

HOOFPRINTS

The Newsletter of the Fife Riding Club



September 2011

A newsletter is long overdue, so here goes...

AREA SUCCESS

After months of planning, FRC hosted one of the most successful Area Qualifiers in recent years – but don't take our word for it, here's what some visitors had to say about their trip to Fife:

"A massive thank you from all the Buchan girls for a fantastic weekend!

We all had a ball, and have come home with so many rossies, we're honestly not sure what they are all for!!

The sheet for the pairs DTM has been laminated to keep it pristine - aren't we sad :)

Hope you had a big sleep last night, and well done for all your organisation. Remember, just say no next time ;)

Thanks again,

Michele xx"

"Many thanks to your Club & your members for excellently hosting the Area 22 competition :o)"

"To the scorers - respect! How the heck did they manage to make sense of all those numbers?"

"Just a short note to say how much I enjoyed your Area 22 qualifiers at the weekend. It was so well organised and all your stewards were so helpful. Again thanks. I have written this off my own back but I was riding for Ladyleys"

Many thanks to all in the club who helped in any way to make last weekend such fun! Despite to hiccup with the dressage scoring on Saturday, the weekend was great, very well run and on classes spot on time. The helpers were all friendly and very helpful despite being hot & bothered!

Many thanks we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves...

Sue & Rachel Boulton
Moray Riding Club.

Hi Tricia,
Thank you and Fife RC for hosting the Area Comps,
it was a great weekend.

All results are on their way to HQ.

Thanks again

It's fair to say that as organisers we had several sleepless nights wondering if we had done the right thing in opting to host the qualifiers at the Club Field. **President John Foster** generously offered us the use of Craigie – an option that would have meant no worries about space or bad weather (the ground up there is always great even in the worst conditions) but committee preferred to stay at home where all our equipment is on hand and also to "showcase" the club's facilities. We were incredibly lucky, then, to end up with probably the best weather of the summer. Thanks to a very efficient car parking team we managed to fit in almost 100 boxes with room to spare – another first. The run –in to the competition was anything but smooth. The grass toppers "died" a few weeks before the qualifiers and the field was looking just a bit straggly. And someone (who shall remain anonymous) managed to knock down part of the arena fence. On top of that we had several trees blown down in the May storms. There was plenty to be done. The field was a hive of activity as committee wanted the place to look its best for the visitors. So we had the grass cut, fencing repaired, wings painted and potholes filled in. Some folk spent ten days on the trot at the field getting it right. Some non-members even ended up working their socks off for your benefit. Members families were drafted in – the Kettles crew, the Glasgow Boys and the Wallace clan to name but a few. Organising a big event often involves thinking on your feet so when the water bowser came with no water, a quick trip to some friendly firemen was called for – and it worked, thank you Glenrothes Fire Brigade! The result was that the field looked absolutely tremendous. Our visitors were truly astonished and full of praise for our facilities, underlining the fact that FRC is almost unique amongst British Riding Clubs in owning its own land, something most other clubs can only dream of. Over the weekend we had fantastic support from members who volunteered en masse to steward, write, pole pick etc which ensured the competition ran smoothly. Visiting judges and Area officials were delighted at how well

everything ran. Praise, too, for the social night organised at Howe CC on the Saturday night where there was some truly impressive karaoke singing, sadly not from Fife this time. There was a brilliant atmosphere over the two days and we even managed to keep to time over both days (well done our entries secretary, Tricia). A big thank you to everyone who helped in any way to contribute to the weekend. This was the biggest thing at the field for many years and it was an outstanding success – well done to you all.

