

District Commissioner's Report

I have so enjoyed my first 'normal' year as DC with the previous two having been subject to Covid rules and regulations. We have held lots of rallies and competitions throughout the year and have had 3 successful camps (junior, senior and the new 18+ camp) with some 70% of our members attending one of them. One of the benefits of having been involved with the Branch for so many years is that I can follow member's progress. I get so much pleasure from seeing a member ride off the lead rein for the first time to celebrating the many test passes and competitive successes at the Area competitions and Championships, of which there were many this year. One significant achievement which I must mention is that Lucy Lloyd Brown passed her A test which is the pinnacle of test success within the Pony Club. There were 15 members nationally who passed this prestigious test and we are so proud that she was one of them. As a Branch our numbers have grown considerably during the year and we are now the third largest in Area 7 with circa 135 members which is fantastic. Hopefully this means that we are doing something right so long may it continue! This is due largely to the strong committee that we have and the support of all our parents for which I am very grateful. Here's to another successful, fun year in 2023.

Ann



Passing the Pony Club A Test

by Lucy Lloyd Brown

On 28th June 2022 I was very happy to learn I had passed my Pony Club A test. When I rang Ann and Helen with the news, along with lots of other lovely things they said, they also told me it was a huge achievement as I was only the second person in our club in over 20 years to achieve this.

Although I perhaps didn't realise it at the time I had been preparing for my final test since I joined Pony Club aged 10 by constantly building up my knowledge of theory and care and trying hard to improve my way of riding. I worked my way along from my first ever D test through all the other tests, adding interest badge each year, and later coaching tests. Alongside this I was usually part of the clubs Horse & Pony Care teams each year, and I gained my bronze and silver YELA awards. While working towards my YELAs I began fence judging for British Eventing, which was both a lot of fun and very informative. I also volunteered and later worked in the equine industry at a professional international show jumping yard, which gave me a fantastic insight and the in-depth knowledge to really step up my all-around horsemanship.

The A test days are held at 4 or 5 locations based around the country and you can choose which location suits best when you make your entry, if there are spaces there. There are usually 8 candidates at each test day who will be from clubs all over the U.K. There are up to 5 examiners, who are mostly Fellows of the British Horse Society (BHS) or with a similar highly prestigious qualification; unlike all the PC tests beforehand you are not told the examiners in advance, they will not know you, and you only get to meet them on the day. The examiners split up and accompany you on certain parts of the tests; not all the examiners do all the parts. There will also be a candidate's friend there appointed by PC HQ to liaise between you and the examiners and check all is well and help you with any concerns you have.

The test day is long one, being constantly on the go, consisting of riding three different horses on the flat, then two horses for show jumping at around 1m, followed by taking one horse cross country. All these horses are allocated to you, and you cannot choose in any way; besides the test is not about the horse but about your riding ability to get the best from it whatever its behaviour. The ridden first half of the day is then followed by lunging a horse for improvement

whilst talking to an examiner during and afterwards about how the horse went and what needs to be developed and improved; they want to know how you would plan to do that. Lastly you talk to an examiner about everything involved in breeding, caring for and producing a young horse.

At the end of the test day, you go home and don't find out your results until around 2 weeks later by email, when you get a feedback sheet with comments. You can pass all the sections or just some of them and this is shown on the sheet. However, you must pass all the ridden parts to pass that half or pass the lunging and young horse to pass that half. If you fail one part of the ridden, say flat work, but pass the others you still must take the whole ridden section again.

If, and when, you pass, you get your name added to the Pony Club A Test Roll of Honour, which is on the main PC website showing all those who have passed going back to the year 2000, the year I was born!

Before I finish, I must say many heartfelt thanks to all the wonderfully kind, encouraging and knowledgeable committee members, instructors, coaches, and friends who have helped me along the way, I most certainly would not have passed without them, so *THANK YOU* to you all.

So now I'm the proud holder of the A test I have been asked by PC HQ to join a panel of fellow A test mentors helping those wanting to progress as we have. So good luck to all of you as work your way through your tests on your Pony Club journey, it's well worth the effort.



Inter Branch Show Jumping Explained

This is a competition also known as the Triangular Show Jumping which often causes confusion

Many years ago, three branches in Area 7, North Shropshire, Wheatland and Albrighton came together to organise a series of Show Jumping competitions to be held over the winter months. Back in the mists of time it was held at Prescott but later moved to Rodbaston where it remains to this day. Each branch organises one competition and gets to keep all the proceeds which subsidises Camps and other fun activities during the year. North Shropshire runs the October event, which is why, if you were there, you will have seen so many familiar faces on the gate etc. All the competitions are open to all Pony Club members from any branch or centre, you can have a go at any of the classes jumping cross poles up to 1.05m. It is a team event so even if you miss out on a top placing you may come home with a rosette if your team does well. Ann will put your team together so all you need to do is enter. Rodbaston has a large indoor school, spectator seating inside, a café and the warmup is under cover too!

It's an excellent opportunity to go to a big competition where you'll always see friendly faces.



The Pony Club in this Country is split up into 19 areas, North Shropshire Branch is one of 16 branches within Area 7 which stretches from the Welsh border over to Northampton and south to Warwickshire. Each Area holds qualifying competitions for a wide variety of disciplines, both mounted and un-mounted to qualify to compete at The Pony Club Championships and Regional Championships in August.

