



Offa's Dyke Group
Of Endurance GB
Newsletter – April 2011
www.offasdykeegb.co.uk



Chairman's Comment

2011 has given us excellent weather for our early rides, fingers crossed for the rest of the year.

Rides news and thanks: Many thanks to ride organisers Belinda Josephi who's done two social rides and helped organise March Hares and Bluebell. Nicola Davies for Govilon. Mark Holland, who ran Maryland and still has Tintern to come. Mary Stubbs and Chris Wray. Our Forest routes have been changed this year to remove as much road as possible and this is due to Debbie Williams who does route for March Hares and Chris on Bluebell, I hope you all enjoyed the changes. It takes about 15-20 helpers on the day so thanks to everyone who's helped and if you haven't please volunteer for those rides later in the year. Entries have been very slow to come in and this does put rides at risk of being cancelled, or days reduced so please enter earlier.

Ludlow new route and date: Judy and Dick Taylors efforts to keep and improve the ride, has involved a lot of hard work and- yes a face book page! So please support them and enter.

EGB'S 10TH anniversary will be celebrated at Blaenavon Social ride early in July with a special plaque for everyone.

Offa's Dyke Group Members International: Fiona Griffiths and Andrea Champ from the group were selected for the world class start squad team and rode at Mont Le Soie on 30th April. Louise and Sue Rich also travelled to compete as individuals. See 'Stop Press' on page 3 for how they all got on.

Training: novice training day was held at Liz Taylor's yard with 12 attendees and it was good to see some young riders attend. Many thanks to Liz and Carolyn Edwards for organising this. More details on training/coaching in newsletter.

Website and newsletter can only be interesting and up to date if you send in photo's, articles or just send a few lines about the rides/training you have been to.

Good luck for the rest of the season to everyone. See you at the rides.

Gina

Editor's Comment

I cannot believe we are in to May already and I have not done a single ride since the Christmas one. Having been trotting back and forward to hospital with a heart rate that would certainly NOT pass the vet, I have really not had enough energy to get my horses fit, though hope soon to do so. I have to thank Carolyn Edwards who has really done most of the work for this newsletter. I am sure most members do not realise just how much work Carolyn puts in for the Group not only for the newsletter but also organising training days and dressage lessons. She has also had a nasty problem. One would never think of delivering Census reminders as a hazardous occupation, but poor Carolyn had the distal part of her right middle finger badly bitten by a dog as she pushed the form through the letter box which has temporarily stopped her driving and riding (thus losing a chance to repeat last year's good result at Golden Horseshoe) and will permanently interfere with her other hobby of quilting!

As reported elsewhere we would make a plea for riders not to leave it to the very last minute to enter rides. We also desperately need more offers of help at rides. This year we are again repeating the entry of a raffle ticket for each ride helped at with vouchers being given to those whose name is pulled from the hat at the AGM. The more times you help the more tickets go in the draw!

Margaret McKiddie

STOP PRESS!

CONGRATULATIONS to Offa's Dyke members who have had a very successful trip to Mont Le Soie in Belgium on 30th April as part of the EGB World Class Start Squad.

As we reported on our web site, Fiona Griffiths and Andrea Champ were selected to compete as part of the British Team of the World Class Start Squad. Sue and Louise Rich, who competed on the team at the same event last year decided to go again. They all rode in the 120km FEI 2*.

Louise Rich was 4th and Sue Rich 6th. They were not in the team but riding as individuals. Andrea Champ who was a Team member was 9th. Sadly the other Offa's Dyke Team member, Fiona Griffiths, was out at the first vet gate.

Andrea's account of leading up to the event is in this newsletter and I hope she will do a follow up account of the event for our next newsletter.

Dates for your diary

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Ludlow - National Ride | Sat 18 - Sun 19 June |
| Blaenavon – social ride | Sun 3 July |
| Committee meeting | Thurs 7 July |
| Open meeting | TBA |
| Cranham – National Ride | Sun 21 August |
| Tintern – National Ride | Sun 11 September |
| Plump Hill – social ride | Sun 18 September |
| Annual Group Meeting | Sat 10 December (note change of date) |

[More information on the website 'rides & events' page](#)

Late Entries for Rides

I wonder how many of you know how close we were to cancelling the Bluebell Ride this year because people sent their entries in very close to the closing date if not after it. Remember that with a National Ride if you withdraw before the closing date you will get a full refund of your entry fee. This means there is no risk in entering early – so why wait?

There are inevitable expenses in putting on a ride, the hire of the venue, vets, first aid, trail bike riders and food for helpers. The Ride Organiser is supposed to raise enough money for ride entries to cover all these expenses. For example, the Bluebell National Ride needed a minimum of about £1700 to cover the expenses. This represents approx 60 ride entries. Similarly the group social rides need to cover their costs.

The week before the closing date for the Bluebell National Ride, we had 17 entries and only 6 for the group social ride. This meant that we had to drop down both to a one day ride on Sunday, before a sudden flurry of last minute entries rescued the two day event and then we had to undo everything and re-book all the support people.

Remember that the ride organiser also has to send out information to you at least the week before, even for pleasure rides – so you can really help us by booking well in advance.

We know money is tight but it would be a shame if you decided to enter a ride at the last minute only to discover it had been cancelled through too few entries being received.

Trophy Card Reminder!

Please remember that you must get your Trophy Card correctly signed for your non-competitive rides (NCRs), noting that you can also claim for other Group's Social Rides. You are also responsible for getting your card signed when helping at any of our rides or events. Failure to do these actions will mean that your points will be disregarded.

EGB 10th Anniversary!

This year is the tenth anniversary of the formation of Endurance GB. Those of you who have very recently come to the sport may not know that for very many years there were 2 different societies running Endurance competitions. BERA (British Endurance Riding Association) which was allied to the British Horse Society and EHPS (Endurance Horse and Pony Society) which was independent and in many ways less formal than BERA (No tack inspection and less formal dress!) Both Societies organised ERs under similar rules to the present but the non-competitive rides were different. BERA ran bronze, silver and gold rides each having a different speed for completion but no grading, only pass or fail, whereas EHPS did graded rides very similar to the present EGB system.

As the sport grew it was felt that it would be more sensible for the two societies to amalgamate, but there were many differences to be sorted out before it could happen. I had joined both societies when I started Endurance as there were only a small number of rides at that time within my easy travelling distance. I eventually became a member of the EHPS management committee and for my sins, I was on the working party which eventually produced a compromise acceptable to both societies. In 2001 Endurance GB was born and that year at certain rides Inaugural plaques were given to all completions.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the birth of EGB and it was thought a Tenth anniversary plaque would be good. Members were invited to enter a proposed design for that plaque in a competition, which was won by Bryony Dickens of the SE Group. Each group has to nominate a pleasure ride at which these plaques will be awarded rather than a rosette and for Offa's Dyke that ride will be Blaenavon so please come along and give your support and join in the celebration.

