



Offa's Dyke Group
Of Endurance GB
Newsletter – March 2015
www.offasdykeegb.co.uk



Chairman's Comment

Hello members!

You will see from my name at the bottom that you have a new Chairman, I was elected at the first committee meeting following the BAM, in January – I intend to continue the good work of all my predecessors, and I hope my own personal style may influence the development of the Group positively.

EGB has been going through a period of soul-searching in recent months, and it is my heartfelt wish that as the new season gets started everyone may enjoy their sport and aim towards whatever personal goals they have. The EGB Board has several member changes, and now that the sponsorship initiative has been suspended, I hope we will see some positive initiatives to improve and promote our sport.

The Offa's Dyke Group committee also has several changes, and more about these on another page, but retiring after many years – latterly our Secretary – Rachel Williams, also retiring after a couple of years are Gill Talbot and Rachael Cratchley, and taking a lesser role than in the past is Carolyn Edwards. I am sure all members join the committee in thanking them very much for all the time and effort they have put into the Group committee, and will continue to do so in other capacities.

Many of you will have been at the March Hares ride, either as rider or stewarding – a shame it got a bit wet for a while, though not so bad as the sleet a couple of years ago – not unexpected for the beginning of March. I hope everyone had a good day – there were many smiling faces, and thanking emails and postings – a review meeting is being held in the coming week, with the object of making the Bluebell Ride even more of a success. The Bluebell Ride – fun/pleasure ride classes on Saturday 25th April and Graded ride classes from 30 to 65km on the Sunday – might be our final use of the current venue – more details on a later page.

Further events organised for your Group will be detailed in later pages, there will be the usual mix of Fun Rides, our other Graded Ride – Cranham on 26th July, and for the first time the Schooling Lessons will continue through the summer – thank you Nicola for this new initiative.

I hope you all have good plans for the season – I hope to be busy with 3 horses for the first time, though maybe not as one of them trotted up lame at the end of March Hares. Please let us know all about your aspirations, successes, and what you learn by emailing Carolyn, our newsletter editor!

Good luck, and may all your wishes come true in 2015,

Chris.

Committee Contacts

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Editor's Comment

I'd like to thank the contributors to this newsletter –particularly Piers Geddes and Delwyn Hall. I welcome all reports and articles, so please feel free to send them to me (preferably by email).

Those of you who have a paper copy of the newsletter should also find enclosed a trophy card, list of awards and fun ride entry form. Those who receive the newsletter electronically should get the other forms through the post. If you don't receive them, or want additional copies – they can be downloaded from the website 'forms' page.

Carolyn

Comments from Outgoing Chair....

A bit of a change of lead & approach, but basically the same enthusiasm for riding our horses both within our group & beyond. Fiona & I will attempt to keep Chris in line as Chair, & our new committee members will hopefully give renewed focus in all aspects of group activities.

I'm sure it goes without saying that we would like to apologise for the lateness of this newsletter & accompanying paperwork. Hey - we can't get it right all the time.

The new season has started well, FOD March Hares had a record entry, & many smiling faces. Neighbouring Wentwood was similarly not only a success weatherwise, but had good entries & happy riders this last weekend.

Forward!!

Heather

Schooling Sessions

I have organised some schooling sessions over the next few months with Carole Broad FBHS. They are going to be held at Jane Smith's in Trostrey , Usk, NP5 1LA and Lesley Dunn's in Trellech, NP25 4QN (by Maryland venue). Directions will be provided with booking.

Jane has a lovely, new 40 x 25 arena with hardstanding parking on her yard which will be ideal for the first session and if the weather gets bad. There are also a selection of poles and jumps available if required.

Lesley also has a lovely new 42 x 27 arena with parking in her field (with the exception of severe weather) and if not in the local forestry. You are welcome to go for a hack in the neighbouring forestry after your lesson.

The sessions will be in groups of 3 and cost £23 for an hour.

I understand the March date is very soon but if I have enough for 2 groups the session will run as both the instructor and school are available. Please let me know ASAP if you want to come.

The dates are-

Saturday 21st March- Jane's
Saturday 11th April- Lesley's
Saturday 2nd May
Saturday 13th June
Saturday 18th July
Saturday 29th August
Saturday 19th September

I will finalise the location of the other sessions once the first two sessions have taken place and dependent on popularity. Currently they are all Saturday sessions but some could be changed to Sundays if needed. I am also flexible to adding new dates and the location of the sessions dependent on the interest.