Rally Attendance Awards

This year, the committee has decided that it would be a nice idea to recognise attendance at rallies by awarding bronze, silver and gold awards for significant rally attendance throughout the year. Rallies include unmounted horse and pony care/badge rallies, games rallies and all other types of ridden rallies. Those receiving awards this year are:



Bronze

Alice Arthan, Bay Brettell, George Brettell, Evie Beckinsale, Scarlett Chapple, Angus Chapple, Kitty Ing, Barney Ing, Octavia Jones, Isla Mason, Charlotte Ratcliffe, Freddie Shaw, Hughie Shaw, Marni Slater, Megan Smith, Aria Wagner, Jasmine Wheeler & Annabelle Wixey



Silver

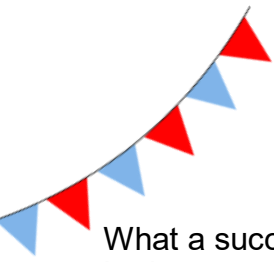
Scarlett Beynon Brown, Jessica Handley & Charlotte Ratcliffe



Gold

Eleanor Britton, Grace Ravenscroft-Jones & Lucy Wagg

Well done!



Competitions

What a successful Branch we are! Throughout the year we have had many successes at Area and Championship Competitions ranging from 70/80cm through to 110cm in Show jumping, Eventing, Dressage and Arena Eventing. In 2023, Pony Club is introducing the new 70cm level which I am hoping will encourage even more of our members to compete for the Branch.

The year started well with Finlay Montgomery qualifying for the **National Triathlon Championships** where he finished 30th overall having done a personal best in the swim and run.

At the **Area Barrier Health Spring Festival** competition we did well in the Arena Eventing with Euan Montgomery coming 5th in the 90cm and qualifying with his brother Gregor, missing out on qualification in 6th place. Bella Spencer Blow was 5th in the 1m class but sadly didn't qualify, Gregor was 7th, Harriet Cameron 10th and Daisy Bethune came 15th. Euan went on to the National Championships and finished a brilliant 5th overall. In the Show jumping competition Holly Mehta finished 9th in the Debut class (80/85cm) and 2nd in the Challenge (90/95cm) at the Area competition and qualified for the Challenge National Final where she came 28th .




and Championships



Moving on to the Summer Area Competitions, we started with **Dressage** at Solihull. We had 2 Grassroots teams with 4 members qualifying for Championships (Iris Burton 2nd on 2 ponies, Mila Wagner 6th & Eva Stanley 9th). Mila won her arena at champs and was 5th in the ride off and Iris was 3rd in her two arenas on both her ponies. Unfortunately Eva wasn't able to compete. Our Novice team was 2nd at the Area competition and qualified with some brilliant individual results: Megan Cappaert 1st, Euan Montgomery 3rd, Annabelle Wixey 6th). Phoebe Cambray came 3rd as an individual in her arena. At Championships, the team did well with Megan coming 6th in her arena. Megan also competed in the Intermediate dressage to music coming a brilliant 2nd in her arena and then 4th in the ride-off. Bella was 3rd at Open level at Area and 5th at Championships which was brilliant with the Area 7 team that she was a part of finishing in 8th position.

The **Area Eventing** competition was next at Sapey. Our Grassroots Team won at Area (Hallie Seaton 2nd, Mila Wagner 3rd, Maisey Lay 5th & Eva Stanley). The team competed at the Regional Championships where Mila finished an excellent 2nd in her arena. Bella Jackson won her arena at Novice level at Area and was 10th at Championships which was fantastic. Anna Warner and Lucy Lloyd Brown competed at 100+ level with Anna winning and Lucy coming second. Both competed at Championships with Anna finishing 10th in her arena.

Area Tetrathlon came next where we had a junior girl's team consisting of Holly Mehta, Tibby Galliers and Daisy Bethune which finished 5th with Daisy finishing 2nd and qualifying for Championships as an individual. Our open boy's team came 1st and qualified (Gregor 2nd, Finlay 3rd & Euan 4th) and won again for the second year at Championships with Finlay in 8th, Gregor 11th and Euan was one of the few who had a clear round of 1400 points. Daisy finished in 33rd place at the Championships but with a 1400 ride.



The **Area Show Jumping** competition came next at Solihull. We had competitors at all levels with Freddie Spencer Blow coming 8th in the 70cm (non-qualifying competition this year) and our 80cm team winning (Daisy Bickford 3 rd, Mila Wagner 10th, Maisey Lay and Iris Burton). They all did well at Championships. Our 90cm and 1m teams were both 3rd in the tack and turnout competition proving that, not only can we jump but we turn out well too!! The 1m team (Anna Warner, Gregor Montgomery, Harriet Cameron and Bella Jackson) came 2nd and qualified. Gregor won the 1m individually which was a fantastic achievement therefore also qualifying for the individual competition at Championships. Anna came 9th and Bella 10th. At the Championships the team came 11th. Gregor jumped really well in the individual competition to finish on 4 faults in 19th place. At Area, Lucy came a creditable 5 th individually in the 110cm class and the mixed team that she was in was 1st. She chose not to compete as an individual at Championships due to the other competitions that week that she had qualified for, but the mixed team she was in finished in 8th place.

Flower Show: The North Shropshire team consisting of Harriet Cameron, Anna Warner, Immy Spencer Blow and Lucy Lloyd Brown) won the Flower Show jumping at Radford's and Immy won her class qualifying to compete in the mini major competition at the Shrewsbury Flower Show where she came a brilliant 2nd with her partner.