Margaret McKiddie

Blaenavon Group Social Ride

Whistle Inn, Wales, Sunday 3 July

Thanks to Belinda Stewart for kindly agreeing to run the very successful Blaenavon Ride again this year. The landlord of the Whistle Inn very generously allows us to use his field as a venue.



We are pleased to announce that Blaenavon is the Offa's Dyke 'EGB 10th Anniversary' celebration ride and that all riders will have the option to receive a commemorative plaque (as indicated above) or a Pleasure Ride rosette (whichever they prefer).

Plenty of cantering over open hills with fantastic views. Incorporates part of the National Cycle Network. 16km & 26km routes (10 & 16 miles). Pub open all day. Non riding members can visit Big Pit National Coal Museum within walking distance of the venue.

Entries:

Belinda Stewart, Ty Jarrett, Brunant Rd, Clydach, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, NP70NG.

Tel: 01873 832272 Email: belinda.stewart484@btinternet.com

Use Offa's Dyke Social Ride entry form £10 members & AMs £18 Non-Members

Venue: If not local, we advise you follow the A465 pass Abergavenny towards Brynmawr. Do not turn onto the B4246 signed Blaenavon / Big Pit but continue on the A465 for about 2 miles to a roundabout. Go straight ahead to continue on the A465. As you climb through Clydach Gorge you approach another roundabout. Take 1st left signed Brynmawr & Big Pit, follow to next roundabout & turn left. Follow this road for about 2 ½ miles, crossing over 2 cattle grids. You will see a sign for Whistle Inn, turn right down to the pub car park.

Coaching for Certificate of Endurance

EGB has set up a syllabus for people to obtain a certificate of endurance. There are 3 different levels and trained coaches to run them.

We have been reviewing run

ing a level 2 course which is designed for a group of six people, but we need to know if we have sufficient people interested.

It's aimed at anyone wanting to learn more about Endurance and improve their horse management skills. Full details can be found on www.enduranceegb.co.uk under the coaching section. The syllabus will be a basis for the course, but the emphasis will be on how this can be used in Endurance

Course will involve pre attendance paper based work, classroom instruction, ground and ridden work with your horse. It's likely to be 3 sessions of 4 hours. Approx cost £15/20 per session

We are hoping to hold them at Holme Lacy College Herefordshire

Express an interest via the contact button on the website attn Gina Harris

Ludlow Ride 18th and 19th June 2011

Brand new route!!!

The plans for Ludlow 2011 are coming together now and as I write this I am very aware that entries are now open!

That's not the only thing I am aware of; Dick and I have a hard act to follow. Margaret, helped by Paul as we all know was responsible for many successful Ludlow Rides, most of which were over three days. It's perhaps only now I appreciate just how much organising went to them, and we have only a two day ride!

Having such fond memories of little Trixie tearing around Ludlow with equally little Liz hanging on tight, is for us some of the motivation to try and ensure this ride continues to provide great pleasure and lots of fun for the riders and of course the hard working, dedicated, unappreciated, under nourished, crews. (☺ I am bound to say that aren't I?)

When we started the planning process, we initially looked for an alternative to crossing the A49, as the Police made it quite clear to us they had serious reservations about us continuing to take the horses over it. We initially looked to see if we could access Mortimore Forest, through another way, but there really is no alternative.



So looking north of the race course we, began to plan the route that will take the longer distances, up towards Diddlebury Common, and onto Wenlock Edge. Although some of it is the same as used previously, some of it is quite new, and hopefully, therefore, will provide a new experience for riders. There will be an on course vet gate, which will have a couple of the routes going through it.

There are two new trophies. One is the Diddlebury Dash, for riders wishing to enter the same horse for the 40km ride on both the Saturday and Sunday and The Mytton Way Team Challenge, which rewards any four individual riders entering classes as individuals and in addition, nominates the team for the challenge trophy. The results of 3 out of the 4 horses will count. A team of three may enter, but then all three will need to complete the ride. (More details in the schedule)

The Saturday evening meal and bar is contributory to Ludlow's great atmosphere and we hope this year riders will again make a weekend of the ride and enjoy the meal provided as usual, by Lesley and a drink in the bar too.

To boost funds for the ride, on Saturday evening we hope to have a wii challenge, where the young and not so young can prove their skills on some of the wii games. A £25 cash prize has been donated to the highest score on the evening – so get practising and come along!

Please do keep an eye on the web site, as Rob Edwards has been great, updating it on a very regular basis and as we finalise the route and the finer details of the ride, it will, I am sure continue to have all the latest news hot off of the press.

We hope to see you all at Ludlow – riding, helping or better still both!

New route now completed - download map from the website

Dick & Judy Taylor

Photos Needed!!

Offa's Dyke Group is planning to produce a fixtures calendar for 2012 featuring photos taken by members throughout the 2011 season. This could be of anything from members riding at events (UK and abroad, Young Riders, FEI etc), action shots in the vetting area, crewing, dogs or panoramic views like Rob Edward's wonderful photo of the Forest's stained glass window that featured on a cover of EGB magazine last year. The idea is to produce the calendar as an A4 or A5 single card that will be sent to all our members and also made available at our rides to promote future events. Our webmaster will create a contact point through the website for you to email any photos that you would like to be considered for inclusion. Apart from being a fun memento of the competing season, this could be a really exciting promotional tool and an opportunity to show off the photographic skills of our members and their crews. Please don't send any professional photos taken at events as this will infringe copyright.

Suzanne Garlick

Golden Horseshoe ride for Mary King

It is exciting news for Endurance riders that Mary King, highly successful eventer, who has just won and been second at the Rolex Kentucky Derby soon after being third at Badminton, is about to sample Endurance Riding, taking part in this year's Golden Horseshoe . She has entered for Day One of the Exmoor Experience riding Karen Jones horse Mellow Jazz and will be accompanied by EGB Junior Champion Abby Chisholm on Cyrion. At least being an eventer, who frequently has two horses to ride cross country she should not find 25 miles on Exmoor too daunting , unlike a team of Showjumpers who took part in a fun event at Cirencester some years ago. When asked what was the furthest he had ridden before 'Twice round the ring at Hickstead !'

We all wish Mary a very successful and enjoyable ride.

