



Offa's Dyke Group of Endurance GB

## Newsletter- July 2019

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



### Chairman's Comments

Here we are at the start of July already!

We have had two rides since the New Year: Bluebell National ride plus OD pleasure ride and Lydney Park Estate pleasure ride. Bluebell ran from Speech House Fields for the first time which was a wonderful venue. Easter Sunday was ridiculously hot and though the horses all coped with the heat, several riders were a bit wobbly at the end!

The new Lydney Park ride was a great success and we were made very welcome. It was also a joint venture with some local Pony Clubs thanks to the sterling efforts of Fiona Williams. 7 Pony Club members joined us and they had their own mini competition. I hope they will try Endurance again.

On the National stage, Louise Rich and Czamak have had success at Kings Forest spring ride (2<sup>nd</sup>) and also Royal Windsor (11<sup>th</sup>). Andrea Champ and Lantana won the one day 80 km at Golden Horseshoe. Karen Jones and Indian Princess were 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 2 day 80 km; myself and Azaleah 4<sup>th</sup> and Fiona Griffiths and the ever young Oliver Twist 5<sup>th</sup>.

Alex Tennant and Watibou were 3<sup>rd</sup> at Man v Horse.

My own year has rather fallen apart. Whereas last year the horses didn't put a hoof wrong, this year Sachiya went lame at Kings in April (only the second time ever) and is now on box rest till the end of August with bone bruising/ possible minute stress fracture to her canon bone. She should make a full recovery and is being a pretty good patient but we had to withdraw from the European Champs team a while ago. Definite entries are in and Offa's Dyke has a representative in Sarah Rogerson and Warrens Hill Rubyn. 7 combinations have been named for 5 places so fingers crossed for Sarah and Rubyn.

We have the Inter Regionals at Cirencester to look forward to plus a busy Offa's Dyke programme (see this newsletter) so happy riding.

**Mary Stubbs**

# Committee Contacts

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## Other Roles not on the Committee

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## Editor's Comments

Doesn't seem long ago I was sending out the April newsletter and now we are half way through the season. Since the last newsletter the group has organised FOD Bluebell National and fun ride and Lydney Estate fun ride. Both of which were on glorious sunny days and were enjoyed by all- Thank you to the organisers and helpers involved with the successful running of these rides. In addition there has been the monthly schooling lessons with Sarah Spencer Williams kindly held at Lesley's.

I have finally finished University so now have less than a month to organise Govilon fun ride on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August. I rode the long route on Sunday and it is all riding very well. I have also been round and got the principal landowners permission and have begun some clearing. I am currently in the process of trying to remove two short sections of road from the route- watch this space. I have also altered part of the long route as there has been some felling in the forestry on the long route so I am planning on cutting that out for this year. Instead you will join up with the bridle path (that was new in 2017) up through the fields before going onto the bridle path across the mountain. This actually reduces the roadwork on the long route but shortens the route to about 24km.

We have lots coming up with the monthly schooling lessons, Govilon fun ride on 4<sup>th</sup> August (page 7), the brand new Michaelchurch Escley fun ride on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August (page 10 ), FOD Autumn Belle National and fun ride on 15th September (page 13 and 14), and finally Maryland fun ride on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October (page 20). I have also set dates for Maryland 2020! (See the back page)

Enjoy the rest of your season ☺

**Nicola Davies**



### **Hot News!**



Offa's Dyke member Charlie Fleming was competing in the Cairngorm 100 last weekend riding Francis Baker's mare Aratahnes Phoebe (Arathanes Azahl x Alkara). The Cairngorm 100 ride is a point to point route across the challenging and stunning scenery of the Cairngorm National Park to be completed in 24 hours. Charlie not only completed the whole 100 miles but came in joint 1st over the line and went on to be the overall winner and 3rd in the Best Condition.

**Congratulations Charlie!!**



## Endurance GB Equine Influenza Policy

In consultation with the Animal Health Trust and the British Equestrian Federation, Endurance GB have drawn up the following policy with regard to flu vaccination and vaccination records. ***This policy remains in place during the current Equine Influenza outbreak but may be subject to change as this is an ever changing issue.***

The equine's flu vaccination records **must be uploaded with the event entry, emailed to the event organiser, or, in the case of paper entry, forwarded to the Endurance GB event organiser with the event entry.** This applies to national or social rides, training events, etc., where equines are present. **Please note that the vaccination record and identification pages of the passport must be forwarded.**

Equines must undergo a primary course where the first and second vaccinations are no less than 21 days and no more than 92 days apart. **For equines attending Endurance GB events, the vaccination following the second vaccination of the primary course must be carried out within 7 months;** the BEF strongly recommend the window for vaccination being between 150 and 215 days after the primary course. Equines who have undergone the initial 2 vaccinations in the primary course are permitted to take part in the event.

### Vaccination 1

Vaccination 2                    21-92 days after vaccination 1

Vaccination 3                    within 7 months of vaccination 2 (150 to 215 days after vaccination 2 preferred)

Vaccination 4 onwards        within 12 months of the previous vaccination

**The vaccination records will be checked for the 4 calendar years preceding the event date.**

**3. Equines may not take part in an event until 7 days have elapsed after any vaccination.**

4. The equine's passport must be with the driver of the vehicle on entry to a venue ready for examination and must be taken to the secretary on registration at the event.