Phew, what an incredible list of achievements. Most importantly though, everyone entered into the team spirit and supported each other through the highs and lows of competitive riding making us all proud to be associated with the Branch. Congratulations to everyone and a huge thank you to all parents for their continued support!

Helen.

2022 Tests Results

We have had an incredible number of test passes this year. Well done everyone!

See the website for full details of requirements for future tests or speak to Helen or Ann who will be able to advise you.

A Test Pass

Lucy Lloyd-Brown

AH Test Pass

Gregor Montgomery

B+ Test Pass

Gregor Montgomery

Lunge Test Pass

Kitty Ing

C+ Test Passes

Daisy Bethune, Jessica Bryers, Phoebe Cambray, Harriet Cameron, Finlay Montgomery, Bella Spencer-Blow and Jasmine Wheeler

C Test Pass

Eleanor Barker

D+ Test Passes

Lucy Adney, Evie Beckinsale, Daisy Bickford, Ella Bryers, Angus Chapple, Florence Hughes, Penny Lea, Maisey Lay, Izzy Perks, Amy Webster and Mila Wagner

D Test Passes

Oscar Adams, Alice Arthan, Finley Beeston, George Brettell, Victoria Bennett, Ben Calcott, Bess Corbet, Bella Dalzell, Lexi Dalzell, Mia Handford, Maisie Hargreaves, Daisy Harper, Chloe Kerr, Freya Lowe, Isla Mason, Hallie Seaton, Megan Smith, Freddie Spencer Blow, Lucy Wagg and Frank Whiston

E Test Passes

Ferdie Corbet, Jacob Dalzell, Grace Griffiths Stalker, Mia Handford, Chloe Kerr, Freya Lowe, Isla Mason, Amelia Trant, Lucy Wagg, Frank Whiston and Hester Whiston





Junior Camp at

By Freddie &

This year was our second pony club camp so we were really excited to be going, seeing some of our pony club friends and making new ones and most importantly knowing when the tuck shop was open so we could get our daily supply of sweets!

We were in different groups this year Freddie with Carys and Hughie had Helen, they were both amazing instructors all week, we had lots of fun, by the end of the first morning Helen had me (Hughie) off the lead rein and I was flying around, it was amazing fun (*not so sure Helen thought it was!!!*) Freddie was in a group with some of the older children on Ziggy and loving zooming around the show jumps and cross country!!!

Longner Hall

Hughie Shaw



Competition day was fantastic and ended with us being given loads of rosettes and some more sweets which was an amazing end to a great week and we would like to say a VERY BIG THANK YOU to everyone for making it such a fabulous week for us!

We cant wait to do it all again next year.....





Senior

Hi, my name is Harriet, and I had my first camp with the North Shropshire this year and I could not be more pleased with it. Riding one of the youngest horses in camp, my gangly ex racehorse. He loved his first camp, and his lovely stable with views across the yard from the door and out of a side window as he loved to see everyone busy on the yard, sweeping and tidying. I had chosen to take him to camp as he is only just 5 and has had no formal schooling and never jumped a course of show jumps, just the odd practice one at home. He took to it like a pro, with the excellent instruction we both received he was soon soaring around the super cross country course, splashing through the water complex and generally enjoying himself.

We had two hours of riding in the morning and another two hours in the afternoon, sometimes in a school, or out in a field doing some general schooling or dressage and out on the cross country course. It was organised so that we had two sessions of each discipline which broke everything up and kept the horses interested. Cross country was certainly our favourite. The two hours were broken up with a very welcome break of biscuits and a drink.

There were three cooked meals a day with lots of choice from cereal and/or a cooked breakfast every morning and lunch, with a

Camp

by **Harriet Cameron**



great selection of sandwiches and snacks and a delicious warm dinner.

In the evening we had a lot of fun doing evening activities especially Dean's Disco (had heard a lot about it and it didn't disappoint!) and the squadron competitions. As well as having our own time to have a chill out before a hot chocolate then bed in our dome tent dormitories.

Camp came to an end with a fun dressage and show jumping competition followed by a presentation. I was lucky enough to win the Equitation Cup.

Camp was a great way to get to know more people in the North Shropshire and I can't wait for next year.



Senior Camp

by Bella and Lexi Dalzell

First Time at Senior Camp 2022

This year was our first pony club camp and we were both very nervous and excited, questioning whether we were good enough riders and if we would make friends. Monday morning came and mum dropped us off with our ponies and instantly our line leader, Dora, made us feel part of a team. She explained camp life really well. We met our tent buddies and lots of them were in the same ride as us, so we made friends, instantly.

Our camp highlights were;

- 1) doing our first cross country course
- 2) the final day show
- 3) chatting in the tent with our new friends
- 4) the food, its amazing
- 5) Deano's disco, its crazy!

It was one of the best experiences of our life!



18+ Camp

by Annabelle Wixey

This year I went to the 18+ Pony club camp which was held at Berriewood, and I would like to start off by saying how well organised it was and how smoothly it ran! It was the first 18+ camp we have held, and it was a great success and a lot of fun! The camp was open to all 18+ members of Area-7, and we had two lovely other members from the North Warwick Pony Club join us.

We arrived on the Friday afternoon and stayed for the Saturday until Sunday afternoon, it was a little bit different to normal senior camp as we didn't all sleep in the same tents, we slept in horse lorries, caravans, and our own tent.