Committee News

Purchases

In preparation for the news season, we've been spending some of our group funds in buying new equipment. Including – as some of you may have already seen at the Forest of Dean rides a new caravan. Thanks to an eagle eyed Julian Costello, who discovered the caravan on a neighboring farm and secured it for a price that had all the other groups jealous at the national groups meeting. Dave Hall very kindly agreed to seal the deal and store the caravan for us. Having run his expert eye over it, he tells us

it's in lovely condition and you could go on holiday in it tomorrow! We also bought a few items for the ride kit, including two new folding tables and first aid kits.

Our other main expense has been another set of bibs, as some of the old yellow ones were falling apart. The new set of 100 gives us the option of passing these from one social ride organiser to another, along with a separate ride kit. This will hopefully save some of the driving around we have had to do to deliver stuff from one end of the area to another to equip ride organisers. Thanks to Belinda Josephi, we also have a natty bib holder she cleverly found on the internet at a fraction of the cost of the usual ride ones (I think they were probably meant to store shoes, but they work a treat for bibs). You may have noticed it hanging from the secretary's trailer at Forest of Dean rides.

Training sub committee

Our committee meetings are always very busy trying to get through all the usual business in time to finish before midnight! We've decided that we just don't have time to fully discuss the training needs of the group and organise the fine detail of training events. To help this we've formed a training sub-committee to meet and report back to the main committee. Volunteers so far are Gina, Delwyn, Debbie and Carolyn. We hope to organise some training events later in the season & winter, including something for riders ready to do longer distances & ERs and possibly the EGB Endurance certificates (see Gina's message earlier about expressing interest for this).

If you have any requests for training or ideas, please contact any one of us. Contact details on page 2, or use the 'contact' button on the website.

Open meeting in August

As mentioned above, we feel as a committee that we are always so busy getting through the business of running the group, that we rarely have time to stand back and look at the 'bigger picture' and way forward as a group in the longer term.

We'd like to give all members the chance to come along to a meeting and give us their ideas about what they'd like the group to do for them. To help this, we thought we'd run an extra meeting one evening in August, which any member or associate member can attend. Date & venue to be decided.

Helpers raffle

Following the success of last year's 'helpers raffle'. We've decided to run the same scheme again as a thank you to everyone who kindly gives up their time to help at one of our rides and events. At last years Awards Evening 5 lucky helpers were given a £10 Countrywide voucher. Remember each time you help your name goes into the hat. Each ride needs a large number of helpers on the day to enable it to run, so please volunteer to help at least once each season so that we can run the rides for you to enjoy. If you don't know the ride organiser details, please use the 'contact' button on the website & we'll pass on your offer.

Young riders

Message from your YR rep – Louise Rich

Finally home and back to work after a fantastic week away with the British team at Mont le Soie in Belgium. Yet again another amazing trip for me and Cziko. We entered the 120km FEI ** on the Sunday. He was excellent as normal and gave me a fantastic ride just like last year coming in 4th so I'm very pleased with him. Now I'm getting ready for golden horse shoe and hope to see some of you there, hope everyone's season is going to plan and all the horses are ok, good luck for anyone going to rides in the next few weeks. If anyone needs advise feel free to ask

Lou email: louise_rich@hotmail.co.uk

Govilon group social ride

Thanks once again to Nicola and her family for organizing the Govilon social ride in March. The weather was kind and the going near perfect, particularly on the lovely long canter stretch over the Blorenges. Fantastic training ride at this early stage in the season. Some really challenging pulls up the mountain, which would normally be rewarded by spectacular views, if the mist hadn't come down. Never mind – as one happy rider said afterwards, a good excuse to come back next year to see the views. As the venue is so spacious, Nicola was happy to accept entries on the day for this ride and this resulted in a massive entry of almost 80 riders and proved a very nice fund raiser for the group. Photo below taken by Steve Rogerson of his wife Mary and daughters Sarah and Rachael (not sure how they all got there in a two horse trailer).



Sarah Rogerson's talk on Kentucky

About 40 people gathered in the Queen's Head pub in Monmouth on 22nd January to hear from Sarah Rogerson about her experiences at the World Equestrian Games in Kentucky. She went there as a reserve for the British team, not expecting to ride but included at the last minute when one of the British Horses was withdrawn as unlikely to pass the preliminary vetting. Sarah had been fortunate to ride and qualify on an American horse Winston who was obviously already in America. There would not have been time to fly another substitute horse from Britain. Even so, as Sarah described in her talk there was little time to spare to contact his owners and get him to the venue in time. There was also a rushed call to mother Mary Stubbs in UK, who had not planned to be there but managed to arrive just in time for the opening ceremony. Sarah fortunately had packed her riding kit 'just in case' never expecting it would be needed.

Sarah gave us a vivid description illustrated with super slides of the full event, which of course she also did a full report in our October newsletter, but listening to it first hand was very much more exciting. As you know she did complete successfully and the British team were sixth overall. Sarah then answered a lively variety of questions. There was obviously great camaraderie in the British teams covering all the disciplines and Sarah had been impressed to meet Mary King and William Fox-Pitt who came down to the vet gate to watch what went on. (Perhaps that is what tempted Mary King to come along and sample a part of the Golden Horseshoe Ride this year)

Margaret McKiddie

Illustrated talk on Endurance Equine Nutrition by Sybil Dryburgh BVSc Cert GP(EqP) MRCVS

Sybil is a team vet at the Cross-Country Clinic at Devauden, part of Chepstow Veterinary Health Centre - but more importantly for us is also an experienced Endurance rider, competing to FEI level - some in the UK, but mainly in the US and Canada.

Sybil spoke to us on feeding Endurance horses through the year, with reference to the nutritional needs of competing at different Levels (distances and speeds), keeping horses well and happy. Her talk was informed by her veterinary training, published research, and her experience of successfully competing in a wide range of Endurance events.

Sybil first took us through the replacement of each of the nutrition groups, explaining the metabolic effects of how they can be fed –such as the insulin effect of feeding large carbohydrate (i.e. grains) meals.

Next was a section on keeping your horse hydrated and with sufficient electrolytes, and the signs if you do not.

Having had a quick run through the technical aspects, informed by published research, Sybil turned her talk to the practical aspects of managing endurance horses.

She talked us through the optimum content and timing of meals before and after rides, and the importance of trickle-feeding during long rides.

Then she discussed how to get a horse drinking and keeping it drinking all day.

Finally she covered how we should approach feeding in the off season, and during the gaps between competitions.

The talk was extremely informative, with even the most experienced members of our Group being able to take away ideas on adapting their feeding strategy. There were around 30 members present at a venue new to us – English Bicknor village hall, which was excellent and even had a bar! Thanks to Suzanne Garlick for suggesting and arranging the venue.

A collection was held during the evening - since Sybil very generously gave her time, the Group has made a donation of £100 to her favourite charity – SPANA, who support people in the 3rd world who rely on animals for their livelihood, through providing to them education and veterinary treatment.