Our riders also did us proud. Our Novice Showjump Team of Lucy Moffat, Sarah Hutchison, Kim Drysdale and Elaine McDonald qualified for Championships; the same squad also qualified in the Style Jumping. Mandy Law qualified in Riding Test and Shona Hynd qualified in Dressage to Music. In addition there were numerous rosettes picked up by members. The full results are on our webpage at www.fife-riding-club.co.uk

OTHER NEWS

Our Wednesday nights have gone from strength to strength with good attendances at instruction and competitions. The **Dressage League** remains ever popular and we saw improved turn out for the **Members Mini Cross Country** on 21 July with nearly 30 horses battling it out for the Galway Trophy. Heavy overnight rain meant a shortened course missing out the river and some of the woodland track, probably just as well as we only just finished before darkness fell. The Galway Trophy goes to the horse & rider closest to the Optimum time on the night. This year's winners were **Lucy Moffat & Tia** – this pair has proved unbeatable this season. **Hannah Seaton** who donated the award in memory of Galway came along to present the cup to the worthy winners. Full results on webpage.

TOP SCORE

The last points competition of the summer season took place on 17 August where members fought it out for the **Gregor Trophy**. This year's winners were **Lucy Moffat on Gem** on 890 points, just ahead of Heather Jones and The Dreamcatcher. Lucy should probably also get the prize for the

most terrifying-to-watch round – has she no nerves?!! Well done to them and thanks to all who helped put up jumps and run the class on the night.

INSTRUCTION NIGHTS

Our instruction nights have been a great success with solid bookings all summer. Our thanks to **Jenny Cushnie** for organising these meetings so efficiently. It was interesting to read a bit in a recent Horse & Hound where two of our regular trainers got a mention – says a lot about the calibre of our instructors! The final Instruction night was full of high drama. David Henderson took a bad fall and an ambulance was called, attended by two paramedics. While all this was going on, Alison Black's horse, Joss, took a turn and so we had the vet out in the ring at the same time as David was being carried off. Turns out David's injury was a bit more serious than first thought resulting in an unscheduled stay in hospital. He is now home but won't be riding for a few weeks. Joss has, we hear, made a full recovery. And they say flatwork is boring!

COMING UP

CRAIGIE traditionally marks the end of the Clubs Summer season and we are now in the process of getting the course ready for the big event on **18 September**. There is a huge amount of work to be done between now and then. In addition to the usual grass cutting, fence repair, track clearance, decorating fences, posting & roping arenas, we have also found a lot of trees blown on the track (and onto some fences) during the summer storms. One of our members recently commented that she thought the course always looked the way it does on competition days – ***if only!*** All the preparation is down to Fife Riding Club. If it was not for the sheer hard work of a very small group of individuals this show simply would not happen. We have loads to do so we are asking members to come along and give us a hand. Our next workdays are on **Saturday 3 September and Saturday 10 September**. We meet at around 10.00 am at the water jump and usually work to around 2pm. If we get a decent squad out we can cut the work times all round. Can **YOU** help? If so, please come along; wear

old clothes and pack a picnic. Dogs are welcome provided they behave. We will also need bodies to help with putting up tents etc on the day before the competition (meet 9.30 onwards) and of course, we need volunteers to act as jump judges, stewards etc on the day itself. If you would like to jump judge, contact **Amy** on 07766 130424; if you need more info about helping with the preparation, speak direct to **Andrew** on 07967 655691. If you are intending to compete you need to get your entry in to **Sarah Hutchison** as soon as possible – further details, schedule etc on the website.

SHOWING SHOW

Mandy Law offered to run a Showing Show at the Club Field. It will be on **11 September**. There are loads of classes and trophies galore. It's short notice but there is still time to get your entry in. **Full details on the website.**

FRC CAMP

After a lot of requests that FRC should run its own camp, Vice Chair Gillian Kettles duly put together a package with something for everyone. It should have run 26 – 28 August but unfortunately had to be **cancelled** due to lack of interest. Well, we tried...

OTHER NEWS

At the start of the year committee decided it would be worthwhile having a **Facebook** page for the club so that we could communicate more quickly with members if, for example, we needed to cancel a show, or to remind people of work days etc. In this respect it has proved a worthwhile exercise. However – as events in the news have shown – there is a darker side to social networking sites and FRC has not been exempt.

