

District Commissioner's Report

You probably get fed up of me saying what a fantastic Branch we are but I make no apologies for this! We continue to go from strength to strength demonstrated in lots of ways, not only by our competitive successes (which are many) but also our membership growth. We are now easily the 3rd biggest Branch in Area 7 and rapidly catching the 2nd largest. Our members range in age from 2 to 25 and we are fortunate to have a large percentage of boys. We also retain our older members which other Branches seem to struggle with.

For me, Pony Club isn't just about improving member's riding and pony care (although that is a very important part of what we do), it's also about having fun and making life-long friends. The parents of nearly 30 of our members were also North Shropshire members themselves which I think says something very positive about the Branch. We are also lucky to have quite a number of very generous parents who have enabled a considerable number of our members this year, who would otherwise have missed out, to attend rallies, junior and senior camp and even Championships and I thank you all for that.

I would also like to thank the Committee for their help and support throughout the year and we will endeavour to ensure that 2024 brings more successes, new friendships and plenty of opportunities for learning and fun.



Ann

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.

Area Competitions 2024

Every summer each Pony Club Area (we are in Area 7) hold qualifiers for the 'main' disciplines and those successful (individuals and teams) qualify for PC Championships or Regional Championships. These competitions start at 70cm now so if you are comfortably jumping 70cm SJ or XC (eventing) you really should consider having a go. There is an equivalent level of dressage too (equivalent to a BD prelim).

The Branch is required to submit details of the number of members wanting to take part in each discipline before entries open so Helen Elston will once again be collecting the Area Reply Slips and passport vaccination details from those who wish to be take part. The slips will be available on the website next Spring and will, at the same time, be emailed to everyone. Please do ask Helen or Ann for further information.

2024 Camp, Area Qualifier and Championship Dates

Winter Triathlon 27th January at Redditch Leisure Centre.

National Quiz Qualifier 3rd March Venue Tbc

Winter Triathlon Finals 24th March at Grantham.

Horse And Pony Care 20th/21st April (provisional) at Berriewood.

Mounted Games 27th April at Grove Fields Farm, Hampton Lucy.

Show Jumping 29th June at Solihull Riding Club.

Mini Tetrathlon Championships 29th/30th June at Oxstalls XC.

Dressage 6th July at Onley Grounds.

Eventing 14th July at Moreton Morrell.

Tetrathlon 20th/21st July at Berriewood Farm.

Mounted Games Zone Finals 20th/21st July at Lutterworth.

Pony Club Championships 9th - 17th August at Offchurch Bury.

Regional Championships 24th - 26th August. Venue Tbc.

18+ Camp Date TBC at Berriewood

For those members aged 18 years and over.

Senior Camp 22nd to 26th July at Berriewood

For those members aged 10 years and over.

Junior Camp 29th to 31st July at Longner Hall

For those members aged 10 years and under.

Rally Attendance Awards

This award is 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 rallies. Those receiving awards this year are:

Bronze



Daisy Bethune, Bay Brettell, George Brettell, Beatrice Britton, Matilda Brooksbank, Iris Burton, Jessica Handley, Olivia Hazell, Kitty Ing, Octavia Jones, William Jones, Daisy Mackenzie, Oliver Ratcliffe, Alice Ravenscroft - Jones, Grace Richards, Isobel Richards, Freddie Shaw, Hughie Shaw and Immy Spencer - Blow

Silver



Alice Arthan, Scarlett Beynon Brown, Sidney Beynon - Brown, Eleanor Britton, Olivia Caswell - Wedderkopp, Finlay Montgomery, Charlotte Ratcliffe

Gold



Grace Ravenscroft-Jones, Lucy Wagg, Jasmine Wheeler and Barney Ing

Well done!

2023 Tests Results

A very well done to all our members who have passed their tests this year and thank you to all our coaches for helping our members achieve their goals. 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.