As all the members that attended were over 18 years old, it was a little bit more relaxed than a normal camp, as in we didn't have line competitions up at the stables, obviously had to keep everywhere tidy to be respectful. We also didn't have to turn out in full pony club attire, we could wear coloured jodhpurs and appropriate jumpers or tops, which I felt worked well especially with the heat we had over the weekend as we could wear polo tops whilst riding.

With the riding side to the camp we got to choose what riding sessions we did, so we chose three sessions to do out of four sessions which were flat work, flat work with poles, show jumping and cross country. We got one-to-one sessions with the instructors, I felt like that this worked really well and definitely got a lot out of it.

On the Saturday evening, we had a social evening and we all got to try side saddle, which was great fun. We also got a bit of an insight in how a side-saddle is made, and where they originated from which was quite interesting.

I think it is safe to say that I will definitely be returning to 18+ camp next year as it is so fun and very relaxed and stress-free, and hopefully now we've run it successfully for the first time more people will come along to the camp.



Dressage

What a fantastic year we've had for Pony Club dressage! The branch had 13 combinations competing at area dressage and a fantastic 7 of those qualified for their respective championships. The highlight for myself was winning the Novice qualifier and warm up test and introducing my young horse to the world of competing! All members representing the branch were very lucky to have benefited from some brilliant training in the run up to the qualifiers, my favourite being the test riding clinic with Michelle Parkin!

This year's National Championships was the second one I'd qualified for and competed at, but the first I'd been able to compete my own horse at! My first test of the day was the intermediate freestyle to music where I placed 2nd to qualify for the overall ride off. Next up, I joined my team of Annabelle Wixey, Euan Montgomery and Gregor Montgomery to ride the Novice Championship test to place 6th individually. At the end of a long day, we finished with my freestyle



by Megan Cappaert

once more against the winners and runners up from the Novice, Intermediate and Open freestyle classes. I was over the moon to place 4th!

The area 7 mixed team placed 8th in the Open championship with North Shropshire member, Bella Jackson, finishing a brilliant 5th in her arena. Mila Wagner and Iris Burton also represented the branch at the Mid-North Regional Championships. Iris rode two fantastic tests on her ponies and did the branch proud finishing 3rd in both of her arenas! Mila also did an incredible job, winning her arena and qualifying for the ride off, and then placing 4th overall.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Ann, Helen and the rest of the coaches, committee and parents for their support and encouragement this year. North Shropshire has had a fantastic year and I hope more and more of our members will be inspired to give Dressage a go!



Triathlons

By Will Beckinsale



My sister joined pony club and went to shoot practice which I thought was pretty cool, but I don't want to ride so did not want to join in. My Mum said I could join as a non-riding member and join in the triathlons so I could shoot too. So, I joined and tagged along, little did I know I would qualify for winter triathlon championships!

When my Mum entered me for the championship she had to disclose my scores/times as we were set in groups for heats. The run is my strongest discipline and my qualifying time was 4m45s on a wet muddy slope but the champs run was on an athletics track so I managed to knock a whole minute off my qualifying time and finish in 3m45s, a PB! I also shot a PB of 940 when my qualifying shoot was 740, what a day to pull that out of the bag! My swim was my weakest discipline but I still managed a PB of just over 100m in 2 minutes which put me in 9th place out of 47 boys in my age group from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

The whole day was great fun, everyone was very friendly and supportive and I even got to support other people representing our pony club branch which was great. I have really enjoyed doing the pony club triathlons and Champs was a great day



North Shropshire Triathlons
Sun 19th Feb & April
2023



Daisy Bickford

Show Jumping

Hi my names Daisy Bickford and I ride a pony called Mojo Magic (Mojo). Me and Mojo have done a lot of different events but I think we can both agree that show jumping is our favourite and best. This year we have been busy with North Shropshire Pony Club as me and Mojo and our team mates Maisey, Mila and Iris all qualified for the grassroots championships at Eland Lodge 2022. Which I was so excited about as this was my first year going.

We got there the night before on dressage day and watch all of the amazing horses and riders. Me and my team mates walked the course that night and then walked it again in the morning with Helen and she was so helpful. Before I knew it, it was time for my round and I was so excited.

On the 1st round Mojo smashed it and went CLEAR!! Which meant we still had a chance to get into the jump off. But then I did the 2nd round (the jumps were made higher) and we had 2 poles which meant that was our last round there as we didn't get though to the jump off.

Even though we didn't get though to the jump off I couldn't be prouder of Mojo and I for even getting the chance to go to Champs!! After that Mojo went home and I stayed to help and cheer my friends on at the eventing the next day.

And now champs is over me and Mojo are forging on just having fun and upping our height to 90cm which I am so happy about!!

Tetrathlon

Wow, what a scorcher! Over the hottest weekend of the summer, we competed in the Tetrathlon Championships at Offchurch Bury. We arrived late on the Thursday to avoid the heat of the day for travelling and got the horses settled into their stables, got our tents set up, and wondered how we would cope in the intense heat. On the Friday we were up early to shoot and then made our way over to the leisure centre for the swimming, which made us a bit cooler for a while. In the afternoon we walked the cross country course, which was a properly challenging course, especially as I was moving up to Open early to make up the team, so it was only my third 100+ track. On the Saturday we tackled the Cross-Country phase. It was due to start earlier due to the heat, although we ended up having to wait around a bit due to technical difficulties. Euan, Gregor and I were all on the cross country at the same time, and we all enjoyed the course. After we had gone round and washed off our horses with bucket loads of water to cool them down we went back to the course to support Daisy who was competing later as she was in the junior class.

