling @ Trellech- Carole Broad
<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September</b>	Rider Analysis Workshop
<b>Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> September</b>	Schooling @ Trellech- Carole Broad
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Talybont Reservoir Fun Ride

More info on the Offa's Dyke website under 'Rides and Events'

[www.egboffasdyke.co.uk](http://www.egboffasdyke.co.uk)

**HELP!**

*With the rising cost of printing and postage it would be a great saving for the group if more people could receive the newsletter by email PDF or download it from the Website. If you'd like to try, please email me. If you try and don't like it you can always change back to a paper copy at any time.*