B Test Passes

Jess Bryers, Harriet Cameron, Finlay Montgomery,

B Test Passes (Ride—now has full test)

Kitty Ing

B Test Passes (Care)

Daisy Bethune

C+ Test Passes

Immy Spencer-Blow and Barney Ing

C Test Passes

Evie Beckinsale, Ella Bryers, Scarlett Chappell, Maisey Lay, and Mila Wagner

D+ Test Passes

Alice Arthan, George Brettell, Phoebe Hargreaves and Daisy Harper

D Test Passes

Lucy Barker, Scarlett Beynon - Brown, Bay Brettell, Nell Kent, Mia Lloyd - Thomas, Isla Mason, Sienna Pierce, Ebony Rudd, Freddie Shaw, Annabel Street, Amelia Trant

E Test Passes

Sidney Beynon - Brown, Beatrice Britton, Florence Chilton, Arthur Haselwood, Beatrice Haselwood, Olivia Hazell, Octavia Jones, William Jones, Martha Jones, Lexi Jones, Daisy Mackenzie, Alice Ravenscroft - Jones, Isobel Richards and Annabel Street





Competitions and

Once again, we have had lots of successes at all levels across the various disciplines at both Area competitions and Championships.

Horse and Pony Care - We were represented by 6 teams at the Area Qualifier in May (3 Mini, 1 Junior and 2 Senior). All teams did extremely well with our Seniors (Gregor Montgomery, Kitty and Barney Ing) coming a brilliant 2nd and 3rd (Lucy Arrowsmith Brown, Finlay Montgomery and Daisy Bethune), they were very close on points to each other and to the winner. Both Senior teams had wild cards to the Championships coming an amazing 5th & 8th out of 32 teams. Daisy sadly couldn't make Championships so Harriet Cameron kindly made up the team.

Dressage – At Area we had 4 competitors all of whom qualified for either the Regional or National Pony Club Championships. At Intermediate level, Megan Cappaert went to the National Championships and won her arena coming 2nd in the ride off which is a fantastic result! Finley Beeston rode a borrowed pony that he had only ridden a few times and went to the Regional Championships and Mila Wagner rode her Mum's horse, also at Regional's, finishing 5th individually.

Tetrathlon – Over many years our Branch has been nationally recognised for our tetrathlon successes and this year was no exception. The Montgomery boys (Euan, Finlay and Gregor) qualified as an Open boy's team and won at Championships again (individually Finlay 4th & Gregor 6th) all 3 of them (Euan included) rode clear which was commendable as there were only 5 clear rounds in the competition. Daisy Bethune moved up to Intermediate qualifying for and competing at Championships.

Championships



SJ – Our 80cm team of Freddie Spencer Blow, Mila Wagner and Iris Burton riding her 2 ponies, won both the jumping and turnout at the Area competition and finished a fantastic 2nd after a nail-biting jump-off at Regional Championships. Grace Evans and Izzy Perks also qualified for the 70cm and both competed at Regionals with Grace getting through to the jump off. At Area, our 1m team (Harriet Cameron, Immy and Bella Spencer Blow) came 3rd and Immy qualified as an individual in 4th place (Bella also qualified but sadly couldn't ride at Championships so Harriet took her individual space with Immy on her second pony and Gregor filling the remaining team slots). All competed at Championships and riding well. We had a 110 team of 3 members (Gregor Montgomery, Lucy Arrowsmith Brown and Immy Spencer Blow) which won the tack and turnout but sadly didn't qualify. Lucy was individually 3rd and qualified jumping well at champs.

Eventing – Our 80cm team of Mila Wagner, Iris Burton, Maisey Lay and Alice Arthan was best Branch team at Area therefore qualifying and competing at Regionals coming 4th. We had a team in the 90cm consisting of Bella Timmis, Annabelle Wixey, Harriet Cameron and Finlay Montgomery which finished 6th at Area. Bella finished 5th as did Harriet both narrowly missing out on qualifying spots for Championships. Our 100cm team of Bella Timmis, Bella Spencer Blow, Dora Prytherch and Gregor Montgomery won at Area (Bella T was 3rd in her Arena). The team (sadly without Bella S B) competed at Championships with Gregor finishing on his dressage score winning his section and making the Horse and Hound! Lucy Arrowsmith Brown competed in the Chairman's Cup finishing 4th at Area and qualifying. She rode well at National Championships. Well done everyone!!