That night was the traditional Tet party. Oh what party! The theme was Ts and Cs, for Tetrathlon Championships, and people had many different ideas, for example there were tennis players, traffic cones, and construction workers. I chose to go for a cheerleader outfit together with the West Warwicks, whereas Daisy and the Ludlow went for Cowgirls, and Euan went as Tigger. We had an athletes meal beforehand, consisting of

by
Finlay Montgomery



pizza and garlic bread!! We went down to the marquee where the party was held and had a great time. The next day was a very early start as the run had been moved earlier due to the heat. Despite the heat, everyone supported and cheered one another (and only one child collapsed with heatstroke!). It felt like the marathon as we were handed cups of water as we ran round to help keep us hydrated in the hot weather.

Once the run was completed it was packing up time. After that we packed up our tents and got ready for prizegiving in full riding kit in a boiling marquee. The North Shropshire did very well, winning the Open Boys Teams, and Daisy and Euan both got their 1400 rosettes for going clear inside the time, which only about 15% of open competitors achieved. I was very pleased with my results, as I beat both my brothers and got an individual placing. Overall it was a fantastic experience, and I am looking forward to all the Tetrathlons next year.



The Linda Sandercock Tetrathlon Horsemanship Award

Linda Sandercock was a keen supporter of tetrathlon and she did a lot to help and encourage tetrathletes. She tragically died in a riding accident in 2019 and the tetrathlon committee decided to honour her memory with a new award. Unknown to the competitors this year, they decided that they would watch all the cross country rounds at the Senior International Tetrathlon competition held at Pontispool in August, spreading themselves throughout the whole course to decide on the recipient of this new award. The Senior International Tetrathlon is known to be the toughest course within pony club, with just 10% going clear, and many of the fences at Pontispool were in the BE Novice and Intermediate courses a few weeks later.

At the prizegiving this award was announced as being a horsemanship award and Euan was delighted to be named the first recipient of the award. This meant all the more to him as he isn't a natural tetrathlete and he does it for the challenge of the cross country. It was lovely that his partnership with his horse was recognised in this way as he jumped clear over the tricky combinations and fences which caused problems to lots of experienced horses, on his small horse who, when he got her 4 years earlier, wouldn't go over a ditch and at her first ODE spent more time spooking at the sheep in the field alongside the course, than looking at the fences. The silver salver was then presented to him at the Tetrathlon Ball held at Hereford Racecourse in September.



Rallies

by Jasmine Wheeler

During this last year I have been to many Rallies riding my horse Dermot. We've only had him for around two years, but the rallies I have been to have really helped me with gaining my confidence and improving my relationship with Dermot throughout all disciplines.

We particularly enjoy Show Jumping Rallies, which are usually held at Walford Equestrian, but can be elsewhere as well. Working Rallies are also great as you don't really know which discipline you are going to be doing until you get there, so you can enjoy doing something different.

The groups you are put in for Rallies are almost always done according to abilities/ages, so you will most likely be put in a group with people that are Jumping the same height as you, or at the same Flatwork level as you. This is really useful as you won't ever have to worry about being put in a group with people who are a much higher or much lower level than you, so you can concentrate about taking as much from each Rally as you can.

The Rallies are a great way to gain confidence in riding, and meet new people as well, all while your horse/pony gets exercised and has something to enjoy every month.

Another great thing about Rallies, is finding new places that you might want to go back to on your own to ride at, and maybe hire out an arena there, or go on a new cross-country course. These are brilliant for exploring new areas to ride.





Pony Racing

by Lexi Everington

'When it rains it feels like I'm in heaven' I love racing, I have always wanted to be a jockey, when I was around the age of 4 I watched my mum and thought that's what I want to do. Racing feels like you're flying you just keep going. There's no other feeling than being at the start with your heart racing waiting for the flag to fall. It's scary but it's so amazing.

'You don't need a pony to pony race' I'm currently racing my 5 year old pony Mr Jerry himself he's a 12.2 Welsh C X New Forrest. We are the most inexperienced combination on the course so each race is an educational day out for us. He can be a bit of a boy in the paddock, but acts a professional on the track. He has a lot to learn as he is only a baby and has only raced twice. This was at Wolverhampton and Warwick racecourse which is a big day out for a young pony. Unfortunately so far we have had to race in open sections due to me already previously being placed on a different pony, which is always very competitive. Hopefully during next season we will find a couple of nice little races for him to pick up a placing or even better a win! After the race he bounces down the track back to the paddock, he doesn't know he has been beaten he just absolutely loves the buzz of racing just as much as me. Jerry is

currently having some downtime in the field before the season starts again in February. Next season we will be attending point to point pony racing and the pony club pony racing which includes having the opportunity to ride at Cheltenham and Ascot. I would also love to have ago at the Isle of Wight Grand National.

‘Turn your idols into you rivals’ Believe and you’ll achieve, I’m always keeping my dreams alive this due to the determination of a very inspirational jockey. The one and only Rachel Blackmore she’s hardworking, dedicated, brave and a kind natural horsewomen. She has inspired so many young jockeys into the sport. I would love to be lucky enough to spend a morning at the gallops with her.

‘Racing is like a big family’ My first time racing I made a brilliant group of friends. There all so kind and supportive. We could go weeks without seeing one another, until the next race meeting and it’s like we have never been apart. Hopefully in 6 years time we will still have that same bond and we will be racing in point to points!

Everyone is so supportive if you are ever unsure on something you know you can turn to anyone for advice or help.