**5. Venues may have individual protocols for vaccination and checking, and may put additional criteria in place. These will be detailed in the event information and must also be complied with.**

**6. In cases where equines are unable to be vaccinated for veterinary reasons, these will be referred to the Endurance GB Welfare committee for consultation and advice.**

7. Owners of equines who also compete in competitions overseen by other organisations (ie SERC, the FEI, the Jockey Club, British Riding Clubs, the Pony Club, other disciplines, breed societies, etc) should check that their equine's vaccination records also comply with the criteria set out by those organisations as they may have different requirements.

# DON'T KISS ME HARDY

“He did n’t say ‘Kiss me, Hardy’ he said ‘Kismet, Hardy”, that’s French for “fate” .

“Why would Admiral Nelson talk to one of the finest novelists in the English language in French? “

“It was n’t **that** Thomas Hardy, the monument is named after the naval officer Thomas Hardy, he was a friend of Admiral Nelson.”

“More than a friend if he wanted to kiss him if you ask me”

“Don’t be lewd”

I ignored the intellectual debate being carried on by my crew and stared gloomily at the long, sharp ascent from the coastal village of Abbotsbury to the Hardy Monument, which would be the last crew stop on Syrian Moon’s first competitive ride, Hardy’s Ride in Dorset. We were doing a “recce” of the route the afternoon before the ride and although it was showing it to be full of variety and interest, with some lovely canter opportunities, it had plenty of hard, technical going and lots of ups and downs. She had never done as much as 36k before and it potentially looked like one of the hardest rides in the calendar. I wondered what on earth I was doing. Because you want to do 40k at the ~~north face of the Eiger~~ Golden Horseshoe, that’s why. All you had to do was get round at 8kph, so get a grip. The siren voices of rides with flat grassy going, with the chance of a good grade for Syrian Moon’s first master card entry, were momentarily silenced.

Up early next morning to feed Moon and then off to the venue in the Shogun with Mr Geddes and with the Golden Horseshoe trainee crew , Marg (my sister) and her partner Roger (“Rodge”)

following in their Mini Cooper. The Hardy’s ride venue is on level ground and was not at all muddy even after all the rain we had. It managed to achieve being both spacious and compact, so checking in and



vetting was “un morceau de gateau” as Nelson might have said if he *was* in the habit of speaking French.

Vetted (36 heart rate, a good start) and ready to go, we set off to CP1 , my carefully estimated time of 20 minutes being ignored by Moon and me since we got there in about 6 seconds. The ride was full of interest and lovely straightaway: quiet old lanes, a manor house with the largest and most varied topiary collection I had ever seen ( Raynet at CP1 not as impressed as me by that) and then a steep , (oo’er ...here we go I thought), climb to a gorgeous grassy canter stretch.

There were some rough bits, plenty of cattle and the odd bull, and as shown by the recce lots of up and down. There were also some stretches where you could a wiggle on, especially the best bit , a couple of kilometres of splendid turf high up with wonderful views of the bay, Chesil Beach and the Swannery. It was a glorious day in a glorious county on a glorious ride.

The marking was superb: on the map the route looked like it could get complicated with a few out and backs and route splits , but it was so clearly marked, with tape, spray and marker boards, all they could do to improve was put “Barbara Rees and Syrian Moon this way to next crew stop and possible chocolate biscuits”.....

The hardest bit of this ride is at the end in my humble opinion, that climb up to the Monument (although that bit was made easier by the presence of some lovely quiet free running Belted Galloway cattle who had a calming effect on me if not Moon). Final stretch was relatively flat and good going through an enchanting wood, and then on to the lane back to the venue. I resisted the temptation to trot in to make my target 9kph speed and arrived at the venue at a leisurely walk just over 4 hours after I left. Moon vetted quickly with a heart rate of 39 and the usual accomplished trot up by Mr Geddes (who also passed the vet).

Moon had completed her first competitive ride, hurrah! Off to get the rosette and to tell the ride organiser it was my first competition on Moon and how much I had enjoyed it.

“You’ll enjoy it even more now, you’ve got a grade 1”. Eh????

GATE ALLOWANCE I LOVE YOU!!!!

We also got an Easter egg, how generous they were.

Thanks to all: organiser, helpers, Syrian Moon and of course crew.

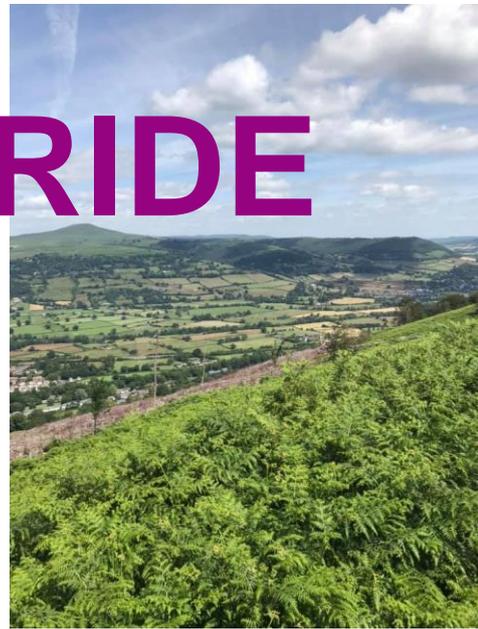
PLEASE try Hardy’s ride. Thomas ‘ardy ‘ee is awaiting for you, ma Cherie...