Ann & Helen.

Young Equestrian Leaders Award

Well done to Megan Cappaert and Kitty Ing for achieving their YELA Gold Awards. Both girls had to volunteer for over 60 hours with three Member Body Approved establishments over a minimum of 32 weeks. The Award culminates with a final project that can be anything as long as it benefits other people or members and showcases a wide range of skills !

If you are a member and 13 yrs or over you can register for the Bronze award for free, have a look at the Main Pony Club website.

Gregor Montgomery appeared in Horse and Hound after he won the Intermediate Eventing [Section D] at Pony Club Championships on Winnie (whose official name is Blackfort Ginger). Gregor was presented with the Toytown Trophy and afterwards a reporter was waiting to interview him!



After his brush with the press Gregor was heard to comment that Horse and Pony Care was his favourite discipline at Champs as there is no stress and unlimited biscuits!



Junior Camp

By Frank Whiston



Junior Camp was at Longner Hall again this year. My group instructor was called Kim and she was really fun. We did Cross Country, Show Jumping, Grids, Dressage (not my favourite) and lots more fun lessons with Kim. In Junior Camp there is a lot of activities for your ponies and yourself. I enjoyed the Shooting! Hester, my sister, loved the Hounds from The North Shropshire Hunt. We played rounders and went to DEANO's Disco which was really really fun! I had to take my friend Maisy's pony Silver because my pony had an eye infection. We won our Show Jumping- that was the first time I have ever won!

We learnt about Horse Safety for Horses and Ponies. If they were stuck in a ditch, you would put a sling under your pony to help get it out. Let's hope we never have to do this! The Whiston Family would like to thank all of the wonderful coaches and organisers, especially Ann Gregory, The Burton Family and all the fabulous children at camp.





Senior

First Time at Senior Camp 2023

Hi, I don't know where to start! Because camp was ~~awesome~~ horsome and I had the time of my life without my parent's whilst pony riding and making new friends.

When I arrived, I was nervous because I had never been to Senior Camp before but I had been to Junior Camp which was so fun. Anyway, back to when I arrived, like I said I was very nervous but my friend, Florence, helped me settle in and get prepared for my first lesson. My mum and Mike helped unpack the lorry whilst I met my line leader [Harriot] and deputy line leader [Daisy] along with my team. My stable mates where Lexi, Daisy, Harriet, Lucy, Cara and Alice. Our stable was called Pytchley. My riding team was Lexi E, Lucy, Lexie D, and Bella. Our ride was the maroon ride and Deano who was the best instructor and also the funniest instructor, like the time when he was checking that all the horse's bottoms where clean for tack check!

After we finished riding in the mornings, we always dunked our bits and then went to play and catch up with our friends and check for bed tokens which are for the tuck shop. You get them if your bed is tidy. Play time was busy and handy because you if need to get dressed for your afternoon ride and get into dark jodhpurs or cross-country skins, if you had them. In the afternoon you had your lesson then you do the yard chores. Lunch was amazing along with breakfast and dinner because we had so many options of food and drinks also puddings. When I was packing [which I randomly

Camp

by Phoebe Hargreaves



started 3 months early, mum was going mad because she couldn't find any of mine or the pony's stuff!].

I took my pony Ruby, who was the smallest pony at camp, who is 10.3h bay Welsh and very cheeky. Although she is small is mighty and I really love her. She really enjoyed camp and all the lessons, also when she went in the extremely deep water, I thought she was going to have to swim! We had a few moments when I was eating dirt and Ruby was looking down at me probably laughing at me in horse language. My favourite part of camp if I had to pick one was the XC. I really enjoyed all the lessons, but I love jumping so I find XC fun. I really learnt a lot at camp thanks to Dean being such an ace instructor.

Thank you to all the cooks, Instructors, Ann and everyone else for an amazing camp. I was really pleased at the end of camp since I got the tack and turn out award, 65cm showjumping award, dressage award and best first Timer. I can't wait for next year, I might start packing now (don't tell mum)!