Here are some directions to Jane's to give you an idea-

If coming from Monmouth A40

At Raglan roundabout take the 2nd exit signposted Gwehelog. Follow this road for 1.7 miles, you go round a wide 45 left and shortly after, there is a house on the left, take the right turning immediately by the house. Follow this lane for 0.6 miles then go straight over at the crossroads and after 0.3 miles there is a another crossroads and a layby. Turn right and Jane's is immediately on your right.

If coming from Abergavenny it will be the 4th exit then follow above directions.

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

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

'Come and join us at the Bluebell Fun Ride (Saturday 25th April).

Lovely routes and hopefully masses of bluebells to be seen! Please refer to the Offas Dyke website for full details'

Helpers for Bluebell Ride 25 + 26 April

The organisers of the Bluebell ride would be very happy to hear from anyone who is able to help at the Social Ride on Saturday 25 April and/or the National Ride on 26 April.

Any help is gratefully received - even a few hours manning a road crossing would be much appreciated. Just get in touch! Don't be shy! You will be made very welcome and will experience that warm glow of knowing that you helped make someone else's day better!

REMEMBER: Without volunteers, we have no rides.

Contact the organisers Andrea Champ (quinnchamp@gmail.com) or Cecilia Lindberg (ACL@cecilialindberg.co.uk) who will be delighted and grateful to hear from you.

Committee changes for 2015

Chris Wray

As mentioned in my introduction, we have several committee changes for 2015.

I was nominated and elected unopposed to Chair, and I am very fortunate to being supported by two Vice-Chairs: the retiring Chair Heather, and new committee member Fiona Griffiths.

Retiring Secretary Rachel Williams has handed over to Kerri Costello

Treasurer – Suzanne Garlick has handed over to Sarah Rogerson, but remains on the committee

Health and Safety – Gill Talbot has retired from the committee and Fiona Griffiths has taken over this role

Groups Liaison Officer – Carolyn Edwards has retired from this role, but will continue for the time being as Membership Sec., and Newsletter editor. New committee member Fenella Lloyd has taken over Liaison with EGB Groups.

All other roles on the committee are unchanged.

So we welcome Fiona Griffiths and Fenella Lloyd to the committee. We are also being supported going forward by Cecilia Lindberg who is now our main Facebook page admin, but will also help us in other areas.

At the second committee meeting, we also decided to create some small sub-committees, which can progress initiatives between committee meetings, so that greater progress can be made, and the committee meetings can be kept to a reasonable duration! These sub-committees are:

- Group Resources (principally the caravan and all its contents) – Heather and Suzanne
- Rides development – Chris, Sarah and Andrea
- Training and Educational events – Nicola, Fiona and Kerri
- We hope to have a 4th one to cover Publicity.

Rides Development.

There was a time only a few years ago when Offa's Dyke Group held 5 national rides each year, one of which (Ludlow) included some CER classes. So this small group will be looking at how and where we can expand our portfolio of national rides. Any suggestions welcome! This will be a fairly long-term initiative, as it takes some years to develop a 30 or 40km loop with suitable venue and crewing points, and run a couple of fun rides to test out the feasibility – so we need to start thinking sooner rather than later!

The first area of focus is to retain the 2 Forest of Dean rides. We have been informed by the Forestry that our current venue may not be available for the future – and we have discovered that there is a proposal to create a community farm in the 2 fields. There is also some local opposition, so this is not a definite situation. However it provides impetus for us to look for a better venue, even if we could continue to use the current one. If anybody has any suggestions for us, we would very much welcome them!

We have also lost some of our fun ride routes/venues, so are already following up a couple of ideas, but want to add further ideas – all help welcome! Ideally we should be running fun rides (some would be classes in national rides) every month from February to September. This year's plan has a gap from 26th April to 26th July during which all we can offer at short notice is schooling lessons.

Annual Awards Evening

Many thanks to Gill Talbot for organizing this year's BAM and awards evening at the Star Inn. It made a welcome change to have the evening in a pub with food provided. The venue was comfortable and the food delicious! The BAM was followed by the awards of the group trophies and rosettes for 2014. Congratulations to all winners (listed below)



I'd like to give special thanks to Piers Geddes, who for the second year gave bottles of Champaign to the organisers of each group ride. As organiser of the Cranham National ride I know just how much hard work goes into them and it is great to be thanked and receive such a lovely token of appreciation. Piers made his presentation in a very amusing way - ably assisted by Barbara Rees, who demonstrated Pier's special gadget to allow ride organisers to give themselves a well-deserved 'pat on the back'.