***Barbara Rees***

# GOVILON FUN RIDE

## Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August

**Venue:** Govilon Car Boot Field, Govilon, Near Abergavenny, NP7 9PT



**A lovely ride with a mixture of fields, bridle paths, mountain tracks and quiet country lanes. Fantastic views from the Blorenges with a few steep hills. Route options of approximately 20km and 24km (12 & 15 miles)**

**Start times between 9:30 and 11:30**

Very easy access straight off a main road, unlimited parking and water!

**PONIES/HORSES MUST MEET THE ENDURANCE GB FLU VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS AS OUTLINED ON PAGE 4**

**Entries to:** Nicola Davies  
Pentre Hendy,  
Twyn Allwys road,  
Govilon,  
Abergavenny,  
Monmouthshire,  
NP7 9RT

**More info:** n.davies91@yahoo.co.uk or 07968 928870



**ENTRIES TAKEN ON THE DAY!**

**\*\* HELPERS NEEDED \*\***

<https://www.egboffasdyke.co.uk/govilon-fun-ride>

# Never say Never

## Man versus Horse Marathon 8<sup>th</sup> June 2019

In January, 2019 I was asked if I would like to borrow a horse and compete in the man v horse marathon. I had completed this rather quirky event three times in the 80's, going faster each time and finishing further down the finishers list. With this in mind I considered whether or not to give it a go. I had always said I would never do it again. We had to get the entry in within half an hour of the entries being open, otherwise the 60 places would already be taken – a further 60 applicants are kept on the reserve list. The entry was made for me with No 44 being allocated. So, I had better get fit. I hadn't ridden for 3 years and other than walking the dog, was not fit for anything. Being over 65 means my fitness level was fairly low if not at zilch. I also had back pain from trying to lift something I shouldn't have last July.

So I had a plan. Object was not to win, just to complete the ride with a fit horse and hopefully a fit (ish) rider. January saw me ride once a week. I was given various horses to try as the owner has about 60. Then I spent 10 days away. Only rode twice in February - luckily not in the rain or the snow. Again in March only rode 3 times and walked a lot more with the dog. I loved it until I broke a toe in my right foot. Riding was the only way I was going to get fit now as I was exceedingly lame – even in walk. Up until now my riding time was about 1hr to 1.5hrs. April saw me up the pace and distance. I rode quite a bit on my own – going out with a ride and returning on my own so I could go at my chosen pace. By then a horse had been chosen for me and I could concentrate on time and distance. Ellie is a homebred, 15 yo, 14.2 hh section D welsh cob mare, used by a riding centre for trail rides and although basically fit, not used to going on her own. I only ever rode for 2 hours at a time, but at a faster pace than the horse was used to. Her best pace was trot, canter for about 100 metres and she was unable to canter any more - tried interval training but things didn't improve so decided to work with what I had. May saw more time in the saddle for me and then Ellie was used for a cross Wales trail – 4 days of over 20 miles each day, finishing on the beach at Borth near Aberystwyth. She also completed a 3 day ride in the Black Mountains, staying in Hay on Wye one night and near the Skirrid, Abergavenny another. Me – well by then I had begun to swim again, after quite a few years of giving it a miss. With the ride due the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend of June what I hadn't done by end of May was not going to be done! Too bad, have to get on with it. The one thing I was really dreading was the start. A 60 horse mass start was not something I was looking forward to. As it happened it was quite a leisurely affair. A walk around the village before the start, and then we were lead by a car so no-one could canter or gallop up the road to the mountain. This took place after the vetting, and briefing. It was very pleasing to see an endurance vet there – at least someone knew what they were doing! There were those whose horses thought it was exceedingly exciting and wanted to go faster but in the main the horses behaved well. Ellie was left at the hill gate by her friends, there was another 6 horses from the riding centre competing. We kept to the plan. Passed so many runners on the first hill – they had started 15 mins before us. 150 runners and 40 relay teams (1 x 7mile legs). What a star, Ellie just trotted on and on and on. Uphill, downhill, uphill, downhill – where did they find the route? Then we caught up four of the other horses, who were all walking having run out of puff. No time to stop – said hello and carried on. More hills – up and down, then a sign to say the vet gate was