Senior Camp

by **Annabella Subianni**

Hello! I'm Annabella. When I was around 10, I joined the North Shropshire Pony Club, and Senior Camp was always the highlight of the year! Back then, I was a pretty nervous rider with barely any confidence, but what kept me coming back year after year was how much those camps helped me grow as a rider, the friendly vibe, and the epic evening games.

After selling my horse 3 years ago I have done very little riding and wished I could find the time to ride more often, but what I missed most was camp. This year, though, luck was on my side! I got to ride the amazing Lucy, and it turned out to be my best camp experience yet!

Returning to camp, I had some jitters about my riding skills and whether I'd still fit in with my old friends. As soon as I arrived, though, it was like I had never left. Everyone was so warm and welcoming, and the instructors were just as awesome as I remembered. Their encouragement made it all feel like second nature.



I am now on the brink of turning 18 and can't believe this was my last Senior Camp. I wish I could do it all over again next year. Senior Camp has been more than just riding lessons. They've been about personal growth, unforgettable memories, and friendships. While my Senior Camp days are coming to an end, those memories will stay with me forever.

18+ Camp

by **Gregor Montgomery**

We are fortunate to be in a large branch which can offer a camp specifically for older members and it was great to be going back for the 2nd year though a shame this year the camp only had members from our own branch. However we all had a great time, learned lots, and for the second year running I fell off (we might need to start a tumblers club!). 18⁺ Camp is much more relaxed than Senior Camp, with no line marking, tack and turnout etc., although Helen still insists on tidy stables much to my disappointment. We had Jon Rogers taking us for individual show jumping and a group cross country session on the Saturday and Jake Taylor taking us for 2 individual flatwork sessions on the Sunday. Helen Elston helped prep us for the Horse and Pony Care Championships, and Kitty had no spare time as she had lots of tuition for her AH training from Nicola Fitter. Our Saturday evening activity was not for the faint hearted (Euan failed to join in!), as we dissected a horse's leg, and looked at the tendons and ligaments which hold it all together. 18⁺ Camp was a great start to our summer of competitions, so thank you to all who organised it, cooked evening meals and prepared our lunches.



Dressage

by Finley Beeston



My goal for this year was British Dressage Quest Series and Pony Club regional dressage championships.

Last year me and Tiddy really got in to the dressage after competing in Trailblazers and registering British dressage. We attended a British Dressage squad assessment in December 2022 and I got my D squad. The start of 2023 got off to a great start, we were achieving over 68% and above and we even got some over 70%.

I enjoy getting my pony working correctly and being accurate in the tests.

Me and Tiddy were at the top of the leaderboard all year in the Quest series meaning we were heading to the regionals in September.

We then went to Olney Equestrian to represent North Shropshire for the regional dressage Qualifier. We did two nice tests, it was nice to have Helen there supporting us along with Megan, Mila and Lucy. Me and Tiddy came away with 3rd and a 5th meaning we had qualified for the championships and both goals for 2023 achieved!

Sadly in July Tiddy wasn't well and had to stay at Liverpool vets, they were unable to make him better and he had to be put to sleep. I found losing him very hard.

Unfortunately the Quest journey came to an end as even though we were still sat at the top of the leaderboard the points were mine and Tiddys and I wasn't allowed to continue on another pony.

For the Pony Club regional dressage I wasn't sure I wanted to go but Dean and Harry very kindly let me take Rosa, I rode her three times at Deans and then we headed off to Championships. We headed down the centre line with some of Tiddy's hair attached to the saddle. She was a very good girl and we came 3rd in the one test and just out the placings in the other so I was really pleased.

I now have a new young pony to continue my journey with and look forward to setting new goals with her. I am grateful to Tiddy for all he taught me and getting me into dressage.



Badge Rallies

by Jessica Handley



My name is Jessica and I am 7 years old.

I like to do the badge rallies as I learn all about caring for my ponies and learning about keeping them safe.

This year I have done my Horse Clothing, Fire Safety, Native Breeds and Working Dogs.

At camp I also did my Road Safety and we were able to see the Fire Engine and Rescue Equipment.

I am looking forward to more Zoom Rallies and thank you so much for doing them for me.