At last years AGM the Chair said that on a few occasions our volunteers had been subjected to abuse from riders. This was completely unnecessary and totally unacceptable. If abuse is not tolerated in the workplace, why should our helpers who give up their time to help run club meetings be expected to put up with abuse – especially from fellow club members? The committee were determined to take a strong line in

dealing with such incidents and got the backing of the AGM

In recent months there have been a number of what can only be described as "inappropriate" messages on our Facebook page. In some cases the site has been used as a means of getting at committee or other individuals. This is unacceptable behaviour. It is also detrimental to the club. We know of an instance where a group of riders in another club were really keen to join FRC. They were impressed by the facilities and could not believe how much was in the syllabus – way in excess of any other club they knew of. However, they wanted to know what was wrong at Fife RC – they had been following Facebook and could not believe what they were seeing. Why, they asked, were some members so ready to complain about almost everything? Why – instead of being appreciative of the people who help organise shows and competitions – were some members so keen to denigrate them? Needless to say, these people have not joined your club. The correct place to make comment about purely FRC matters is the forum page on the clubs own website. It is important to remember that Facebook is a very public arena. Your comments are seen by every man and his dog – not just club members. It would therefore be very unwise to post derogatory or false remarks about individuals who may take exception to what's been said. Indeed at the time of writing a complaint has been made by a member of the public about allegations made on the club Facebook page. Anyone posting inappropriate messages should be aware (a) you are in breach of Facebook's own terms and conditions of use; (b) you could be breaking the law (and liable to legal action); (c) you are in breach of British Riding Clubs Rules; and (d) you are in breach of Fife Riding Clubs Rules. Be aware, anyone deemed to have brought the club (or the Riding Club movement) in to disrepute may be liable to disciplinary action. Members should be very careful before putting anything on a public forum. In some cases the comments have been so bad that it has verged on cyber-bullying. Some of the people who organised competitions this year have made it clear they will not be doing so next year – so everyone loses out. Our Facebook administrators have been instructed by committee to terminate any

inappropriate comments. This is not about censorship – it is about saving the good name of Fife Riding Club and in some cases, saving members from themselves. Nor is it about stifling criticism. The committee welcome constructive comments from members. If any member has a criticism they can make comment on the Clubs own Forum page on the FRC website. Alternatively, complaints can be put in writing (duly signed) to the Secretary for discussion at committee meetings. By the same token, if any members have enjoyed a show or competition, please make a point of saying so. It's very hard to find people prepared to give up their time to run meetings for others. In many cases they will be giving up the chance to ride themselves so others can have a bit of fun. They often end up out of pocket as well but no one minds as long as they feel that their efforts are at least appreciated. It's not much to ask but it can make a huge difference.

CLUB SWEATSHIRTS

We have a supply of sweatshirts, hoodies and polo shirts in a range of styles and colours. Costs start from £14 for the polo shirt to £26.50, depending on style. If you would like to buy one contact Linda Gove on 07740 027427 for more information.

CROSS COUNTRY CLINIC

Once again we will be running a **cross country clinic** over the Craigie fences. Our instructor will be **Jane Gilchrist**. Jane did last year's clinic and was a great hit with the riders. She regularly rides over the Craigie fences so knows the problems very well. FRC are the only club allowed to do training over Craigie and the clinics have proved popular in the past. Each session will last approx 1.5 hrs. It will run on **SUNDAY 2 OCTOBER**. Costs are £27 (FRC members) £30 (non-members). **EVERY RIDER WILL RECEIVE A DISCOUNT VOUCHER WORTH £10 FOR USE AT THE REFURBISHED RHYND CROSS COUNTRY TRAINING COURSE**. Application forms can be downloaded from the FRC website and will be available at the Hunter Trials.

That's all for now – **see you at Craigie on 18 September**