up ahead. I got off to walk down the last hill. Ellie had other ideas, she wanted to trot downhill but it was really slippery as it had rained the day before (about 24hrs of it), so she dragged me down to the vet gate and some helpers. Where is my stethoscope? Who knows but it wasn't there, so had to borrow someone else's – thank you. Went to vet, had to wait about ten minutes but with a starting heart rate of 36 was not expecting anything spectacular. Wrong, heart rate 48, so was deemed fit to continue. I didn't really want to carry on due to the slippery conditions but couldn't let her down. I was expecting her to have quite a high heart rate (isn't that what welsh cobs have?) No, not any of it! More hills up and down, caught up more runners, some of whom I saw three times and I know they never passed me. So they must have a shortcut somewhere and of course I had to stop at the vet check. I even caught up the wife of Ellie's owner who was running the last leg of a relay team. Ellie was really going well and getting difficult to hold. I may have been heard to say, "not another downhill?", as we fell out over how fast she should go downhill. Two miles from home we slowed to walk, with the occasional trot, so she would be calm and cool to finish. The plan worked, we rode these two miles with another rider whose horse always has a high heart rate after the finish, or so she said. Anyway, the finish was in sight and we trotted over the line, in less time than I had given myself, and took Ellie to the vet after 15 mins as I didn't want her to get cold. No vehicular access to the finish area meant no rugs or water other than from a tank in the corner of the field. Heart rate was 40. What? Never! 40 bpm and sound. The results sheet also tells me we completed the ride at 6mph or 9.6kmph. What more could I ask for?

I visited Ellie twice the following week and realised she had really enjoyed her time out from her normal life. By Tuesday she was kicking her heels up and dashing up the field with her friends. Note to owner – she may not be the quite the old plod you thought she was. THANK YOU ELLIE – YOU ARE A STAR. Thanks you also to Paul and Emily for all their encouragement and allowing me to ride Ellie. Oh, and my back pain – what back pain? It has receded, not cured but definitely better than it was.

Have been asked to ride again next year – watch this space – haven't given an answer yet.

**Sue Rowe Hannen**



# MICHAELCHURCH ESCLEY FUN RIDE



## Saturday 24th August

Come and ride in this beautiful part of the Herefordshire borders, under the shadow of the Black Mountains. We are very lucky to have the use of the Michaelchurch Estate (kind permission of John Williams), and the ride in addition goes over open hill common land, along quiet lanes and through forestry with plenty of opportunity for long canters. 3 routes will be offered, approx 15 miles and 10 miles and a short PC route.

**Venue:** Private field in Urishay, near Michaelchurch Escley, Nearest postcode HR2 0JZ

**NB:** There will be a STRICT one way route enforced for cars and trailers/horseboxes to and from the venue. Please take the Michaelchurch Escley turning off the B4348, NOT the one signed to Urishay. There will be EGB signs to the venue.

Start times between 9.30 and 11.30

**Entry Fee:** £10 for EGB members and £15 for non-members

**PONIES/HORSES MUST MEET THE ENDURANCE GB FLU VACCINATION REQUIRMENTS AS OUTLINED ON PAGE 4**

**Entries to:** Andrea Champ  
Urishay Barn  
Michaelchurch Escley  
Herefordshire  
HR2 0LR

**\* Helpers Needed \***

Enquiries to 01981 510686 (not after 9pm please) or email [quinnchamp@gmail.com](mailto:quinnchamp@gmail.com)

***ENTRIES TAKEN ON THE DAY!***



<https://www.egboffasdyke.co.uk/michaelchurch-fun-ride>

# BOCONNOC

Boconnoc, Cornwall, is a large private estate with over 100 acres of parkland and deer park. It was mentioned in the Domesday book of 1086, was home to the ancestors of William Pitt, the youngest ever British Prime Minister, and was also used in the filming of the original Poldark series. The house and grounds host parties, weddings, retreats, corporate events and... ENDURANCE RIDES! If you are looking for a guide to wedding venues then this article is not for you, but if you are thinking of, or even **not** thinking of, doing an endurance ride there, then read on...

**Location:** Boconnoc is between Liskeard and Bodmin in the southeast of the county, about 1½ hours from Exeter. From Abergavenny it took me 4½ hours towing to get there on Friday afternoon and just over four hours back on Sunday morning, along easy roads, mostly motorway and dual carriageway until the last wiggly bit. Boconnoc is in that part of Cornwall that is quiet and still has a hint of Celtic mystery. In my frequent trips over the weekend between my temporary lodgings and Syrian Moon's stable, at exactly the same point in the 10 minute journey, I would see the same cat, pigeon, deer and pheasant in exactly the same place, just looking. ... a bit spooky.... In the memorable words of Bob Peck in *Jurassic Park* ....“ We are being watched” .....

**Venue:** The way in to the venue is through a very modest gateway, easy to miss were it not for the EGB banner, down a long drive (past a **very** large obelisk) : and the setting is lovely, within view of the house. I found the access and venue layout confusing to start with and could not find the way in to the venue at all when receiving the day before with the crew, resulting in hours driving around narrow Cornish lanes, but **that was because I had not read the instructions properly**. They were crystal clear when I did read them: but I like a challenge and will manufacture one for myself if necessary ... The venue is spacious with a longish walk (over 5 minutes) from parking to vetting if you get the wrong spot, as I did. I also went the wrong way with the horse to the vetting (Ride Organiser *not impressed*) but everyone seemed to know the way except me ....

**Paperwork:** this all arrived very promptly about a week before the ride so there was plenty of time to study the route and make plans. Very comprehensive, with checkpoint distances, timings and directions to the venue and venue layout so you could look at and then ignore them (see above). The route map was blurred and a bit difficult to follow which was more of a problem for the crew than the rider (see route marking, below).

