

Dates for your diary:

27<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at RDA  
Wilton  
Ride, Coach, Ride Dressage  
Places still available.

#### Remember

- Wash your hands
- Stay Alert
- Keep the 'two metre' if possible  
one metre if not social distance
- Protect our NHS
- Save lives

# SEPTEMBER 2020

## Newsletter

### Wessex Riding Club

Well, August has been a busy month and I am delighted to say that both the Training Camp Day on 23<sup>rd</sup> August and the 'Ride, Coach, Ride' event at the end of the month have both been very well received and deemed successful for all those who attended.

I would like to put in a special thank you to all the team who made a substantial contribution to these two events and I think we should all say a huge 'well done' to Ali, Hazel and Lorna for their hard work and determination; the feedback has been great! More about these events to come later so keep reading!

I managed to get a few words with Eve Blachford, our Dressage judge on Sunday. I wanted to get some thoughts from her on the event and what she thought the 'coaching' aspect of Ride Coach Ride gave to our members and riders. I have entitled it **"Views from the other side of the Table"**, I hope you find it interesting?

I have been asked to cover a spot on the Pleasure Riding Scheme just to remind everyone of the benefits and the very fact that you can join the scheme at any point in the year and tot up those hours either with sole schooling sessions, hacking or just enjoying riding your horse in the school.

Caroline is the lady in charge and she will happily send you a sheet so you can collate the info on hours in the saddle and at the end of it there are rosettes for recognition of numerous hours of achievement.

The best thing of all is that it's in your hands to make what you can of the time and enjoy what we are very fortunate to have, our horses! I would encourage you to send in pictures of 'Views between the Ears'.



**'Biscuit and Happy Hacker' with 50 hours on the clock!**

We want to put as many of these on the Web site as possible. If you take a particular shot and give it a 'caption', submit it to Hazel, you may be surprised with a treat for taking part. Things are still difficult with COVID and perhaps this will encourage you and

others to engage in a light- hearted look at what we all love doing. Spending time with these wonderful creatures.

Joining the scheme is £10.00 per head and the clock starts ticking as soon as you join. It's down to you to retain the records and then log the hours spent in the saddle with Caroline, from time to time. The first trigger point for your first award is achieved at 50 hours which wouldn't take too much effort to achieve between now and the start of Winter, hopefully with the weather being kind to us!

The next milestone is 250 hours and then you will find your hours really built up. One of our members, Richard, recently achieved 1000 hours with his trusty stead Archie. So, a hack every week for a couple of hours adds up doesn't it?

To encourage you to get out and enjoy nature, spend time with your horse and escape the stress of day to day life, this is a fabulous solution. Attached to the Newsletter is the application form which needs to be sent to the email address noted at the end of the newsletter and Caroline will be in touch to guide you on your way. At your joining anniversary she will remind you and collect the annual sub of £10.00 but you can start today and begin recording hours with your horse and our wonderful countryside.

Caroline can be emailed at:  
**Jigbabe15@gmail.com**

### **Day Camp – A first for the Club**

I have to say our very first Day Camp was a resounding success. Due to the number restrictions brought about by COVID and common sense, it was a very limited number that took part in this first event and it was witnessed by just a few helpers. I went along to see how things were going at lunchtime and witnessed a hive of activity! Clare Pier, who was wonderful, stepped in right at the eleventh hour to provide a session for our Day Camp

participants 'Pilates for Equestrians' and I think we will be seeing more of her in the near future!



**'Thunder' contemplating where the next 100 hours are going to take them!**

During a busy lunch time session, Sarah and Trudi gave a talk and demonstration in the RDA inside school (using the lovely Mango, thank you Tom!) to demonstrate some of the actions and paces that are required to take your dressage activity from Prelim to that next Novice step. Whilst this was going on everyone tucked into a warm lunch, I had fish and chips which was absolutely delicious!

The training elements were split into small groups for morning and afternoon sessions between flat work, and grids and poles run by Sarah and Trudi and the feedback has been superb. Our Facebook page has never been as busy! So, for this I must mention Hazel, who with some help, has really got our profile raised. The day was a 'sunshine day' with a lot of happy faces as you can see from the pictures on the web – and quite tiring too I believe? More will follow in the next few weeks.

Thank you to Lorna and all the team for your efforts and drive. Arranging these events needs teamwork and we are very fortunate to have a working committee and a team of helpers that roll their sleeves up and get stuck in when stuff needs doing!

A second day camp is on the cards, so watch this space but if you would like to be contacted for the next camp info please make yourself known to Lorna and you will be updated as to what date and arrangements we have been able to secure.

You can email Lorna lodging your interest for the next day camp at:

**Lorna\_roger@hotmail.com**

So to my conversation with Eve, our Dressage Judge.