Eventing

by Mila Wagner

The eventing championships are held on the last day of the regional championships weekend and even though I had been lucky to compete there for the last 2 days, you can not imagine my excitement for the eventing as it is always the highlight of my weekend!

I was especially nervous because this was only my second event with Skye, the first one being the qualifier as I hadn't had a great start to the year with RJ going lame, but the best replacement ever had been kindly lent by my Nana. Never the less Skye and I went down the centre line bright and early on Monday morning, surprising me with a brilliant sub 35. It wasn't the best score in the world but to me that was one of the best achievements of the day as dressage is certainly not Skye's forte! The nerves were on for showjumping as we were a team of 3 and my teammates Iris and Maisey had just gone clear, but Skye tried her heart out for me and scored a clear which meant the team was one of the only teams still on there dressage scores! After the showjumping it's the cross country. The track at Kelsall was one of the best courses I have ever ridden on her. I was so proud of Skye going clear inside the time to place a amazing individual 7th and team 4th.

For the past 3 years regional championships has been the highlight of the year for me and I am really grateful to pony club, Anne and Helen for providing these opportunities and endless support.

If your thinking about Eventing, go for it!!



Show Jumping

by Freddie Spencer-Blow



My favourite part of riding is jumping & preferably jumping quickly!

My pony (Benji) and I competed at Rodbaston triangular SJ and qualified for the PC Spring Festival. Unfortunately I couldn't go because we were on holiday, but thought never mind, I thought I could aim for the summer qualifiers.

Sadly Benji went lame which ruined my plans for summer competitions and PC camp. I tried borrowing my sister's Pony but she would only let me do flat work and I found it boring. Mummy thought I was probably going to give up riding.

Then one night, we had a call from Dean to ask if we would like to borrow his pony, Rosa, for PC camp and, if so, have a trial ride on her. One lesson on Rosa and I was absolutely hooked again... "this is my kind of pony!" I told mummy. Rosa loves to jump and go fast, and she's totally genuine.

Dean gave me lessons on Rosa and allowed me to take her to PC camp, and then even extra kindly allowed me to compete at the Regional SJ Qualifier at Solihull riding centre. I was able to join an amazing 80cm team, including Iris Burton and Mila Wagner. At Solihull we had to jump 3 different courses in the same day. Helen gave me lots of help and training in the warm ups. Rosa was absolutely incredible and jumped clear each time. My team members were amazing and we won which qualified us for the Regional Championships.

I was so excited and looking forward to the Regional champs at Kelsall, where we had to compete against the finalists from other regional qualifiers. Having followed my sisters around for years it was really exciting to be at my own final. My family came to watch and Rosa's family came too! Harry promised Rosa lots of polos if she jumped clear and it worked! She jumped clear every time and the team came 2nd.

There were so many North Shropshire PC members who came to support including our DC Ann, the Elston family, the Price family, other nshpc members and our team's families - we definitely had the biggest cheers of the day and I loved every minute of it!

Triathlons

By Grace & Issy Richards

In a tetrathlon there are four events, they are swimming running shooting/ bean bag throwing, and horse riding, our favourite is the horse riding because we get to ride our ponies .

When there are no ponies we like the swimming. It normally takes one day for a triathlon and two days for a Tet (with riding).

When I'm 8 I can start shooting instead of bean bags which I'm excited for, I have been to some practice at Rachel's house to get ready.

Our overall favourite bit is seeing our friends getting their rosettes and playing in-between the races.



North Shropshire Triathlon
Sun 18th Feb
2024

Tetrathlon

by **Matilda Brooksbank**

When I tell people I compete in Tetrathlons, they often ask what is this? The simple answer is that a Tetrathlon consists of Shooting (at targets), Running, Swimming and Riding.

There are often shoot practices throughout the month, so you don't need your own gun or targets to practise (you don't even need your own gun for competitions as the club will loan these to you). A competition usually takes place over 2 days, the shoot, run and swim sections are usual on the first day and the ride on the second.

During the shooting phase, competitors are required to shoot 10 shots at a distance from the target. The time available to shoot, the distance and whether you hold the gun with one or two hands depends on your age group.