**Stabling and Accommodation:** the venue looked great for camping and corralling and the provisions from the refreshment van were of high quality, a lovely cuppa tea. I put Moon in an equestrian centre nearby, with a hint of Cornish strangeness in that the entrance drive I arrived up (incorrectly it turned out, but in this case because I was not telepathic, rather than ignoring any instructions) had a huge granite monolith next to the drive camouflaged with ivy, so it was ready for a collision with any passing vehicle, although not mine luckily. Obviously

they could not clear the green cloak of invisibility from it since that is where the pixies lived.....

**The ride and route marking:** I had entered the 40k but did the 32k for various reasons, one of which was a small repeat loop to get the extra mileage which I'm not keen on. Varied going, quite a few hard tracks, more than I was expecting, but trotable with care. No serious hills, but constantly undulating so not an easy-peasy ride. Plenty of wonderful canter opportunities across the estate and deer park, some road work on quiet lanes, really lovely woods and parkland and a memorable trot through 2 huge wheat fields with the wheat reaching almost to Moon's withers, making a magical swishing sound. It was like surfing, really lovely, I had never done that before ... I could tell she loved it also. The marking was superb, which was a relief because from the ground particularly near the venue, it looked like just a confusing sea of random flags, sending me into hyperventilation on the recce the day before, worrying I was going to spend 3 hours whizzing round the venue fields trying to get out. But it rode superbly and was very easy to follow. Well done trail riders!

**Crewing:** the crew spots were hard to find. We found the ride instructions to be a bit vague so recceing is essential and even after that it was a bit of a mystery. Luckily, the crew then found the route planner chap to talk to on ride morning so all was good on the day. There is no crewing at all on the second half of the ride but the organisers did provide water and sashes with all helpers jolly and friendly.

**Summary:** So it was a game of 2 halves: pre-ride day (Friday), tiredness after the drive, frustration over playing "hunt the crew spot" and "dodge the granite pillar, Oh shame you can't see it" and confusion over the apparent plethora of orange flags, to ride day (Saturday), with a wonderfully enjoyable well marked route, excellent crewing both by my crew and the ride helpers and to top it all a great result for Moon. Thank you pixies, working overtime on my behalf!

So I beseech you, as in the immortal words of that epitome of musical expertise and professionalism, Village People, "GO WEST!!" (Just don't forget to say hello to the pixies, it's useful to have them on your side.....)

*Barbara Rees*

## Other Group Fun Rides

<i>Date</i>	<i>Ride Name</i>	<i>Group</i>
Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> July	Wentwood	De Cymru
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> August	Barbury Castle	Cotswold
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> August	Radnor Forest	Mid & North Wales
Sat 31 <sup>st</sup> Aug/Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept	Pen Ddol Y Gader	South & West Wales
TBA September	Lambourn Downs	Cotswold
TBA September	Pembrey	South & West Wales
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> December	Mince Pie	Cotswold

# Autumn Belle Fun Ride

## Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September

Mainly forestry woodland and tracks, with less than 1km road work. Route options of 15km, 25km and 33km (TBC). If there is demand we can do a short Lead Rein route.

The route will not be using the wooden bridge over the weir from FOD Bluebell.

Venue: Speech House Fields, Speech House Hotel, Speech House Road, Coleford GL16 7EL

There will be loos and catering, but you will need to bring your own water.

Start times: TBA

Entry fee: £10 for EGB members (this does not include Supporters) and £15 for non members.

Entries to: Chris Wray  
Pentrewheeler Farm  
Cwmcavvan  
NR MONMOUTH  
Gwent  
NP25 4PL

ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED  
ON THE DAY

Enquiries: 01600 860938/ c\_wray@tiscali.co.uk

**PONIES/HORSES MUST MEET THE ENDURANCE GB FLU VACCINATION REQUIRMENTS AS OUTLINED ON PAGE 4**

**\*\* HELPERS NEEDED \*\***

<https://www.egboffasdyke.co.uk/fod-autumn-belle>

# *Autumn Belle National Ride*

***Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September***

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

The route will not be using the wooden bridge over the weir from FOD Bluebell.

**Venue:** Speech House Fields, Speech House Hotel, Speech House Road, Coleford GL16 7EL

There will be loos and catering, but you will need to bring your own water.

**Classes:**

1. 65km GER 1 hold
2. 50km GER 1 hold (try a vetgate class)
3. 50km Novice GER 1 hold (try a vetgate class)
4. 40km GER
5. 40km Novice GER
6. 32km GER
7. 32km Novice GER
8. 25km Novice Foundation

**Closing date:** Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September

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**\*\* HELPERS NEEDED \*\***

<https://www.egboffasdyke.co.uk/fod-autumn-belle>

# Golden Horseshoe 2019

When I was planning my 2019 season, Golden Horseshoe was a ride I wanted to do. The only problem was that it was during A Level exam season! Despite this we decided to go and Tiggy and I entered the 40km Novice class. We also thought it would be a good idea to make a weekend of it, so we booked a lovely holiday cottage (Westcott Farm, Luxborough). Tiggy, Mum and I travelled over on Friday afternoon with my Dad joining us on Saturday evening. Tiggy had a small paddock with plenty of grass so she was very happy to be away from home. The cottage was brilliant with great access to bridleways; so we took Tiggy for a little hack on Saturday afternoon in between me doing some revision.