Carolyn

Offa's Dyke Group of Endurance GB -Trophies and Awards 2014			
<u>Pleasure Ride Rosettes</u>		<u>Associate Members Trophy</u>	
Alison Knight	Rory Thomas	Rory Thomas	
<u>Pandora Distance Rosettes</u>		<u>Native/Neddy Rosette</u>	
<u>240km</u>		Oliver Twist IV	Fiona Griffiths
Oakleaze Farm Czelo	Louise Rich		
Sa'da Sekora	Gill Talbot	<u>Thoroughbred Rosette</u>	
		Sa'da Sekora	Gill Talbot
<u>320km</u>			
Stella II	Sally Lewis	<u>Bonanza Trophy</u>	
Open T' Offers	Rachael Cratchley	Zakhir	Charlie Fleming
Chica Gitano	Ally Knight	Bright Dawn	Sue Loveridge
Warrens Hill Rubyn	Sarah Rogerson		
Indygo	Mary Stubbs	<u>Mitchell Arab Racehorse to Endurance Horse</u>	
		Barik	Abigail Tennant
<u>400km</u>			
Bright Dawn	Sue Loveridge	<u>Cindy Trophy</u>	
Oakleaze Farm Cziko	Louise Rich	Stella II	Sally Lewis
Oakleazefarm Czako	Sue Rich	Frayaa	Lesley Dunn
Roundhills Harvest Shine	Heather Evans		
Cs Ibn Fiesta	Debbie Williams	<u>Pandora Trophy</u>	
Hendrewen Pirate	Nicola Davies	Nicola Ravensford	Black Sand
Zakhir	Charlie Fleming	Hannah Verkerk	Bint Al Reeh Janoob
<u>Warrens Hill Arabians First 80km</u>		<u>Starlight Trophy</u>	
Cs Ibn Fiesta	Debbie Williams	Psyngari	Piers Geddes
Chica Gitano	Ally Knight	Azaleah	Rachael Cratchley
Balishla	Sam Owen		
Bh Supersonic	Fiona Griffiths	<u>Belstar Trophy</u>	
Open T' Offers	Rachael Cratchley	Oakleazefarm Czako	Sue Rich
Warrens Hill Rubyn	Sarah Rogerson	Cs Ibn Fiesta	Debbie Williams
Indygo	Mary Stubbs		
Sa'da Sekora	Gill Talbot	<u>Warrens Hill Arabians Trophy</u>	
		Chica Gitano	Ally Knight
<u>Warrens Hill Arabians First 160km</u>		Indygo	Mary Stubbs
Oakleaze Farm Cziko	Louise Rich		
Oakleazefarm Czako	Sue Rich	<u>Offa's Dyke Challenge</u>	
Oliver Twist IV	Fiona Griffiths	Bright Dawn	Sue Loveridge
Takwenya	Chris Wray	Hendrewen Pirate	Nicola Davies
<u>Grade 1 Rosettes</u>		<u>Madoc Trophy</u>	
<u>400km</u>		Zakhir	Charlie Fleming
Bright Dawn	Sue Loveridge	Bright Dawn	Sue Loveridge
Frayaa	Lesley Dunn		
Stella II	Sally Lewis	<u>Teams Trophy</u>	
		Nicola Davies, Belinda Stewart, Sally Lewis	
<u>Bilbo's Rainbow</u>			
Zawadi	Chris Wray	<u>Shimara Cup</u>	
Midnight Star	Rachel Williams	Ann-Marie Pelc	
Ground Kontrol	Sue Rich	Fiona Griffiths	
Spring Steps	Kerri Costello		
		<u>Offa's Dyke Hero Award:</u>	
		Ally Knight	

Below are some useful tips sent to me by Delwyn Hall

A FEW GOOD BUYS FOR CREWING.

Here are a few things I found very useful for crewing and after care:

BATTLES event salve (no prohibited ingredients) I smear this liberally on horses heels. It does not hold in grit and is easily washed off. I have seen it used on thin skinned horses wherever the tack touches and underneath the tummy. Also good inside ears to repel midges on rides.

PREMIER EQUINE COLD BOOTS - These are excellent at cooling legs but do need to be soaked well beforehand.