Chris Wray

Schooling Lessons

Following the success of the last two winters, we continued with the schooling lessons at Huntley Riding School with Carole Broad FBHS. We started in October and booked as many Sundays as were available until February (7 in total) followed by a dressage competition open to all Offa's Dyke members.

The lessons were very popular, with a total of 32 different people coming to the lessons, each fitting in as many as they could, depending on other commitments, the snow etc.

Carole enjoyed seeing the progress of all horses and riders and was particularly pleased with those who competed in the dressage competition, as she felt they had each achieved their own personal goals. I must say, having watched most of the lessons over the winter, I also saw huge improvements in the horse & rider combinations and enjoyed seeing them growing in confidence.

I asked riders for some feedback at the end of the winter sessions. Some of their comments below:

"I have a much better seat & position & am not afraid of her bucking while out hacking because I managed to sit on some vigorous leaps in the school & 'ride through' them. We have been doing almost collected canters to order out hacking recently, rather than just falling into canter because of increased speed & leaning forward. I have bags more confidence because of this. Considering we have only had one practice in a school (Sharon's outdoors) other than at the actual lessons & barely any winter hacking (plus Swallow's little rest!), I am VERY pleased with the result. I just wish we could do more now. Roll on next winter....(did I actually say THAT?!)" *Heather Evans*

"Safe environment improved steering and brakes which is very useful when we come to scary things on rides. Shame I couldn't make them all. Horse understands that working with other horses is not exciting." *Gina*

"I took Woody, my relatively new Arab gelding, to do some much needed flatwork lessons. Was unsure how he would react as he tends to be a bit OTT when given a new situation. Carole soon had him weighed up and just kept things nice and calm for him and, as she said, as soon as realises it is not going to be exciting then things will start to improve. She was not wrong! After three sessions he was starting to work in a much better outline and very much more relaxed, hopefully he will gradually build up the right muscles now to be able to work more efficiently which is essential for endurance horses. It is amazing how Carole manages to get you to do one or two simple things that make all the difference to horse and rider. Cannot wait til next winters lessons." *Debbie Williams*

"I thought the lessons were excellent - very good value for money, especially since Carole Broad is a top level instructor and the lessons were indoors. I particularly wanted to take my horse to a group lesson to get her used to working with other horses in unfamiliar surroundings and away from home. Although 9 years old, she is very inexperienced and green and also very "clingy" to her stablemates at home. Most of the lessons were done at walk and trot and Carole gave me several useful tips about riding my horse, particularly not trying to hold her in and letting her find her own way through mistakes to build our confidence as a team. A very useful and enjoyable series of lessons - I wish they could have continued and I look forward to the Autumn when hopefully they will resume." *Barbara Fox*

"Although I was unable to attend all the sessions, I did find those I went to very beneficial both in terms of helping my position when riding and in ensuring Tango

was moving forward. Unfortunately he is a different horse on an endurance ride than in an arena where my overriding problem is getting him to come back to me!! I did wimp out of doing the dressage test though but this was more about my lack of confidence rather than a reflection of the lessons. I thought Carole was an excellent instructor and it was good to have access to someone of this calibre at such a reasonable cost." [Suzanne Boulton](#)

"We have both benefitted so much from the lessons I hardly know where to start

Spyde is much calmer than when we started and if anyone had told me a short time ago that we could achieve a 4 and a half minute test in the school on our own I would not have believed them. This has improved my confidence and feeling of relaxation when I am riding him which I have been able to transfer to the outside and our hacking and subsequent rides have got better (still a long way to go) I now can honestly say I enjoy riding him whereas before I was scared to death (never admitted it before!!). Onwards and upwards and huge thanks to Carole for encouraging us and helping us to achieve our goals. Thanks Carolyn for organising them and I would look forward to next winter and sign up now to do them again." [Sue Loveridge](#)

"For me lessons with Carole have given me a whole new experience with riding. Having been taught to grip with the knees heels down and toes up not any more. I now try to ride in the centre of the saddle weight distributed evenly (well try not to keep hanging on the right). Carole has taught me to understand that Lulu is quick to respond so I must be as quick to recognise her willingness to please. The lesson over the winter have been such a help to me and to see everyone at the dressage on Sunday was most enjoyable we all seem to have a touch of nerves so it's good to know I am not on my own. All the best" [Helen Mayo](#)

"I went to Govilon on Sunday with the Rogerson family. Faline went very well following the faster horses over the first part of the route. I noticed (and Rachael also commented on) how well Faline coped with going fast over the rough, stony ground. I really believe all the schooling we have done over the winter has improved her balance tremendously." [Janet Dobbyn](#)

"Rhianne and I would not have achieved a 4th at the Winter Group Dressage held at Huntley if it had not been for Carol Broad's positive help through the winter sessions. An 8 out of 10 for Rhianne is as rare as Hens Teeth. Thanks" [Margo](#)

"I have really enjoyed the schooling lessons with Carol. I took my new young horse and with the help of Carol we really have started to get to know each other. Carol helped me to recognize when his behavior is 'teen age' and needs correcting or when he has run out of steam and it is time to take a break. Also finding the right rein contact that will give him the ability to move freely but still have a connection to me. We were able to put our new learned skills to the test on the Govilon ride and we had a great time together. I will continue with one to one sessions with Carol over the summer and look forward to the joint lessons coming winter." *Margaretha Herman*

"The lessons were informative educational and geared to the endurance rider maintaining a relevance for the work that we require of our horses at all different levels, focusing on control and regularity of all paces. Using simple school exercises to improve balance rhythm and suppleness of rider and horse." *Fiona Griffiths*

"I don't own my own horse but I'm privileged to ride Gina's horse Eskhada (Wispa). He is a lovely grey Arab and very quiet mannered at home but comes alive at Endurance rides. When I was asked three years ago, if I would like to take him to a lesson, I was so nervous at the thought that I would let him down. You see he is beautifully schooled and I'm not, in fact only 2 previous lessons in 30 years and just hacking out at weekends. I was so nervous at my first lesson I couldn't even speak about myself to the rest of the group. Carol immediately made me feel more relaxed and I believe this transmitted to Wispa, so we both thoroughly enjoyed our first experience together in a school. Watching yourself in mirrors gives a rider so much more information to check if you and your mount are straight and what shape you make. Since that first lesson, I have always looked forward to the next as Carol is such a brilliant instructor she brings out the best in us all. Nothing escapes her keen eye. She manages to notice each tiny detail despite having four or five horses in each lesson. This winter I have tried to improve my poor posture and to ensure Wispa remains balanced on both reins. I know he is more relaxed in the closest company of other horses so better for everyone at a ride. I believe everyone that attended the lessons gained so much from the experience as certainly that was the feedback I received." *Barbara Lawrence*

"This was the second year that we attended the winter training sessions. Not only was it a good opportunity to catch up with other members of the group, but it provided good discipline over the winter months and somewhere warm and dry

to have a proper workout. Carole is a wonderfully supportive and intuitive instructor and could tell me things about Shushi that it has taken me 8 years to find out the hard way! We have improved our way of going from regulation of paces to response time from the aids, and from straightness to steering. He has even changed his shape over the winter from being worked more correctly. Please let us come again next year!" *Suzanne Garlick*



Dressage Competition Helpers and winners!