The next morning we set off for the venue, I wasn't feeling as perky as Tiggy due to a lack of sleep (Eurovision's fault!). However, I was looking forward to the ride and wanted to get going. Tiggy started on a heart rate of 44 which was pretty good for her. We set off on our own but with lots of other horses around, Tiggy was very keen. The first section of the ride rode really well and we were travelling well at around 10kmph. As the ride went on it got hotter and harder. Between checkpoints 1 and 2 we slowed down a bit due to the climbs and the gates! I was really pleased to see my parents at crew point 2 as I felt Tiggy would benefit from a drink as it was getting quite hot. With Tiggy being a tubby cob, hot weather doesn't really suit us. Tiggy happily had a long drink, felt very perky and ready to set off again. The next part of the ride wasn't great. It was quite steep and we couldn't make up much time as the ground was rubbish! Between checkpoints 2 and 3 the ride dragged. Tiggy was quite happy to drink from streams and plod along during this section. Thankfully the last section of the ride rode really well and we were able to have some lovely canters across the moorland! It also helped us make up time so that we would be inside the time!

The ride was challenging for me not just Tiggy! People who I had spoken to before had said the ride was very tough, like a 64km and that there were LOADS of gates. By the end of the ride Tiggy had

certainly got the hang of gates! It was probably the toughest ride that we've done and if I'm totally honest Tiggy wasn't really 40km fit due to my exams taking over a bit!

We gained a completion at 8.5kmph with a heart rate of 52! I was chuffed just to get round and really felt that we'd achieved something. It wasn't just me who found the ride tough, the ride organisers actually ran out of completion rosettes! Therefore, we got a grade 4 rosette instead! After all this effort, we returned to our holiday cottage and Tiggy's paddock for a well-earned rest. Tiggy had an opportunity to rest before travelling home on the Monday, in time for me to return home to sit two exams on the Tuesday!

***Sara Williams & Mrs Tiggywinkle***



*Photo courtesy of David Saunders*

# Trawsgoed

I had only been to Trawsgoed ride once before and that was the first year it ran as a National ride back in 2014. My memories of it were, we got lost getting to the venue; followed a fellow endurance rider who is amazing at navigating and getting to places (usually!) and ended up having to get someone to come out of their house to move their car so we could get through as the road was so narrow and then ending up at a downhill junction where we wanted to go right and thought the trailer was going to ground out it was so steep. Lesson learnt there!

After the trauma of getting there last time I had spent considerable time studying the map and looking at google earth. I had found a way that looked suitable (avoiding narrow lanes) and which meant we didn't have to go all the way up to Aberystwyth. It turned out to be perfectly suitable to be towing two horses and got us to the venue perfectly in 2 ½ hours. My friend Donna came with me with her mare Dolly, she was doing the 32km group fun ride so she was able to ride with me doing the 32km GER. It was already quite hot by the time we arrived and the horseflies were out in force. We got ourselves sorted and I soon vetted before tacking up and starting. Our ride didn't start well as as soon as we turned onto the road out of the venue field a landrover and trailer were coming towards us and were speeding up the closer he got. I politely waved my arm to slow him down but he carried on at a ridiculous speed and did some very rude hand gestures as he passed us. Thankfully both Pie and Dolly are very good with traffic otherwise this could have led to a serious accident.

We continued along the road, through a farm and onto another road before crossing a stream and going into some forestry. Most of the tracks you could happily trot along with a few stony sections. The old railway track provided some well needed shade and also allowed for a good trot. We went off and did a loop before coming back to the checkpoint where my mum was there to crew us. There were stewards (local scouts I believe) on a lot of the gates luckily, however we did have to get off for a few which weren't manned and were too tricky to do off the horse. We were soon well over half way. We headed back towards the venue before turning off to do the last loop which seemed never ending in the heat. There was a long farm track which was quite stony so we had to walk most of that before following a road through and out of a village. This road was a long uphill before we turned off into the forestry and by this point it was very hot with lots of horse flies. Soon back out of the forestry onto a road and into some fields and then back onto a road which I recognised as being fairly close to home. Once on top by the photographer we could see the venue and I knew there was a long, steep downhill through fields back to the venue. I was very aware of time so wherever it wasn't quite as steep we were gently trotting on. It seemed to take forever to get to the bottom but when we did it was straight into trot as I only had a few minutes to spare!

After a good cool down it was time for vetting which he passed 😊. He had a higher heartrate than usual as although he was desperate for a wee he didn't go till in the vetting because the grass was far more tempting to eat.

The venue has plenty of room with a nice quiet vetting area, all the helpers and organisers are very helpful. It's one of the toughest rides I've done and I live on the side of a Welsh mountain!

Next day we then went to the Offa's Dyke Lydney Estate fun ride. Both horses were fresh and seemed to thoroughly enjoy doing a gentle 13km.

*Nicola Davies*

# Summer Schooling

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

Lesley has a lovely new 42 x 27 arena with parking in her field. 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 sessions will be in groups of a maximum of 3 and cost £25 for an hour for Carole and £21 for Sarah.