WOOF ICE BOOTS - These have mesh pockets inside, which hold ice cubes - more efficient if ice is smashed .

WESSEX FABRIC POULTICE BOOTS - These are water repellent with padded soles and clip fasteners - Ideal to use in vet holds or after work on hard ground. We put smashed ice into the bottom, then put on hoof and then add a little more ice and fasten. They stay on even if horse wanders around (from Shires - Hintons in Leominster will order them in for you---postage versus trip to Leomister?).

PLASTIC JUGS FROM ASDA, cheap and large enough to use for pouring on water, more efficient than sponges and cheap enough to replace when cracked!

ALAN AND PAGE FAST FIBRE FEED. This looks revolting but all horse who tried it eat it up well, it really is fast and can be made up fresh to tempt the fussy ones! I find that a little and often seems to work. It can even be made into a sloppy mash or made with warm water on a bitter cold day.

THERMOS FLASKS for the early cold rides. Fill with very hot water to make mash, or add to drinking water and to the water you are sponging the sweaty marks off with. Better for your hands and horse.

Delwyn

The following piece was sent to me by our regular contributor Piers Geddes in January. Since then things have moved on with the Meyden deal, but I hope you agree that his light hearted take on the situation is still very amusing to read. Thanks Piers!

Mr Geddes Goes Bling!

'Sponsor: one who undertakes to be responsible for another; a godmother or godfather; an advertiser who pays for advertisements of his goods to be introduced into radio or television programmes.' So says my old dictionary; a Christmas present from mum in 1973. Ah, one sighs, such innocent days. Actually the definition's on the same page as 'spondulics' ('money, cash') and 'sponger' ('one who sponges; a mean parasite'), but that's just coincidence. Anyway words and meanings often swap around. In some circles the hunting leopard, or 'cheetah', is known as the rule-breaker.

Now a few folks had trouble swallowing, let alone digesting, our parent organisation's sponsorship idea. Myself, I took refuge in the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, a second century Roman emperor. 'Our anger and annoyance harm us more than the things which anger and annoy us.' Wise words from Uncle Marcus.

But if money makes the world go round, the world of endurance could have been spinning like a top. Now economists often talk about the trickle-down effect of great wealth, so if any trickles down to me, it's been earmarked first, for the refreshment of Team Geddes's riding wardrobe. Look out, then, for my elongated but portly frame in gold-encrusted riding tights, topped with a Swarovski crystal helmet finished

in black velour. (Is discretion the better part of velour? I think we should be told.)

Meanwhile my horse will drink his sugar beet from a silver pail, and a personally selected team of assistants – chef, chauffeur, masseuse, vet and groom – will comprise my crew, all dressed in off-the-shoulder taffeta ball gowns with matching tiaras. Forty kilometres in the Forest of Dean will never be the same again. And as Team G's fleet of lilac Range Rovers plunges into the woods, together with my elite security staff, the venue will throb to the sound of our theme tune, Whole Lotta Sheikhing Goin' On. Or is it Sheikh, Rattle and Roll? Just dig it, baby.

Karen Jones sent details of this local fun ride. She says 'it is organised by the same lady who did one from a different location last autumn. Lovely ride, relaxed but well organised. Here is her description for the one this spring which would be an excellent training ride for Horseshoe'.

Sunday Bank Holiday Fun Ride

Brechfa Pool, Llandefalle, Brecon, Powys, LD3 0NL.

Marked route fun ride of 13, 9 or 6 miles approx. over open rolling countryside. Fabulous views. Easy access off A470. First horse not before 10.30 – last 12.30. Adults £15 – children £10.

Hot/cold food available all day.

Contact Peta Mellors 01874 754325/07967157721

Dates for your diary

Schooling Lesson	Saturday 21 March	
Schooling Lesson	Saturday 11 April	
Group Fun Ride	Saturday 25 April	FOD Bluebell
National Ride	Sunday 26 April	FOD Bluebell
Schooling Lesson	Saturday 2 May	
Schooling Lesson	Saturday 13 June	
Schooling Lesson	Saturday 18 July	
National Ride	Sunday 26 July	Cranham
Group Fun Ride	Sunday 16 August	Govilon
Schooling Lesson	Saturday 29 August	
Group Fun Ride	Sunday 13 September	Bwlch Riad
Schooling Lesson	Saturday 19 September	

More information on the website 'rides & events' page

Web site: www.offasdykeegb.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.