There are many supportive websites to look into pony racing, including PRA(Pony Racing Authority), Racing2learn, and The Pony Club. If you fancy having a go at pony racing my advice is to do it, you’ll absolutely love it!

However just remember like in all sports sometimes things may not go to plan, but you can’t have a rainbow without a little rain!





Another Win for North Shropshire at the Flower Show

by Immy Spencer-Blow

My grandparents aren't horsey, but they watch show jumping at the flower show every year and ask when I will go there... So it's always been an aim of mine to ride on the PC flower show team – and this year I was lucky enough to do this!

The flower show split into two parts: The *Team Competition* and the *Mini-Major* Competition. On Sunday 31st July Radford's hosted the 105cm *Team Competition* and held qualifiers 70cm-100cm for the *Mini-Major* competition with 1st & 2nd place going forward to compete at the flower show on 13th August.

Radford's employed a BS course designer and made a big effort to decorate a show course and run under BS rules.

I joined my teammates Lucy, Anna and Harriet. We all jumped the 1m class (a qualifier for the *Mini-Major*) to warm up and then jumped the 105cm team class against Tanantside PC and South Shropshire PC. Which we won!

It was a strong win as we were the only team to jump clear and we were deservedly proud of our performance. My own mare excited the crowd with a few large bucks but was forgiven because she jumped well and fast! We received some flashy embroidered rugs and a large shield call the 'Royal Mail Salva'.



We've been busy with Horse and Pony Care this year with something on every month.

I started attending rallies and am now taking my AH which is the highest test.

Unfortunately we didn't get to have a go at the Area Competition this year but hopefully we can go in 2023 and as my YELA Gold project I have organised a Friendly Competition so hopefully that will inspire some of our younger members to give it a go.

If nothing else it makes passing the Care Section of your tests so much easier!

by Kitty Ing

What is the Young Equestrian Leaders Award?

The Young Equestrian Leaders Award (YELA) is a scheme for young people aged between 13 and 25 who want to volunteer within the equestrian industry, not just Pony Club.

There are progressive levels to work through: **Bronze, Silver and Gold.**

The scheme not only recognises the time and effort spent volunteering, but also facilitates young people to gain a range of skills and experiences, setting them up to become leaders of the future.

Why get involved?

Completing the award shows dedication and can be used to enhance your CV, university, and job applications. Volunteering can help build confidence as you meet and work with new people.

Join in

Join up on the main Pony Club Website (**Bronze is free for PC members**) and start volunteering..



-Eventing-



By **Hallie Seaton**

After my first-year eventing I think I can safely say I've caught the bug. My first One Day Event was at Sapey for the Area Eventing Qualifiers. My team consisted of Eva, Mila and Maisey alongside our fabulous ponies. For our first dressage test together, we managed to produce a nice test coming out with a score of 31.5% which I was pleased with. Then we got a lovely clear show jumping round and then stormed our way around Cross Country, we ended up being clear inside the time! After all the hard work our team put in on the day it paid off and we ended up winning the 80 class. I came second individually and was only 0.5% off being first. It was such an amazing day, and I was proud to be on such a great team. I couldn't have done it without the help of Helen, Ann, Mum, Mandy and Dean who all were such a big help this year. I can't wait to do it all again next year.

Endurance

by Scarlett Chapple



My aims for the 2022 Endurance season were:

- 1) To get my total competitive distance to over 1000km which I am happy to say I have – after this season – now reached a competitive total of 1100km !
- 2) To do an 80km ride – we attempted 2, 80km rides this year but sadly Tansy went lame at both of these.
- 3) To get a Grade 1 (the highest grade you can achieve) – I got 1 grade 1 this year and it was Bunny's first! I achieved 5 grade 2s this year – one of them was also Bunny's first grade 2.

How did my season go?

I started with a 32km ride at Cannock Chase. Lovely and challenging ride with some amazing views. My season continued to many more amazing rides one of my favourites being Foremark Reservoir. I rode 64km on my own and worked a lot on my map reading skills. I achieved a Grade 2 at Foremark, and rode alongside Tansy's breeders Sally and Katie Mellor. It was lovely for Tansy to ride along with some of her old friends!

The toughest ride I did this year was Rushford Hall. We travelled to Thetford, a great distance and stayed overnight. Due to the recent drought the hardcore from the amazing sand and grass tracks had risen to the surface and both Lexi and Tansy went lame. It was, a true experience of an international ride, we were amongst lots of horses and riders that had come over for the UAE team. Our trailer felt very inferior next to lines of massive, matching and fully equipped Oakley Horse lorries, each with 15 very shiny horses, and each horse with its own staff. A new world!