## **Dates are:**

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August- Sarah

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September- Carole

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September- Sarah

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

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

**PONIES/HORSES MUST MEET THE ENDURANCE GB FLU VACCINATION REQUIRMENTS AS OUTLINED ON PAGE 4**

# Winter Schooling

I have booked Usk College and Carole Broad FBHS for the Winter schooling sessions.

## **Dates are:**

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2020

# Golden Horseshoe 2019

Exmoor has always held a special place in my heart. John and I started going on holiday there many years ago before we got involved with endurance riding. It is very accessible from South Wales - you can stand on Dunkery Beacon and it is only 50 miles to the Sugar Loaf as the crow flies. It feels a world away though with dramatic coastal scenery, fabulous combes and moors, welcoming character villages with lovely pubs and cafes.

I first experienced the Golden Horseshoe ride when I went to help crew Marcy Pavord. We stayed at Court Farm in Exford and I had a wonderful time. I never dreamt then that one day I would get to compete there myself. I have been to Horseshoe just about every year since, crewing for Gina Harris and Mistress Harriet and then finally taking Ginny and later Dakota. The ride has changed a lot since those early years both in venue and format but Exmoor itself remains just as beautiful as ever.

My little arab, Indian Princess (Indi), has been to Horseshoe 8 times. We have never entered the major classes but have had great fun doing the 2 day 80K class. I'm fortunate to live in the Black Mountains in South Wales so we train on some fairly steep hills which set her up well. She first did the class when she 7 years old. Taking her to stay away from home and competing over 2 days really cemented our relationship and we both learnt a lot that year.

Unlike most modern endurance rides the course changes each year. The weather conditions and terrain are often challenging and you really have to concentrate and 'ride' each step of the way, listening to your horse and never asking too much of them.

This year day one for us went around the southern loop. It rode well and I was really pleased with the way Indi behaved. She seemed full of running and vetted well with a pulse of 45 in 20 minutes. Classes 1, 2 and 3 have an overnight vet hold at the end of day one. She spent the night grazing happily and ate and drank really well. No problem with the trot up on Sunday morning so we set off on the northern loop. This route was more difficult and one of the toughest I have ridden. The one day graded riders also did the northern route and for anyone riding on Exmoor for the first time this was a real challenge. Congratulations to all those who rode it – it's not always that hard honestly!

Indi went well again on Day 2, I did not push her at all and let her choose her own pace. We rode some of it on our own and enjoyed the company of other riders for some long stretches – she was happy with either. There were quite a lot of gates for which we were given a time allowance and I was glad to be carrying my hunting whip which I bought from the Brooke Hospital stall many years ago. Thankfully, as always, there were plenty of crew points which you really need on this ride. Gina and John always have great fun crewing on Exmoor and get chance to enjoy some fantastic scenery and good company.

It was quite a relief to cruise down the hill into Exford and know the venue was almost in sight. We took it steady up the last hill and we were soon trotting across the last field and over the finish line. Thankfully the weather had been kind to us again on the second day – Indi hates

the cold and rain so at least we didn't have to pile on too many rugs at the end. She passed the vetting; smiles all round and now time for a well deserved feed for her and tea and cakes for crew and friends.

Huge thanks must go to the Chisholm family for organising this fabulous ride along with their band of volunteers. I really hope Horseshoe happens again next year and if Indi doesn't get to compete again I shall definitely be there to help. If you haven't ridden on Exmoor yet put it on your 'to do' list – there is nothing quite like it.

*Karen Jones*

## HELPERS WANTED

**Our rides can not run without helpers, here are a list of our upcoming rides which need helpers. We look forward to hearing from you ☺**

**Govilon Fun Ride-** Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August

Helpers required to be gate stewards and checkpoint stewards.

If you can spare a few hours contact Nicola on 07968 928870 or n.davies91@yahoo.co.uk

**Michaelchurch Escley Fun Ride-** Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August

Helpers required for a number of roles.

If you can spare a few hours contact Andrea on 01981 510686 (not after 9pm please) or email quinnchamp@gmail.com

**Forest of Dean Autumn Belle National and Fun Ride-** Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September

If you can spare a few hours there are various roles available.

**Maryland Fun Ride-** Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October

If you can spare a few hours there are various roles available from time keeper to checkpoint stewards.

If you are available to help contact Abbi on 07873755827 or abbi\_tennant@hotmail.com

***Don't forget every time you help for a full half day your name is recorded in the 'Loyalty Scheme' and when you have reached 6 'helping occasions' you will receive your loyalty reward of a free group fun ride entry (riding members) or a store voucher if a non riding member.***

*What better way to end the season.....*

# Maryland Fun Ride

## Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October

Venue: Trelleck, halfway between Chepstow and Monmouth off B4293,  
NP25 4PQ

The route consists of mainly forestry tracks connected by quiet country lanes. Some moderate hills with some fantastic views over the Wye Valley. There will be two loops of approximately 12km each and a 7km lead rein/novice loop within the South loop. Route options of 7km(4 miles), 13km(7 miles), 20km (12 miles) and 25km (15 miles)

Start Times: Between 10:00 and 12:00. We recommend that lead-rein and novices start on the South loop before 11:00am. Other riders start on the North loop.