Dressage Competition Results

Class 1: Walk & trot test A

- 1st Abigail Tennant riding Duette
- 2nd Freya Thomas riding Robin
- 3rd Richard Williams riding Maestro
- 4th Margaret Barry riding Rhianne
- 5th Suzanne Garlick riding Shushi
- 6th Liz Taylor riding SG Enigmatika

Class 2: Prelim 7

- 1st Richard Williams riding Maestro
- 2nd Jo Williams riding Spinway Blackthorn
- 3rd Lyn Tilt riding Apache
- 4th Janet Dobbyn riding Faline
- 5th Carolyn Edwards riding Patches
- 6th Abigail Tennant riding Duette

Wales Inter-Group Challenge

This season's Wales Inter-Group Challenge (WIGC) is about to begin. The competition takes place between the 4 EGB Groups which cover Wales (note these 4 Groups send a joint team to the EGB Inter-Regional championship – see separate article). The WIGC is normally run over 6 days of competition – one ride nominated by each Group, plus the Saturday and Sunday at Red Dragon. Each Group enters a team of 5 combinations (and can have reserves) at each of the rides (team members can change from ride to ride), and the results are scored on EGB National Trophy points. There are bonus points for a Junior and a Novice in each team.

The 2011 qualifying events have just been agreed and are:

- 1) 22 May – South & West Wales host the Pen-Ddol-Y-Gader ride – classes 1 (50km A/O), 2 (50km Novice), and 3 from classes 3 (40km A/O) and 4 (40km Novice) (at least 1 must be class 4).
- 2) Unfortunately the Mid and North Wales ride at Margam Park has had to be cancelled – deputizing will be selected classes from the Ludlow Ride the following weekend 18th & 19th June – classes 2 or 3 (80km ER), 4 or 12 (80km CR), 6, 7, 14 or 15 (50km A/O and Nov), and 2 from 8, 9, 16 or 17 (41km A/O and N).
- 3) 7 August – De Cymru host the Ride the Rhonda - classes 1 (80km), 2 (65km), and 3 from classes 3 (40km) and 4 (40km Novice).
- 4) 11 September – Offa's Dyke host the Tintern ride – classes 1 (70km), 2 or 3 (51km A/O and Nov), 3 from classes 4 (43km) and 5 (43km Novice).
- 5) 1 October – Red Dragon Saturday – classes 7 (160km ER), 9, (80km ER), 11 (80km CR), 13 or 14 (48km CR, O/A and Nov), and 15 or 16 (42km CR, O/A and Nov),
- 6) 2 October – Red Dragon Sunday – classes 18 (80km CR) and 4 from classes 19 to 22 (42km and 35km, O/A and Nov).

The Offa's Dyke Group team for each of these is selected from the combinations entered in the applicable classes, but if you are particularly interested in being on the team, please advise the team chef, Chris Wray – contact details at the front of the Newsletter.

EGB Inter-Regional Team Championships

This is a team championships between 9 regions (each are combinations of EGB Groups) held this year at the Ridgeway Barbury Castle ride on August 13/14th. Our team comprised the 4 Groups which cover Wales (note, these Groups compete between each other in the Wales Inter Group Challenge – see other article) - Mid and North Wales, South and West Wales, De Cymru, and Offa's Dyke.

The Classes (for which we need 2 combinations each) are:

On Saturday 13th August

- IR-Class 1 100km Endurance Ride
- IR-Class 2 80km Endurance Ride
- IR-Class 3 65km CR
- IR-Class 4 80km CR (40/40km over 2 days) (DAY 1) for Open/Advanced Combinations

On Sunday 14th August

- IR-Class 4 80km CR (40/40km over 2 days) (DAY 2) for Open/Advanced Combinations
- IR-Class 5 40km CR (Novice)
- IR-Class 6 32km CR (Novice)

In addition to the 14 combinations listed above, each team can enter 2 more combinations in any of the applicable classes (called Wild-Cards), but only the best 2 results in each team for each class will count to the overall result – so it is likely that the preferred classes for Wild-Cards will be those most vulnerable to failing vetting – the ERs and the 2 day class.

These IR Classes are run within the normal Barbury Castle classes, so you get all the normal awards, and the IR team competition is additional.

The IR Championship will be won by the team having the lowest points total. The combinations (except for 3rd members of any team) in each IR class will get points from their position within the IR entries in their class (1st = 1 point etc). In CRs, the positions will be calculated based on Performance Formula (speed vs. pulse at final vetting). There should be 18 combinations (2 x 9 Regions) in each class – and any Fails or No-Shows will be given the average points of all of them – e.g. if there were 13 finishers, each team missing a finisher will get 16 points for each missing finisher (16 is the average of 14, 15, 16, 17 & 18).

So we (the joint Team Chefs) need lots of you to consider Ridgeway Barbary Castle in your plans for the year, specifically the classes mentioned above. We will need crews to help those who do not have sufficient friends and family to support them, so please get in touch whether you can compete or crew! You will have seen we must have at least 4 Novice combinations in our team, so don't be shy – here's a chance to be supported and learn from experienced riders and crews in a fun atmosphere!

We are planning a training/team building day for any potential team member and/or crew who wish to attend - a week ahead of the competition, on Saturday 6th August at the venue of the following day's Ride the Rhonda. We will help everyone understand Performance Formula, provide advice and carry out Vetting practice, do a short training ride with crewing practice, run a mock vetgate for those entering the 65km or ERs, and will have a non-equestrian team building fun exercise, with BBQ to finish. Then you have the opportunity try out what you have learned on the following day.

Please contact one or both of the joint Team Chefs with your interest to compete or crew at Barbary Castle, or for any questions regarding the competition or the planned training. If you are considering entering the Barbary Castle ride, PLEASE LET US KNOW – we really do want to improve on the 5th place achieved in 2010, and if you don't let us know then we can't include you in the team.

Joint Team Chefs:

Hilary Cuming, email: hillstart@talktalk.net , phone 01495 272267 or 07920 728641,
Chris Wray, email c_wray@tiscali.co.uk , phone 01600 860938.

