



Endurance GB

Heart Of England Group

Spring Newsletter 2011

Welcome to the first edition of the newsletter for 2011 and the first edition written by me!

Thanks to everyone who has contributed and for those who wish to contribute to the next edition please send me through your articles to viks83@hotmail.co.uk

Hope you enjoy the read - Vikki

- *Chairman's Report*
- *New Season, New Committee Members*
- *Hopwas Hop Ride Report*
- *Cannock Chase Ride Report*
- *Sid, the Sequel*
- *Cirencester Gold Cup*
- *Miscellaneous Group News/Information*
- *Berkshire Downs - Helpers Needed*

Chairman's Report

Hello Group Members

The Heart of England Committee has asked me to be their new Chairman and I am honoured to take this on. Thank you Alan for keeping the Group in order for the past three years! As this is the first Newsletter of 2011, this is my first Chairman's chat.

I would like to welcome all our new members for 2011. Please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Committee if you have any questions or ideas.

Please join me in welcoming also our three new Committee Members, Helen Blair who is our Vice Chairman; Sally Farrall who is Group Secretary and Victoria Smith who has kindly taken on the task of bringing the Newsletter to you and up-dating the website.

I can hardly believe that we are already a quarter of the way through 2011, but very pleased that the winter is almost behind us, and the better weather, longer days and endurance season is upon us once again.

I am pleased to report that Heart of England will be represented at Mont Le Soie on 30th April 2011 by Annie Ings and Alpha, who have recently been selected from the World Class Start Squad as a member of the GB Team travelling to Belgium. We all wish Annie and the Team a successful trip. Brett Corcoran, riding Bashir Shamy, successfully completed his first FEI 80km

1*YR in second place at Kings Forest on 27th March. Brett is aiming to complete his FEI qualifications so that he can be eligible to represent Great Britain in Young Rider Championships. Congratulations to you both.

Chris Liggins is keeping an eye on everyone for our Team for the Inter Regional Championships at Barbary Castle on 13th/14th August. If you would like to put yourself forward for selection for the Team, please contact Chris as soon as possible. She will be looking for combinations of all abilities from Novice to ER and Junior and Young Riders to Veteran.

We would like to support a Riding Club Team again this year. Please contact Marian Drew if you are a member of a Riding Club, or have friends who are and who would like to have a taste of endurance. Qualifiers are being held throughout the year and the final and Championship is to be held again this year at The Robin Hood Challenge on 4th/5th September.

For those of you who are also Pony Club Members, you may wish to consider the Pony Club Endurance Championships, the final of which is at The College Ride on 19th September. Endurance in the Pony Club is now reaching a larger audience and becoming increasingly popular. Please help to spread the word through your District Commissioner and Pony Club friends. Helen and Jodie Watts will be able to help if you need pointing in the

Chairman's Report Cont.

New Season New Committee Members

Chairman's Report Cont.

right direction.

As a Group we have already run three successful rides this year, The Wyre Forest Social Ride and Hopwas Hop in February and Cannock Chase Spring Ride in March. Thank you so much to all of you who gave up your time to help in whatever capacity and also those who entered and rode at the Rides. Your support is much appreciated and is essential to enable us to continue to provide these rides. Please everyone make a special effort to offer your help at one ride at least this year. You don't have to wait to be asked! It will make a difference. We have two more National Rides this year, Cirencester in July and Cannock Chase Autumn in September, which are both well under way. Please see the qualification criteria in this Newsletter for the 4 new classes we

are offering at Cirencester this year. We are working on at least two new Social Rides for the Group for this year, both in Staffordshire; one around the Lichfield area and another near Eccleshall. Two of our members have come forward with offers to run these rides, and we are very grateful for this. Another area we are working on is Pershore. Other events that are in course of preparation are a mounted training day, a treasure hunt, a BBQ and a week-end camp. We are presently working on dates and venues. Please watch the website for further information.

www.heartofenglandeqb.co.uk

In the meantime, I wish everyone an enjoyable and successful season.

Best wishes
Di Latham

New Season New Committee Members

With the new season already well under way it is time to introduce you to your new Heart of England Committee members as elected at the 2010 Heart of England Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner:

Helen Blair – Vice Chairman

Sally Farrall – Secretary

Victoria Smith – Newsletter and Website

Their biographies shall be added to the "Meet the Team" section of the website and shall also feature within the next couple of editions of the Newsletter. So to start the introductions off here is mine:

Victoria Smith

Victoria started endurance riding in 1998 on Helen Blair's Haflingers and continued on her own part bred Arab Sasha. After a break in the mid 2000's due to university and entering the working world Victoria re-joined EGB in 2010 competing on her own Haflinger Chevin Wardour (Widget – pictured). After he so enthusiastically took to the sport in his first competitive season in 2010 they are now aiming to reach Advanced level this season and complete some higher distance multi-day rides. Victoria also has a 3 year old part bred Arab Shah Storm who she hopes to bring into the sport over the next few years.



Victoria Smith and Widget at Hopwas Hop 2011

Photo Courtesy of West End Photography

Ride Report – Hopwas Hop

By Ann Raymont

26th February 2011

Hopwas 2011 from a Beginner

Since we acquired Frank our Appalosa pony last October my daughter Emma and I have been slowly getting him fitter with the goal in mind for her to compete him at dressage and myself to start endurance. He is still only six, a late starter and a busy little chap with a cheeky side! Following a phone call and subsequent meeting with Di Latham I decided to enter him in the 16km NCR at Hopwas just to see how he went. My only previous experience of endurance was 20+ years ago at Monks Kirby, doing what was then the "Bronze Buckle" on a coloured cob mare who I didn't realise was in foal at the time!