The run phase is either across fields or sometimes on a running track. Again the distance depends on your age. For my age group Junior Girls (12 - 14), I am required to run 1500 metres. Next up the swim, the aim is to swim as far as you possibly can in 3 minutes.

Now for the ride, which is a cross country course and often everybody's favourite. Each age group has a height of fence they are required to jump. For Junior Girls this is 90cm but can choose to jump down a height if you want to (with a points penalty). The feeling of completing a cross-country course is amazing.



After this your scores from each phase are added together and whoever has the most points as an individual and team wins. Tetrathlon is such a team building and fun sport. There is a bit of everything and you are able to meet so many incredible people.



Pony Racing

by Lexi Everington

This year was my first full season pony racing, I did both Point to point races and The Pony Club pony Races with my 6yo pony Mr Jerry Himself. We attended 9 races this season across the country including getting the chance to race at Cheltenham. Pony racing is like one big family everyone is so supportive always offering advice to another and you make friends for life!

Me and Jerry have had a great season, he's a very buzzy pony at the races. Our first several was all a learning curve for both myself and Jerry. Things turned and the penny dropped when we attended the pony club racing at Wolverhampton we came third! After this there was another 3 more races at Nottingham, Bangor on Dee and Warwick racecourse. Both Nottingham and Warwick we came 2nd to the top 128 race pony Longthwaite waterlilly she is trained by racehorse trainer Warren Greatrex and is ridden by both daughters.

The highlight of our season was winning at Bangor on Dee, Jerry lead from start to finish there was a ding dong battle for the last furlong but Jerry rallied gamely and held his own. It was an incredible feeling, I was very well supported that day having friends from my school come. We even had a video interview so watch this space.

It's been such a rewarding season, more so because I've trained Jerry myself and getting the results we did makes it all worth while. Don't be put of if you don't have a racing pony, any pony can pony race!... Jerry is a 6yo New forest x Welsh section C... we have had some fantastic results racing against some of the best racing ponies in the country!..... It's all about the fitness and not forgetting having fun!!

We've already done our qualification for next season and passed. So we can't wait for the meetings to be released so me and mum can start planning!

During the summer we bought another project pony her name is Darferns Victoria she a 3yo section C filly, we broke her in during the summer. Her sister competes in mounted games in Germany so we are hoping she has a turn of hoof. As long as training goes to plan she'll attended a training day at Broxton hall gallops in January, and hopefully we will qualify for the p2p pony races.

Racing is a big part of my life, and I hope the achieve these dreams. Believe and you'll achieve!

Photos are off Mr Jerry Himself and new pony 3yo Deferens Victoria



The Flower Show Competition

by Daisy Bethune



Back in July, Immy Spencer-Blow, Harriet Cameron, Bella Timmis and I formed a team for the Shrewsbury Flower Show Pony Club Team competition sponsored this year by Rowan Barbury. Although it is no longer run at the Flower Show itself it is still a big event in the Pony Club calendar and I felt privileged to represent NSHPC.

We arrived at Radfords, LLanymench to find a very technical, 1.05 m full up show jumping course dressed with trailer loads of flowers making it look very different from the normal showjumping events at Radfords. All the team were beautifully turned out and all completed the 1 m warm up class ready for the Team competition. But, it wasn't our day, coming a gallant second to a fabulous team from the Berwyn and Dee who were well prepared with course walks by their showjumping coach and turned in some lovely clear rounds.





My Experience at Chatsworth

by Iris Burton



Chatsworth was my first big event I went to. It was filled with loads of stands with nearly every equestrian brand.

The competition was a sort of relay. You would line up and then once the person before you finished, you would start. I was last so no-one was to go after me. The fences in the arena were show jumps which had a windy course.

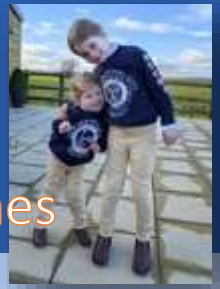
I'd say the arena was massive, with the stands closely surrounding the arena and the crowds sat beside our arena. It was SOOO fun and I really enjoyed it. We had a fab team including Mila W, Maisey L and Scarlett C.

