

## **The UK Riders Challenge National Finals 2008**

After a few years based at Warwickshire College, the UK Riders Show Jumping and Dressage Championships moved to Vale View Equestrian in Leicestershire.

This year, however, the weather was not remotely kind to competitors and organisers alike, as it remained more or less torrential rain, especially throughout the Saturday.

There were two show jumping circuits in operation, with the Juniors using the outside one and the Seniors inside, but the weather did make for some determined riding!

There was good representation in the Show Jumping from riders from the Equestrian Life region. In the Juniors, the first class of the day, the Restricted Novice was won by Chloe Gresswell, from Newark riding Miss Stroppey in a time of 19.63. Having only owned Charm as she is known for only four months they had been focussing on the UK Riders and Trailblazers classes and clearly their efforts had been rewarded, adding their winnings to the day by coming 6<sup>th</sup> in the Novice class in a time of 21.09.

4<sup>th</sup> place was Alice Donnelly on Miss Millie in a time of 21.32. The family had only bought the pony in May and it was the first time for this combination. Alice is only 9 years old, so a really great start for them both.

In the next class, the Junior Novice, Nancy Plant and Tango came in 4<sup>th</sup> in a time of 21.07. Apart from UK Riders, they have also been competing at regional Trailblazer events.

In their first season together, Izzy Rae and Midnight Gelignite, a ride she has taken over from her sister, they won the Junior Intermediate section in a time of 19.02. Travelling from Huby, Yorkshire, they have only recently started to gell together so were absolutely delighted to qualify for the finals.

In the indoor arena, with conditions clearly better for the riders, the Senior Restricted class won convincingly by Sally McNaughton from Drifffield, East Yorkshire on Joop, in a time of 31.28. They then followed this with taking 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the Senior Novice with a time of 31.82. Just beating Sally into 2<sup>nd</sup> place was Jane Courtney from Newark with Sea Brooke Bay in a time of 29.35.

The earlier round had clearly fired up Sally and Sea Brooke Bay as they then went on to win the Senior Intermediate class ahead of a strong line up with a blistering time of 27.09. Gemma Dickens riding Duo du Marais from Shepshed in Leicestershire took 3<sup>rd</sup> place in a time of 31.23. A former winner of the Hickstead Novice Derby, Duo du Marais has come out of retirement after several years off. he was retired due to a terrible injury but time has been a great healer and he is

very much enjoying the unaffiliated competitions. Nicola Chapple and Fairviews Dignity from Mansfield, Notts came a respectable 5<sup>th</sup> in a time of 32.45.

The last show jumping class of the day, the Senior Open was won by Gemma Dickens and Duo due Marais in a time of 34.64. Second place went to Justine Rebbeck and Rodger from Ilkeston, Derbyshire in a time of 35.06.

On the second day, it was time for the dressage riders. Again there was good representation from the East Midlands and Yorkshire in the classes.

Prelim 1 Juniors produced a winner from Yorkshire with Callum Small and Briardale Rainbow Quest with a score of 66.32%. Alex Chick riding Tic Tac just finished behind them in 3<sup>rd</sup> place but still with an impressive score of 65.26%.

In Prelim 7, Amy Small and Caroworth Pelham from Yorkshire scored a brilliant 75% to take first place ahead of Jane Armstrong from Rutland, Leicestershire on Poppy with 73%. Lindsey Turner and Jackson Was were joint 6<sup>th</sup> with a score of 71.5%. Prelim 14 produced a very high score for Leicestershire rider Linsey Turner and Jackson Was. Scoring 71.04%, they were just in second place. Toddy as he is known at home is a 15hh Connemara X and clearly excels at dressage having won the Rugby One Day Event this year. Samantha Walker and Pickle from Nottinghamshire, another Connemara X took 5<sup>th</sup> place, again with a good score of 65.21%.

Novice 28 produced an impressive 2<sup>nd</sup> place for local rider, Phillipa Slater from Barrow on Soar and Theo scoring 61.25%. Julie Tomlinson and Ted, also from Leicestershire took 4<sup>th</sup> place with a score of 58.75%, just behind their friends Helen Dent riding Kaysford Ace Joker, a Welsh Section C x TB, with a score of 60%.

In the Novice 25 Juniors, Samantha Waters and Tyras Boy took 3<sup>rd</sup> place with a score of 59.6%, beating Amy Small from York and Caroworth Pelham into 6<sup>th</sup> place with a score of 57.4%. Amy has been riding Caroworth for about a year now and after a slow start they have really started to go well together and have some fun competing.

In Elementary 42, Samantha Waters from Rutland riding Tyras Boy, scored 58.13% to take 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Juniors. In the Seniors, 6<sup>th</sup> place was awarded to Jathryn Nankervis on Fairo with a score of 62.81%. Fairo's normal job is Pony Club Eventing and hunting with the Cottesmore and Kathryn has been riding her for a year to keep her fit. They have also qualified for the Inter Schools 3'6" Cross Country finals in November.

Many thanks go to Vale View for hosting the event and to the Sponsors. It is still good to see so many competitors travelling from all over the country to take part and we look forward to another great finals in 2009.

