

Unlike most horsey people, I didn't start riding before I could walk, not because my parents didn't want me to, but because I was too scared to go near a horse. Until the age of about 7, if a horse went near me I would run and lock myself away in the car whilst my sisters had weekly riding lessons at the Horse Shoe Centre. For months I would sit in the car whilst my sisters were riding until one day I was dragged from the car by Alida Lewis and thrown on Scottie the little Shetland. Although I sat there frozen and totally petrified, from this day onwards I've been in love with horses.



I started out having riding lessons with Wendy (Lewis) at the Horse Shoe Centre. Once I could steer, stop and just about manage to stay on at a canter I was quickly introduced to Prince Phillip (mounted games). With the lovely Linnet not being the keenest when it came to games, I was kindly lent Polo by Millie Davies, a 9.0hh tiny grey Shetland, and now games had really begun! Endless late nights cleaning tack, polishing my boots and washing Polo (although I think I have Sandy (Davies) to thank for most of this!), followed by early mornings loading the ponies, frantically trying to find something you've forgotten to pack the night before, filling up the coffee mugs for the poor parents who were standing all day in a field and travelling to wherever we were meant to be. I started off like most in Junior Pony Club, and I tell you something it wasn't all glory from day one! Watching old videos back you can see how I was quite frankly, hopeless! But we have all got to start from somewhere. Throughout my years as a Junior, me and my team who stayed together for a few years progressed from hardly even making a final at a competition to not only winning Area and qualifying for Zones, but also qualifying for the Pony Club Championships. Qualifying for the Championships at this age is still a huge achievement and extremely exciting, but imagine what it is like for a team of five 11 year olds riding their ponies who they are convinced they'll have forever and will grow with them. I think we felt like we had just won HOYS.



After this I found that Games was definitely what I loved doing and what I was best at. As I progressed through to Senior Pony Club this is when I really started to improve. Along the way I was very thankful to have some fantastic ponies that really helped me to improve, Polo, Zak, Rosie, Snip, Amber, and some ponies which are still in the Pony Club team today teaching others the ropes.

Throughout my years of Senior Pony Club we just got better and better as a team. In 2010 I was fortunate enough to be selected to ride for England at the Royal Windsor Horse Show after a gruelling 3 hour trial. This was an amazing experience that I would have never been able to have if it wasn't for Petersfield Pony Club teaching me to ride and introducing me to Games. Unfortunately though, everything has to come to an end at some point, and with the age limit of Prince Phillip Cup being 15, at the end of 2010 I had to call an end to Pony Club Games, but I don't think I could've asked for a better way to end it than the Championships where my team rode their hearts out and we finished 4th, one of the closest positions we have ever been to qualifying for HOYS. Although in my Pony Club career I never made it to HOYS, I feel I had so many fantastic experiences, ones such as the Royal Show, Bath & West and many more, that that was enough for me.



2011 was quite sad, as it was my first year out of Pony Club but yet again, I was fortunate enough to be nominated by my Pony Club for the Pony Club Great Britain Team. I was absolutely ecstatic when I received a letter saying I had been picked to travel to Kentucky in USA for 2 weeks as part of the GB team, this really was a once in a lifetime experienced.

Now with no Pony Club to do, I didn't want to stop doing Games. In my last few years of Pony Club I was also doing MGA, the Mounted Games Association of Great Britain. This was an association that was set up to enable those kids who had been taking part in Pony Club Games to carry on once they were too old, and this is exactly what I did. I was so happy to be able to carry on with Games as this is what I loved to do most of all.



I am still competing in Mounted Games now, and over the years I have been lucky enough to represent England on 5 occasions, winning 3 Europeans team titles, and become the reserve European individual champion. I have also managed to win 4 world champion titles with 2 of my fantastic ponies, Daisy, who I rode in Pony Club, and Jazz who I still ride now.