Entry Fees: £15 for non members or £10 for Associate or EGB members. Cheques made payable to Offa's Dyke Group of EGB

**PONIES/HORSES MUST MEET THE ENDURANCE GB FLU VACCINATION REQUIRMENTS AS OUTLINED ON PAGE 4**

Entries to-

Abigail Tennant

Mitchmore Del

Holme Lacy

Herefordshire

HR2 6LJ

Enquiries-

07873755827

abbi\_tennant@hotmail.com

Ride info will be available for download approximately 2 weeks before the ride.

<https://www.egboffasdyke.co.uk/maryland-fun-ride>

# Lydney Park Ride – The Pony Club “Have a go” Challenge

I often wonder why more people don't do Endurance riding?

Perhaps it is lack of awareness about the sport? Not knowing how to get started? Or where you can do it? How do you win? I don't think my horse is fit enough?

Both The Pony Club and Endurance GB are keen to encourage young riders to take up the sport – so it seemed a good idea to partner up and put on some sort of “have a go event” to attract the endurance riders of the future.

Nicola had been asking me for ideas for new rides, and Mary had suggested running something to attract young riders to endurance.

The two seemed to roll into one when I came up with the lovely Lydney Park Estate where our Pony Club branch had run successful “Tinsel Rides”; the landowners' children having all been members of our PC branch over the years. Being a local venue for Pony Club, it seemed an ideal opportunity to run our “Have a go Endurance challenge” from here linked to a Group Fun Ride.

As the Wye Valley Ride had to be cancelled – we had an opportunity to use this date for the proposed Lydney Park Ride.

After a few phone calls and emails, Mary was out route checking with Sheera Bathurst of Lydney Park Estate. By all counts Mary had a good time! Quote from her email that followed: “I had a stunning ride today with Sheera!” I had the tricky task of getting Pony Club children to come and try Endurance! I advertised the event to probably 50 Pony Club branches around the area. Unfortunately, our date clashed with all sorts of Pony Club championships qualifiers, but we managed to get 7 children to come along, one from as far afield as Ledbury!

We started the day with introductions, a ride briefing and an explanation of the post ride trot up and heart rates. These we were going to use in a formula to work out our winner!! Kids always want to win – so it seemed an idea to add this in! Mary altered the Performance formula to favour heart rate and therefore the fitter ponies – we didn't want everyone to go around at a gallop and end up with a heap of exhausted ponies!





Amazingly, all went to plan! No one got very lost, no one fell off, no one cried, no one had a horrible time!

Completion rosettes, Performance formula placings and Pony Club Intro to Endurance badges were duly awarded to all participants.

Following the ride, I received lovely feedback from parents:

“We both had a fabulous time”

“It was lovely to take them both out somewhere that was so relaxing and friendly, no pressure at all. The badge is already on her jumper and the fantastic rosettes hung up in her room. Such a good experience all round and I think those from our club who didn't make it really don't know what they were missing. We've had a round robin from our secretary asking for news of events attended so I

will be sure to post this lovely pic and tell them all about it”

“Huge thank you to all involved, and a special thanks to the lovely lady who was so patient with Cello for the vetting and let Sarah listen to his heartbeat too.”  
(Mary is the lovely lady!!)

“Please do send details of any other rides as I'd love to bring them again, I just didn't realise that this was something that ordinary people on ordinary ponies could do.”

So, a successful day!



***Fiona Williams***

# Lydney Park Estate Fun Ride

A new group social ride near Forest of Dean.

Great venue - opportunity to ride somewhere you wouldn't normally have access to.  
Rode alone - lucky as 5 minutes up road from home - took longer to get out of venue onto busy road with trailer than drive back!

Lovely varied route / good training ride: fields, woods, deer park, hills, stream crossing, no road work but riding alongside busy road good for traffic training.

Pony club - good to see young riders trying endurance/ vet check practice too!

Many thanks to all involved for a superb ride and lovely photo!

Hope we can do it again next year :)

*Janet Dobbyn and Faline*



*Copyright Steve Rogerson 2019*

22 year old Faline enjoying the Lydney fun ride.

*Photo courtesy of Steve Rogerson*

## **WANTED**

15.2-15.3hh, 4-8 year old

Middle weight type, no full TB's or full Cobs.

Wanted as a general all rounder to compete in low level endurance, fun rides, dressage etc. Long term home for right horse.

If you know of anything contact Nicola on [n.davies91@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:n.davies91@yahoo.co.uk)/ 07968 928870

# Dates for your Diary

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December

Schooling Lesson @ Trellech

**Govilon Fun Ride**

Schooling Lesson @ Trellech

**Michaelchurch Estate Fun Ride**

Schooling Lesson @ Trellech

**FOD Autumn Belle**

Schooling Lesson @ Trellech

Schooling Lesson @ Usk College

**Maryland Fun Ride**

Schooling Lesson @ Usk College

Schooling Lesson @ Usk College

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2020

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2020

(bad weather date alternative to 2/2/20)

Schooling Lesson @ Usk College

**Maryland Fun Ride**

Schooling Lesson @ Usk College

**Maryland Fun Ride Alternative date**

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

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