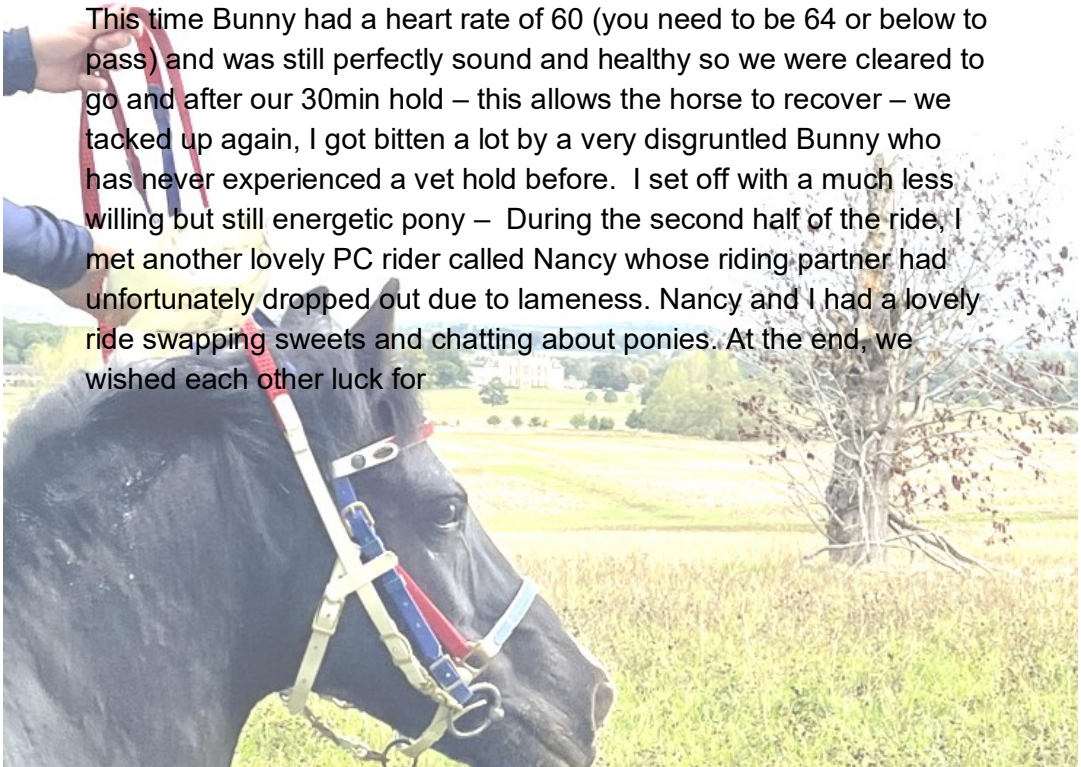
The Pony Club National Championships

My plan for the PC National Champs was to qualify and enter Tansy into the Open Championships - 56km, and retain my title.

Unfortunately Tansy's bruised feet from Rushford Hall were not recovering and endurance is all about the welfare of the horse. Even if she passed the vetting at the start, we risked rebruising so..... we pulled out.... Only then realising super Bunny had in fact qualified for intermediate champs so, last-minute change a week before and off to Intermediate Champs – 41km – on Bunny.

Worryingly we had only one week to get the famously fat Bunny fighting fit. Against the odds – we did it! Bunny did lots of galloping and was given the day before the ride off to save her energy – she took great pleasure in this (sleeping ALL day). We arrived at the Lions Tail, got ourselves ready and met some of the PC riders. Bunny passed her initial vetting with a fantastic heart rate of 38bpm! We tacked up and set off into the beautiful countryside. Bunny and I finished the first half of the ride in good time and headed off to vetting.

This time Bunny had a heart rate of 60 (you need to be 64 or below to pass) and was still perfectly sound and healthy so we were cleared to go and after our 30min hold – this allows the horse to recover – we tacked up again, I got bitten a lot by a very disgruntled Bunny who has never experienced a vet hold before. I set off with a much less willing but still energetic pony – During the second half of the ride, I met another lovely PC rider called Nancy whose riding partner had unfortunately dropped out due to lameness. Nancy and I had a lovely ride swapping sweets and chatting about ponies. At the end, we wished each other luck for



the vetting and headed off our separate ways, Bunny loves company and didn't stop whinnying until we went to vet and saw Nancy's horse again. Each time she whinnied her heart rate spiked making it worrying to get her through.

We passed our final vetting with a superb heart rate of 43 the vet had some lovely comments to make about how, in fact 41km later Bunny was looking exactly as she did on arrival (round and happy). I waited anxiously to collect my result and was delighted when my vet sheet, Mastercard and rosette were put on the results table... we got a grade 1! This was Bunny's first ever Grade 1, and despite a long wait until the awards ceremony, it was fabulous to hear my new pony club friend Nancy had come first and we (Bunny and I came 3rd).

On studying the results, we discovered that we were each only riding by 1kmph apart (in the order we were placed) and all had the same final heart rate! Next year if I get to take Tansy, I hope to ride at around 14km per hour as this is a more successful speed to go at than Bunny's 11km per hour.

The most shocking piece of information that I found out that day was as the secretary said, "There are 37,500 pony club members in the UK and only 15 of you are here today!" The lovely Pony Club officials encouraged us to all become ambassadors of this fantastic fun sport. So I'm hoping next season to take a North Shropshire Team of at least 4 to the Pony Club Champs (wherever they are). This is the most amazing sport for equine fitness and teaches you and your pony so many life & riding skills. You see fantastic places and meet amazing people - come along / learn and enjoy.

I am helping to run a Pony Club Intro to Endurance, at Field Fare Farm on December 3rd 2022. Please book yourself into this fun Rally, and give yourself a wonderful taster of endurance.

Badge Rallies

by Robert Aitchson



Hi my name is Robert I am 6. I like doing badge rallies because of learning about pony care and how to look after my pony, They are also lots of fun.

I started my badge rallies during lockdown on zoom, I did my mini fire and safety, pony health and poisonous plants. At Junior camp I also got another badge. I have 4 now and I want to do more.

I love looking after my pony so badge rallies help me and I cant wait to do the next zoom rally.

Thank you for running them.