Forest of Dean rides 2011 - By Gina Harris

Well for the first time since I started endurance I failed to get to either ride this year, due to an injury to myself and then a sick horse. I did feel very sad.

I am pleased that the weather was perfect for both days and the results for March Hares had high number of grade ones, with nearly everyone in the 64k achieving this. What a credit to the riders so early in the season and indicative of how well the route rode!

Forest of Dean rides are organised by a group of us. I am involved with Belinda Josephi in the pre-ride arrangements which we do between us. It starts in April the year before when we book the venue and TRF to mark the route. Then in autumn we book all officials and facilities and finally about 2 weeks before confirm it all and organise the helpers. After the ride we sort out finances and do the books. Carolyn Edwards takes

the entries. This is the first time we used the on-line system and we were very impressed with how smoothly it went.

Routes are planned and checked at various points in the year by Debbie Williams and Chris Wray, who put in some excellent changes I am told. I can't wait until next year when they will try and do some more. Mary Stubbs was organiser on the day for March Hares and Chris Wray for Bluebell this year, so I could ride.

We had some good feedback from riders, so please come along next year and find out what's changed on the route. If you enjoyed the ride or have some nice photos please send them in or a few words about the ride for the website.

Membership

As you will all know the membership of Offa's Dyke group is split between Members and Associate Members. In recent years the number of full members has dropped significantly, partly due to the splitting of the group when De Cymru was formed and then further affected by the 'credit crunch'. At the same time, the launch of the Associate Members scheme proved a very popular way for new people to try out the sport, representing very good value for money.

The most recent lists from EGB give membership numbers as:

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Full | 88 |
| Associate Members | 36 |

Of the full members 9 are non-riding and 10 are junior or young riders. The breakdown of levels is Advanced 46, Open 28 and Novice 28

Associate Members have 5 junior or young riders.

We find quite a high turnover of Associate Members, with quite a few lapsing their membership each year, but also lots of brand new members. A few each year go on to become full members of EGB, which is very encouraging. Interestingly all the people who attended this year's Novice training afternoon were Associate Members.

The benefits of Associate Membership represent very good value for money and a good way to receive all the information about endurance, which will hopefully encourage people new to the sport to progress on to the higher distances. **However please note the changes to EGB rules regarding non-members and Associate Members entering competitive classes.**

In 2011 only full members of EGB may enter Competitive rides. Non members and Associate Members may only enter a maximum of two competitive rides using the newly launched 'try before you buy scheme'. They pay the temporary day membership fee of £8 per ride and must enter online so that EGB can monitor that they only do 2.

EGB Try Before You Buy Scheme

TBYB is an opportunity for those new to endurance riding to enter a novice competitive ride up to 40km before applying to become an EGB member and registering their horse. Successful completion of the ride is awarded with an appropriate rosette. No trophy points can be gained and no progression towards novice qualification can be gained. This offer is purely to allow non-members to experience a competitive ride and is limited to two rides per applicant.

TBYB can be only applied for online and rides must be entered on line via the EGB web site.



Novice Training Seminar 10 April

Once again we were blessed with lovely weather for our annual Novice training afternoon at Liz Taylor's yard.

The photo shows most of the 12 attendees catching the sun at the end of the session. It was nice to see such a mixture of new people, all associate members. These included four young riders and also two dads who've taken the plunge & bought their own horse to keep up with their daughters. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and hopefully took something away from the day, including having a few more familiar faces next time they go to a ride.

Thanks to Liz for the use of her beautiful facilities & her horses for demos and for Gina for doing most of the talking and bringing her riding kit along to show.

'Belgium - a Wonderful Opportunity!' Andrea Champ

I am fairly new to endurance, but quickly got hooked and bought my present horse Druimghigha Luxor in 2009 specifically to explore the sport further. I was lucky - Luxor had just become Advanced at the end of the previous season so I set about trying to get myself to his level. Finally after a couple of hiccups on the way I managed to do a successful 80k at Cirencester in June 2010 (going round with Luxor's half brother, which was a treat!). As Luxor's fitness was at 80k level I decided to have a go at a couple of ERs to finish the season; not to race, but just to complete. This we were very fortunate to achieve, which meant that we had the minimum qualifications to be considered for the World Class Performance Start Squad.

As I am so new to the sport, I have much to learn and what a great way to do it, in the company of other riders and their horses all with the same objective. To soak up information and maybe even to compete for their country!

Training Days were organised by the Squad management led by Andrea Baker (Chef d'Equipe) and Stevie Martin (Team Manager). The first in 2011 was at Hartpury, where all the squads met together and the second a weekend at the end of February at Bury Equestrian Centre, Buckinghamshire. I found both to be very useful. Squad vets and farriers were there to check over our horses and advise as to any changes we might make. I became more knowledgeable about pads for the horses feet (a requirement for Belgium), the use of a weighted gel pad under the saddle and tricks of how to ensure that it is positioned for greatest comfort to the horse's back (through the use of cable ties!) etc. Some of this information was gained from the team management and their hired experts but also from other riders and their crews.

At Bury we also had horse stretches demonstrations from our superb team osteopath. This I found to be particularly enlightening. Lessons were given in groups at both of the training days. The instructor at the second being Sally Hall, who gave us challenging exercises using various poles layouts as obstacles. Six horses in a 20x40 arena proved to be more than my horse could handle and he showed his confusion and nerves by leaping into the air on several occasions. I was very relieved to have the arena to ourselves when the time came to ride our prepared dressage test in the afternoon! The facilities at both equestrian centres were superb and we were grateful for warm cafes as the weather was cold. Hartpury was hosting an Affiliated Dressage Competition during our time there

which made perfect viewing for the crews who had greater amounts of hanging around and certainly was a welcome distraction for my daughter Lucy, who helped me that day!

The selection ride for Belgium was an 80k FEI* at Kings Forest, nr Bury St Edmunds and we had to pass this to become FEI* qualified. The downside is that the ride is a long way from home. The upside is that it is flat! I had taken Luxor to do 64k Cannock Chase and by this time had my regular crew on board, Chris Wray and Georgina Bull. What a luxury that was, being able to sit down at vet gates, whilst everything was taken care of - really great! Luxor completed easily, a huge relief as I had been very anxious about doing longer distances earlier in the season and I felt he would be fine for Kings.

At Kings I was lucky to do the ride with Fiona Griffiths and Dear Kate, who helped me with my speed both in not going too fast at the beginning and just giving us a pep up on the final loop and we completed at 15.5k, the fastest we've gone yet. Luxor's final pulse was 48 going down to 44 on the Ridgeway test, so I was delighted.