There was also a rather large cross country course you could walk, but I wouldn't recommend riding there unless you were a 4 star of course.



Rallies

by Grace & Alice Ravenscroft Jones



Grace (7) said: "I love going to pony club rallies as I get to ride with friends, I love my instructors, I love riding my pony and we get to do all sorts of fun things. We can do all kinds of rallies such as mounted games, jumping and flat"

Alice (3): "I like going to pony club, it is lots of fun, I like doing trotting and jumping and a bit of cantering. I love my Rosie pony, she is the best pony ever! "



Horse and Pony Care

by Alice Arthan

This year I have attended lots of pony care rallies. I've enjoyed these as I have made new friends and learnt lots of new things. The rallies have covered various topics but one thing I found tricky was bandaging which now I have got the knack of. I was lucky enough to be a part of the team, alongside Henry and Florence Hughes, that entered the area horse and pony care competition at Berriewood. This involved going around stations that focused on different pony care topics. We were assessed on our knowledge of feeding, grooming, shoeing, points of the pony, to name but a few. Points from each round were totalled but unfortunately our score did not get us a podium finish. I am keen to do the competition again as it was a great experience for me and it helped to develop my team working skills. It also really helped with the theory side of the D+ test which I achieved this summer.



The *Very* Friendly Horse and Pony Care Competition

by Kitty Ing

I had to do a project to complete my YELA Gold so last November I organised our first Friendly Horse and Pony Care Competition. I really enjoy Horse & Pony Care and have competed at Area for the last 6 years and have got to Championships twice now. It is great preparation for people taking their Pony Club tests whatever their ability and is open to everyone, whether you have a horse or not, making it truly inclusive!

I tried to take the best bits from competitions that I've attended so plenty of cake breaks, a separate (warm) room for parents, rosettes for all and lots of sweets were non negotiable!

It wasn't all plain sailing, just before the competition we discovered that the Hall was suddenly missing it's roof and the night before we discovered that there would be no parking. Luckily we stuck some balloons up to hide the safety fencing and we were allowed to park on a field so hopefully it didn't spoil anyone's day.

On the day it all went to plan, the brilliant assessors and helpers all mucked in to solve any last minute issues. The competitors from a variety of branches and centres were all fantastic and seemed to have a



fun time. It was a lovely day, Helen and I agreed that it should run again so next year Barney and Finlay will take over the organisation. Finlay was an assessor last year and Barney was in charge (worryingly) of the catering so they have a good idea of what needs to happen....hopefully their hall will have a roof!



Endurance

by Scarlett Chapple

Pony Club Endurance is a sport offering something a little different to riders. It's a fantastic sport full of adventure and fun. Endurance builds skills such as map reading, pony care and teamwork. An endurance ride can range anywhere between 20km and 160km in a day! It is a challenge and that is one of the reasons why it is my personal favourite equestrian sport. At the start and end of every ride your horse has to pass a vetting. This means the horse has to trot soundly, have a heart rate of less than 64 and have good body / and gut sounds. This sport is all about the welfare of the horse.

I have been competing in Pony Club endurance for 6 years now. I said at the beginning of this season that by the end of 2023, I want to have completed an 80km ride; I've done 5 successfully. My incredible pony Tansy has taken me around four 80km rides and a few other shorter rides this year finishing her season with a 100% pass rate – she is breaking down barriers in the endurance community as one of few (but increasing) ponies being competed Barefoot.

One of the best rides we did this year was the Young Rider/ Advanced Championships an 82km race ride at Well Vale. I met my friend Livvy from endurance camp on the ride and we decided to stick together which was super fun as we both had someone



our own age to chat to and our ponies trotted well at the same speed. It was mainly on grass tracks which also allowed for lots of cantering. Tansy was fabulous and after a racing finish (big ask after 82km) she earned us 5th place in overall championship and 2nd place in the Young Rider Championship.. She's amazing!

After many successful rides, Tansy and I were offered a place on the England Home-International team as the young rider reserve. Of course we accepted!