Another year has gone by, and despite the lack of lockdowns, the online badge rallies have remained popular! They have been fun to organise this year, with new badges from last year, and the kids have also been fantastic, learning more and more about their horses and the world around them with each session. We began in the winter with sessions on a variety of topics, and are looking to continue them this winter again, though we may have to start repeating badges if we keep on!

The rallies followed the same format; one session introducing the topic with interactive questions and follow-up information and explanations over a powerpoint for an hour, ending with them being sent a workbook that they had a week to complete at home from what they learned.

Next week, they would come back, workbook completed, as I went through the answers with them, asking what they answered, and explaining what they may not have understood the first time round. They were always very engaged and excited to learn, and got an astonishing amount of the questions right each week, even when I threw in extra questions that weren't in the workbooks in the "Lightning Round" each week before assessing the workbook answers. Each week had two sessions, one for the mini-badges and one for the senior badges. In all, I think it has been a great time for all involved, and they have learnt a lot. I hope to continue them into this winter, and to keep teaching more badge rallies in similar formats.

Alisdair

Zoom Rallies

Mounted Games

by Lucy Wagg

It's very exciting!!! You can learn a lot and a big win win because sometimes you get to camp over!!

On my first games competition my pony Chatty was very scared because the tannoy is very loud and there are lots of other pony's rushing around you going very fast.

I learnt when the horse goes backwards and you are scared or worried you don't panic and pull, try to stay calm, just squeeze on with your leg and give them a nice scratch and say it's okay. After that the pony will trust you and do what you ask. The pony can feel everything that you're doing.

I went to Malpas and Malvern, both of them were great and extraordinary because you go with your friends. You get to do lots of different races such as odd socks, recycling, 2 mug, bending poles, and stepping stones. It is very thrilling! If you camp, you get to have your pony outside your tent, and great how you don't go by yourself because you have your team to support you.

If you're interested in games I thoroughly recommend you to do it any questions I really hope you come and see me and ask me any questions



Xmas
Competition

Sun 4th Dec
Come and Have Fun!

Badminton

by Euan Montgomery

Badminton - what an experience, somehow I managed to qualify, still not sure how that happened, but I got a lucky 5th at Bradwall where I finished on my Dressage of 35 and I got 7th at Kelsall the year before and I was lucky that the qualifying places were extended because of covid. Those 2 placings qualified me for the area festival qualifiers so I went to Chillington Hall where I again finished on my Dressage score of 33.4. I had 2 Dressage judges and it was in a 20x60 area and it was very stressful being watched by all the spectators as well, but I did one of my best tests despite it. As I did so well in the dressage, had no poles show jumping and was clear and as close as I would comfortably be to the optimum time across country, I ended up coming 5th and I was on my way to Badminton. I spent a long time preparing over the winter so I could still have time to revise for my A-levels, which were due to start just a couple of weeks after Badminton. I had to make sure I was prepared for the Dressage, as it is my weakest area, so I had lots of lessons and a couple of days before I started to prepare all the items I may need and lots of extras in case anything broke when I was there.

When I arrived there it was surreal. I arrived in the evening stayed the night in a cold tent and the following morning I was on to do my Dressage where I was warming up really well then when I went in the arena, my horse decided it was all very exiting and got a 35.9 Dressage score though I was very pleased about as it and thought the judges were a bit harsh. There was a lot of people watching, so it was quite nerve-wracking. The rest of the day was spent walking a very long cross country course and making decisions on what lines to take for fences and what was likely to happen and where things might go wrong and also where people may be watching so I remember to look good over those fences!! I probably walked it 3 times in total, each time took longer than the last due to debating the lines I was taking. I definitely did over 25000 steps walking the course, and was glad we had taken bikes to help get around some of the grounds. That night was spent memorising fences and doing maths and physics papers, followed by a few drinks at the main badminton media centre with some speeches on how lucky we are that we were finally allowed to be there again due to covid.

The morning was chilly again but it was the last night in the tent for me. I washed my horse legs again and we replaited her and got ready for the show jumping. I had a very good course walk with Helen, like she always does, though unfortunately I had a pole as I was a slight bit too long going in to one of the fences, so I was slightly annoyed because I really rode that round. But I moved on quickly to the best phase, the one I had been waiting for, and I was so nervous I couldn't stop worrying about the rail ditch rail and the drop because I knew that would cause problems. Luckily I didn't have any of the problems we thought we might have and she didn't even notice the big crowd around the Lake and all the tents and marquees. I was told multiple times as I was walking the course that my horse would tire out as it's a much longer course than we normally do, and we didn't know if she was as fit as she would need to be and usually is by the summer. I went too fast and she didn't tire, and it didn't help that I couldn't read the watch so I ended up finishing with some time faults for being too quick which cost me a few places but I finished on a score of 41.5 in 49th place (which was in the top half of competitors) and which personally I am really happy with. The best bit was I did the cross country clear, even if too fast, as that is supposed to be the hardest part



If you have a success you'd like to share in next year's newsletter send an email to claire_ing@hotmail.com

Thank you!

Many, many thanks to those members and their families that have hosted a NSH Pony Club event of some kind at their home during the past year. Thank you for allowing us to hold mounted or unmounted rallies, for letting us use your fields, arenas, stables, garages and outbuildings, and for making our members feel so welcome.

If anyone has facilities that they would be able to allow the club to use during the forthcoming year please contact Helen Elston or Ann Gregory.

Thank you also to all our coaches for their dedication and support, it is greatly valued by all our members.



Xmas Show

11th Dec '22