### **“Views from the other side of the table”**

**I caught up with Eve Blanchard our Dressage Judge on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August. She was full of enthusiasm and there were smiles all round as she helped everyone achieve that little bit extra. I asked her for some thoughts and comments on our Ride Coach Ride morning, such as, what could be gained from taking part? and how did she find the event?**

Eve was keen to impress upon me that as judges they hold a position that does not include or allow them to provide personal encouragement and training on the day, but they act as a marker of what is achieved by the rider and horse in front of them. That doesn't mean that they don't offer encouragement in their comments, as many of us see on our score sheets, but, they have to judge and score on what is achieved in front of them and the quality they see for each element on a scale of 1 – 10. The fabulous option to have a chat with the judge, at what I am going to call 'HALF TIME' is that the judge can then give you guidance and encouragement about aspects that could be improved so you make the most of the test when you do it for the second time. These in simple terms can be anything from; get into those corners deeper; show the difference between

a circle and going large around the arena; improve that straightness on entry and going down the centreline; hold straight at Halt. For the more advanced tests the change to the paces and the quality displayed you need to demonstrate that you can achieve a difference in movement not just the horse going faster! Small steps of improvement for example, the upgrade from Working trot to Medium Trot even if it's not all the way across the diagonal that the test demands you still get marks for achieving some and it's called work in progress!

Eve was particularly keen to impress on me and all around that riders shouldn't fear the judges, they all have your interests and convictions at heart and want you to succeed. They want you to produce your best and gain good marks, but as we all know too well, you can't take the key out and sometimes it doesn't quite go the way you've practiced and it's frustrating!

Eve said that her most important point would be about nerves, she wanted me to make everyone aware that '**Nerves are GOOD**'! It means that you care about what you are doing; Nerves show that what you are about to do is important to you and you are seeking to improve. This tip is very much in line with what Sarah and Trudi were trying to get across at the Day Camp. Work at home really should be at a higher level than what you go and compete in, this instills a sense of confidence that actually you can do this test with your eyes shut (not literally please?) compared to what you do at home or in the school. I quite like that idea. But going back to Eve's comments, she enjoyed the encouragement part because, being a former riding instructor, it's all about learning and developing and putting those building blocks in place, never be afraid to take a step back and look at what you are doing and if it doesn't work today, try again tomorrow.

Eve has promised to come back again, she actually enjoyed her day too!

Finally, one most important point made, another must for the checklist of do's **SMILE** – it's supposed to be fun and actually when you smile an amazing thing happens; your body loosens, the tension melts and your relaxed posture is felt by your four-legged friend!

### **A Loan Opportunity for those who are tempted!**



**16.1, 11 years, dark bay mare.  
TBx Warmbloodx Clydesdale.  
Forward going ride with brakes.  
Enjoys jumping, flatwork a little green but knows the basics.  
She has a sweet and kind personality and tries to please.  
Good to shoe, clip, load etc  
Has never bucked, reared or bolted.  
Would suit a knowledgeable rider looking for a good allrounder.**

Contact Amy : 07870 831296

I am hoping you get time to look at the web site in the next few days as more photos get loaded onto it. Please feel free to send items for the website or newsletters. At present we are still unable to hold our Talk and Chat evenings, but we will try to organize something soon, sticking to the guidelines to keep everyone safe.

Lastly, we were contacted by BRC to send this message from one of the official stewards from Area 17 who feels

it is time to take it easier! It's a plea for support, it may suit someone from our membership

Dear all

*This subject has been mentioned on a number of occasions but now it is a RED ALERT! At age of 82 I need to slow down I have been acting as official steward for a number of years. I am not sure if all members realise that if an official steward is not able to attend an AREA QUALIFIER, then that qualifier is unable to run.*

*This area has run over the last few years with just myself and Gary Hammond filling the role of official stewards, I need to step back a bit and Gary has his work commitments.*

*We are therefore looking for new blood to step up and get trained for these roles, the main criteria of being a steward is knowing the rule book and the ability to communicate, ( not always easy in the heat of battle ).*

*If anyone feels they are able to come forward the first thing is to shadow either Gary or myself at qualifiers to learn what the stewards duties entails.*

*A new steward will not be asked to officiate at a qualifier until they have completed their shadowing training and attended an official training weekend to get their ticket, which covers them for three years.*

*These roles are unpaid but you are able to claim some expenses.*

*DONT JUST DISMISS THIS, AS I HAVE SAID WITHOUT NEW OFFICIAL STEWARDS WE COULD FIND THE AREA IN A POSITION WHERE WE DON'T HAVE AREA QUALIFIERS . I look forward to hearing from interested members of Area 17 A S A P*

*Regards Nick Fincham Area Rep*

If anyone is interested in hearing more please email me.

Best wishes to all and stay safe.

## **Janet**

And the WRC Committee

Email [janetbower@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:janetbower@tiscali.co.uk)

For all Dressage event queries and enquiries / Ride Coach Ride interest please send your emails to [wrcdressage@gmail.com](mailto:wrcdressage@gmail.com)