We arrived at Builth Wells for the Red Dragon International Champs on the Friday, Lexi seemed happy coming off the trailer and being put to graze but unfortunately the vets did not like her action and we did not get to start the 80km race. This was a hard lesson, especially as she had her all-time best heart rate of 24!

Despite huge disappointment of not being able to compete, we still were the parade horse for the English team and had a fun family weekend supporting all the other English Team Riders at the Venue.

After completing my first 80km on Tansy and loving it (upgrading to an Advanced rider) I decided to set a goal to gain FEI 1* qualification, to compete in higher distances next year. This required two 40km and two 80km rides in a minimum of a year. And Tansy and I did it! We are both now FEI 1* qualified and plan to do our first FEI ride at the Seiche Haywood Oaks ride in early 2024.

This year I have ridden and passed 592km but it all started with my first ever 40km six years ago on my rather round and unfit cob Bunny. I really hope that people give Pony Club Endurance a go as you see the most incredible landscapes and meet some lovely people. Also next season Pony Club Endurance are offering more prizes for the larger distance rides so... I hope that my amazing pony winters well. If you want any information about competing, please just give me a shout.



My Experience at Blenheim

by Iris Burton

We arrived the night before my competition, staying in a caravan not too far away from the entrance of the Show. On the morning of my competition we would take a buggy down to the entrance of Blenheim and explore the sights and try to familiarise the arena and type of jumps we'd be jumping. Not too long after that we'd head off to check if the horses had hay and water and give them a walk around the lorry park after their long journey. After we had checked the horses we'd head down to our arena which was filled with all sorts of complicated fences and distances. Our team and I would walk the course together discussing the turns and lines we would take to the fences. It was a challenging course and had a fast time to get around in. Our whole team did amazingly and it was an incredible experience. Well done Bella Timmis, Daisy Bethune and Finlay Montgomery.

If you had the time afterwards I would recommend staying maybe one night after so you could watch the Cross Country and meet some amazing event riders, like how incredibly lucky I was to meet the AMAZING Ros Canter and Pippa Funnell.



Mounted Games

Since joining pony club, my brother William and I have been to lots of mounted games rallies and training with Steve and the Ings. 2023 was our first year representing the North Shropshire Pony club in the Junior Novice and Novice teams with lots of our friends.

The first competition was at Southview in freezing February, and we were guest riders in a Cheshire North team. All our ponies were very good and helped us to win the competition, we got our first (and only) sash. The best fun race was The Caterpillar because we got sweets at the end.

The next competition was the Berwyn and Dee and was very close to home. We were in the Grey- Team with Freddie and Hughie Shaw. We were a bit nervous when we arrived as it was a huge showground and loads of teams, but everyone was friendly. We raced against some of our South Shropshire friends in races like bending and flag. It was very competitive.

When it got warmer in the summer, we packed our camping kit for the Sir Watkins Williams Wynn competition at Malpas and Scarlet Beynon Brown stayed overnight with us. Karaoke was a surprise in the evening and camping with the ponies was brilliant, but my brother snoring wasn't good. Every time we went to a competition, we all improved a bit and cheered each other on. Our team was starting to support each other in the races, and we were starting to come off the lead rein and ride with a bit of help.



by Octavia Jones

We finished the season at The Three Counties Showground in Malvern, I joined the Junior team on my brother's pony Magic. He is a bit smaller than my pony Dougie and a lot easier to pick up the coits and bottles on. We had to be a bit speedier in the Junior team as the other teams were very fast. Wilfred Budgen was in the Junior Novice team and won a rosette for best rider, he was happy. Grace Ravenscroft Jones and Rosie were flying up the bending poles and Rosie was the only pony lucky enough to have her own camping field shelter in her paddock.

When the competitions were over, Steve organised for our teams to do demonstrations at The Shropshire Show and Weston-Under-Red castle Show. Our ponies weren't very keen on the Morris Dancers but both shows were really good fun to ride at.

Thank you for the fun amazing season of mounted games Steve, Kitty, Claire and Simon and also for helping us train and managing all of us. We can't wait for next year!



Xmas
Competition
Sun 3rd Dec
Come and Have Fun!

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

31st Dec '23