Shortly afterwards we were told as a group of our selection to go to Belgium. When I joined the squad list at the end of last year, I could not have expected this result and still have to pinch myself to believe it is true! It just goes to show how lucky we are in this sport as the gates really are open to compete internationally in a way that would be quite impossible in any other equestrian discipline. All one needs is a good horse to take you there!

Congratulations to Andrea in coming 9th in the competition. Let's hope she agrees to write all about it in the July issue of the newsletter.

If you have any interesting articles or ride reports you'd like to contribute to the newsletter or website, please let us know. We love to receive news and photos to share with everyone in the group.

Bilbo – A Very Special Veteran

Passed on in an apple orchard, Ross-on-Wye - 11.4.2011

Bilbo (Royal Mikado) - Royal Mistral x Suki-Yaki

Born in an apple orchard, Reading - 20.5.1976 (Bilbo liked apples!)



First competitive - Graded Ride - 30th March 1997

7th EHPS Novice Championship 1997 aged 21

Winning team 'Spirit of Sherwood' (with Rhianne, Bonnie Anne & Mokka) 1998

1st EHPS Ross Trophy (Home Bred) + placed in 3 other national Trophies 1998 aged 22

1st Dukeries Tyro 40 mile ER 1999

1st Cambrian Trail 40 mile ER 1999 aged 23

1st Dukeries 50 mile ER 2000

1st Lindum 2-day 100 mile ER (beating the eventual EHPS Supreme Champion that year) 2000 aged 24

1st Sam Weller Trophy (best 10 x 40km GRs) 2002 aged 26

Last competitive - Set Speed Ride - 25th April 2004 to reach 2,400km Distance Award aged 28

Last EGB Ride (Red Dragon 24km PR) 2006 aged 30

Offa's Dyke 'Cindy Trophy' 2000 & 2002

1st Man vs Horse 2000 & 2001, + Lord Such Memorial Trophy 2002

4th Arab Horse Society Marathon 1998 -1st owner-rider, winning Free'n'Easy saddle. (1hr 29 at 17.3mph = almost 28kph!) aged 22

7th Arab Horse Society Marathon 2000 aged 24

4 out of 5 days trek on the Pennine Bridleway, covering approx. 90 miles, 2006 aged 30



Bilbo was a gentle, enthusiastic & very vocal little horse, who was a 'constant' in my life for almost 35 years. He lived with me wherever I lived: near Reading, Weybridge, Carlisle, Bromyard & Ross-on-Wye. He was 10 days late arriving in this world, giving me many sleepless nights.

Bilbo came into Endurance by default, rather late in life, when Woodstock went lame. He attacked the challenge with gusto. Up to that point he had done very little of anything, except occasional hacking. He found 'gallops' somewhat boring, but enjoyed hills - point him at one & he trained hard, making that part easy! He had a very long & fluent stride, solid legs, large hooves & straight action - attributes I only appreciated later in his life!

His dam was half TB, quarter Arab, eighth Hackney, eighth Welsh - bred as a show pony - very pretty but highly strung. His sire was a stunning, gentle, pure Arab, belonging to a neighbor - the covering was a fertility check! Bilbo was a gift, with no long term plan.

What a gift!

Elder brother to Woodstock.

Surrogate mother to (battered) Swallow in 1998, & best friend thereafter.

A treasure.

Heather Evans

Maryland

Olivia Beaumont

I would just like to say how much I enjoyed the ride yesterday, Thank you to all the volunteers and the organisation that went into this ride. I only took up riding in the last few years (in my thirties) and I am in the fortunate position to be able to ride a friends horse at least on a weekly basis, I initially thought 'endurance' was for far more experienced riders, I had not done anything other than hacking out with friends - despite this I decided to enter the Staunton ride in January as a 'Temporary Day Member' and encouraged some 'more experienced' riding friends to join me for reassurance, this was a good starting point as we did not need to box to the venue and this was on home ground. After successfully completing the full 22km, I was elated to realise this was something I could achieve, the rosette was the icing on the cake and I immediately wanted to find out more.

This first ride encouraged me to join 'Offa's Dyke endurance group' and booked on for the Maryland ride, I was late with my entry (thank you for accepting the late entry!) and therefore I only received the ride details and map on the Friday. After reading through that night, I wanted to be fully prepared and decided to walk the first 9km circuit on the Saturday with my husband and one of the other riders to feel more reassured. The orange markers were brilliant and we came across a bike trail rider who was more than helpful in explaining the route.

I was really looking forward to the ride with 3 other friends, but also extremely apprehensive as this involved boxing 4 horses with 2 trips – as my friend only has a 2 horse box! (Unfortunately one horse would not load on the morning – so a quick last minute swap for one that would!). My patient husband drove 4 round trips (Staunton to Maryland) and only the 3rd occasion he has towed a horse box!). He tells me he has a few more grey hairs after that hill!

Dylan, who I was going to ride had been head strong the day before in the wind, and this only added to my apprehension on how he would deal with a new terrain and the atmosphere of the occasion. I must say he was marvellous in every way, I am so proud of Dylan, we completed 17km with no issues, having opted not to do the final circuit primarily due to not over facing the horses. I could have gone on all day – well maybe not all day!! So inspiration to get them fitter, so we can go further next time!

So once again a huge thanks to all the helpers who were so friendly, who give people like me the inspiration to do things I otherwise might feel 'just beyond me'. Everyone has to start somewhere, and I just can't wait to see where this journey takes me.

How I ended up at the BEF Futurity!!

By Chris Wray



My first horse that was really all mine was Zawadi, she came here in 1998, I started Endurance with her in 2005, and we won the Offa's Dyke Novice Horse and Novice Rider trophies. After becoming lame during her Open season in 2006, I decided to retire her temporarily to breed another foal who was eventually born in 2009 (Peponi), and I restarted competing her again last year.

So what is Zawadi's background? When my family moved back to the UK after 10 years in Nairobi, having sold or given away our ponies out there, my mother started looking around locally where she had moved to in North Norfolk. She found (this was 1979) a 5yo grey purebred Arab mare (Beauty), in foal to a Hanovarian stallion. Beauty foaled, and the result – Bacchus – my mother is still riding, though they are both a little creaky now! So all through my 20s and 30s, I had this wonderfully quirky Arab mare to ride every time I went home for the weekend. Mother put Beauty in foal again when she was 20, to the American Saddlebred stallion who had lived the other side of the stream and fence all the time she'd been with us – 15 years! So this is where Zawadi comes from! She was 5yo when she came down to me, given to me by my mother who felt she was underutilised at home – up to then I'd never ridden her – always her mum!

I had a lot of fun getting to know Zawadi, she knows my every mood so well that she knows at all times to the millimetre how far she can string me along or push me

without retribution! As she got fitter, and I got more adventurous, we explored the whole area down most of the way to Chepstow and up to the Hendre. In the end I decided that I ought to have a foal from her before she got too old, and at the suggestion of a friend from Choral Society, I took her to the nearest stallion. As you can all imagine, this was a completely life-changing experience – the stud owner was Lesley Dunn and the stallion Chatanz.

Lesley did not restrict herself of course to selling Chatanz's great features, but also to selling Endurance to me. She followed up by coming to see the foal on it's first day (and the photos I have are thanks to Ray!), and later helping me complete the silhouette for her passport. And of course, I started Endurance! Takwenya is a palomino mare just like her mum, we bonded when she was an hour old and we have been really close ever since. Of course in those days there was no Futurity, so Takwenya didn't see outside Pentrewheeler Farm until she was 3 and I started walking her out in-hand to learn voice commands before long-reining and ultimately backing. Of course Takwenya has her own story, so I better leave that for another day. So then I started doing Endurance with Zawadi, finding it to completely match what she and I most enjoyed, and of course our relationship deepened as we travelled around the country. And we are now back to my first paragraph.

So, which stallion to go to now? I had only just backed Takwenya, though I knew I would have a fantastic Endurance horse in her. I did however think I would be more competitive with a horse a little bigger (Takwenya is 14:3). So I decided to look around, and it had to be a purebred Arab. I had been admiring Liz Taylor's Karaanza so I went up to Pearl Island to look around, and Krayaan Dilmun was a very easy choice. Zawadi didn't take the first year, but we were eventually successful and Peponi arrived on May Day 2009. Patricia saw her being born, phoned me at work and I burned rubber all the way home to spend the rest of the day with mum and baby.

Peponi is very much her father's daughter – very relaxed and confident. She's also a bit bossy, though not so much as her mum – and I hope she has inherited some other traits from her mum like Takwenya has – competitiveness and determination for example! As she was so relaxed with everything, I started walking her out down the road in-hand at only about 6 months – and she was fascinated by everything and bothered by nothing. So the idea of taking her to Futurity came to mind. There was going to be one just a few miles away at Triley Fields, between Abergavenny and Hereford in August 2010, so I went online and entered her.

However of course there turned out to be a lot of preparation, though I enjoyed every minute as it brought us closer together and helped deepen the bond of trust between us. The first thing was getting her halter trained and learning voice commands, then practicing walking and trotting in a triangle and standing still in a show stand. I also had to get her used to going into the trailer and relaxed when travelling. I did a couple of runs round the block a day or 2 apart with her beside Takwenya in the trailer, and then

later unloading her at a neighbour's and reloading after a walk around and graze. After a couple of those I took her by herself round to the neighbour's, the second time doing this we went into their indoor school and chased her around into a canter as she would have to do for the Futurity. Finally I had to make sure that she and I were turned out appropriately, and as I had no showing knowledge I needed help. I turned to the person doing most of the Futurity encouraging, Sallie Dudley, and with her approval (by emailed photos!) I dressed her in Takwenya's burgundy zilco marathon bridle without bit and hangers, and Patricia dressed me in white shirt, cream jods, my ariat terrains, and a tie that I found that completely matched the zilco burgundy! The final piece was that Peponi had to be plaited, which is completely beyond my experience! Very kindly Andrea Champ agreed to be my helper on the day, and was going to bring her daughter Lucy to do the plaiting!

So how did it turn out on the day – did she (or I) freak out? Did she decide not to load? Did she not want to perform for the assessors? Well, she was an absolute angel! She was relaxed loading and travelling, and as chilled as you like at the venue where we had plenty of time to soak up the atmosphere. She was fine as Lucy plaited her mane, and was really interested and enjoying the experience. When we got our turn in the school, she quickly recognised that the planters full of flowers were in lieu of my upturned buckets in the field, and she didn't put a foot wrong. She wasn't terribly keen on cantering once we turned her loose – even with me and Andrea chasing her, because we hadn't practiced that much!

It was lovely to have a big contingent of Offa's Dyke supporters in the viewing gallery, and when Jo Claridge (the Endurance member on the assessment team) came to give me the results there were calls of "Speak Up", so then everyone heard it together. And what results they were – 9/10 for Trot, and Temperament, and 8.75 for Athleticism/Canter/all 3 paces. Overall score was 8.5, which is a "Higher First Premium". I'm very grateful to Gabbie Franklin for all the photos she took of us, and to Ray Dunn for the DVD of us in the school – what lovely records of the day they are!

I had only really taken her in order to broaden her experience of the big world outside Pentrewheeler, and she certainly passed that with flying colours – but it is such a thrill when you find out that other people also like your youngster and complement you on her. It is even more special when the horse concerned is the 3rd generation of the line that has been part of our family. It was a lovely day – as well as all the Offa's Dyke spectators, Lesley and Gill were there showing a foal, and Jenny and Amanda showing one of their 3yo twins, and Ann-Marie showing her new youngster.

Long after all the dust had settled – in December – I had a letter inviting me to the British Breeders annual Awards Dinner – it turned out that Peponi had the highest score of all the Endurance Yearlings in the whole year's Futurity. All I have to do now is keep her safe and sound until she can start her Endurance career!

Advertisements

Adverts are free to Offa's Dyke members & associate members. Other adverts cost £5 per half page.

Email below received through the website. If anyone can help Kathy, please contact her directly.

Hi, My name is Kathy Ryan and my husband, John, and I are visiting the UK in 2012 for an extended holiday probably from about July to maybe October or even December. We intend to reside somewhere in the UK countryside and rent a property as a base to live and travel through the UK (the Olympics) and perhaps western Europe. I am an active (somewhat less active at 56 yrs old !) endurance rider in Australia and I have held executive positions with our local club and also am a current steward for our organisation In Queensland. I have completed many thousands of kilometres in rides and have successfully completed 2 Tom Quilty 160km rides in Australia which is the equivalent of our national championship. I must admit that my really competitive days are behind me but I still enjoy the sport immensely. I am very interested in firstly renting something for our stay that gives us a rural experience but also perhaps where I might be able to even borrow or lease a horse short term to do a bit of riding in your endurance season. I do not expect that I would be doing the longer distances but even some social/training rides would be a great way to experience the UK but also get to know locals. Preferably, if we could rent a farm cottage or similar, that would be ideal. The reason for this contact is to see if anyone in your club would have such a rental situation or a horse for lease etc. I am unsure of the lie of the land and would appreciate a discussion with someone who may be able to assist us. If you could discuss this within your group and get back to me I would be most appreciative and I would then make phone contact to have a conversation about possibilities or whether we are barking up the wrong tree entirely.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this contact.

Kathy Ryan

email: visionfinplan@bigpond.com

Phone: Aust 0488301083

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