As we set out in the rain on the Saturday morning I felt a bit apprehensive not knowing what to expect, added to this was the fact that Frank,s previous owner was

coming to support from Shropshire (no pressure then!) My long suffering husband drove the lorry and Emma was my groom for the day (role reversal for a change). Frank came out of the lorry full of beans and "eyes on stalks". I was glad when he passed the trot up ok and I didn't disgrace myself but falling over in the mud. Di introduced me to Katy and her horse Tonto and we agreed to ride together.

My map reading skills or lack of are a standing joke so I was amazed to find that Katy,s were not much better, however I need not have worried because the route was well marked. Frank settled well to the job and seemed to be really enjoying himself. I had been looking forward to the wooded section but it was quite boggy and hard going in parts with lots of tree roots but

the lovely scenery and long canters made up for that. The two horses seemed evenly paced and went well together allowing us to have a good chat as well. The rain stopped and I felt like I was in a sauna by the halfway point.

The last part, "The Heart of England Way" was lovely underfoot with no traffic to worry about. I was amazed and a bit disappointed to see the finish ahead so soon. Frank still felt full of running which was very encouraging. I was glad when he trotted up sound at the finish and I could relax. All the riders looked so competent and professional but everyone was very friendly and helpful. I was very impressed at how well organised the ride was and appreciated how much hard work had gone on on the day and before, many thanks to you all and to Di for all her support. Katy and I have exchanged numbers and hope to ride together again soon.



Ann Raymont (right) and Katy Williams (left).



Ride Report – Cannock Chase

By Sue Higgins

12th March 2011

Cannock Chase

As one of the early rides in the endurance calendar, the organisers of Cannock Chase, Di Latham & Helen Watts must have again wondered what the weather would be like as many riders recall the year it snowed so much it was a white out!! Thankfully this year, the weather was kind to us and although not that warm, it stayed dry and was 'perfect riding weather'.

This ride runs mostly along forestry tracks, it is undulating with lots of twists and turns, so is quite a technical course which needs a horse to be listening to it's rider. The venue is the perfect setting and once again I noticed that many stayed long after they had finished the ride to socialise. Me included! In fact we were some of the last to

leave.

I had entered the 64km ride with my mare Aberllwyds Another Rose, this was to be our last training ride before we compete in the FEI 1* at Kings Forest in two weeks time where we would be up for selection for part of the World Class Start Squad to compete in an FEI 2* ride in Belgium at the end of April. I was quite nervous about this ride as having come this far and trained all winter for our ultimate goal, I knew that if anything went wrong during this ride it could really mess things up and all my preparation could be in vain. I was riding with my friend Annie with her horse Alfie who was in exactly the same situation. After initial vetting we went out together with a plan to ride at around 14kmph.

The first loop was a little too exiting with horses coming up behind and our two both being competitive, meant we had trouble keeping at a steady pace. However after a while we didn't see too many other horses and we managed to keep to our plan and did the ride at just under 14kmph.

As usual the ride seemed to run like clockwork with the organisers and helpers all seeming very calm on the day. This was no doubt as a result of all the hard work put in beforehand. The route rode extremely well and the marking was excellent, however Annie & I did manage to miss one right turn on both loops! We couldn't understand how we could miss it a second time, especially when we were looking out for it.

Once again the ride rosettes were sponsored by Robinsons, and very nice they were too. It seems like just a few years ago that I visited Robinsons to purchase everything I would need in terms of grooming equipment, headcollars, buckets etc., for my first pony Bracken. That was 37 years ago when Robinsons were situated next door to Wigan Railway Station in a large timber shed! They've come a long way since then! Also NOM Dairy of Shrophshire gave out yoghurt drinks to all riders and crew. So thank you to them, they were delicious.

Also in attendance was photographer David Saunders who not only took some super shots but was printing them on site while you waited. They are also available to view and purchase from his web site www.saudersphotography.co.uk



Annie and Sue at Cannock Chase

Photo Courtesy of David Saunders

Sid, the Sequel

By Anne Green

I have come to the conclusion that the words 'horses' and 'planning' should never be used in the same sentence. After a good start to the 2010 season with my old boy Trooper at Cannock Chase, and Sid's first outing at Major Oak, I had planned to try and get each of them out once a month. For the Tresham ride, I entered them both in the NCR and a friend came along for the experience. Tresham I thought was quite a hard ride last year with lots of mud on the first half, and lots of hills on the second half. Although we took it fairly steady, unfortunately Troops went lame after this ride and was diagnosed with a pulled ligament so I wasn't able to take him out enduring for the rest of the season. This meant that poor Sid was thrown in at the deep end and after withdrawing Troops from Haywood Oaks, I took Sid instead. My usual crew couldn't come with me on this ride, so although it was only Sid's second competitive ride, I decided to go it alone. Sid, thankfully is good to load onto the trailer and travels

well so I had no worries about that. His problem is that he likes company and likes a bum to follow so I just had to hope for the best. We started the ride completely alone and at first, he didn't want to leave the venue, but after a bit of persuasion, we set off, and for the first 15 minutes or so, we didn't see another soul. Well into the woods, Sid spotted a horse in the distance just starting another loop so he decided to go faster and catch them up! It transpired that this horse and rider were doing 64km and this was her first circuit. Sid decided to stick to her like glue, even though she really was cracking on, and I was able to share her crew. He flew round his 30km in just over 2 hours, far faster than I had planned and I had to MAKE him walk the last quarter mile or so as I was concerned about his pulse rate, and this was after all, only his second outing. This was one of my plans that paid off and he finished on a good pulse rate and earned him his first grade 1. I was delighted and all inspired to plan my next ride at Vale of Belvoir.

This was another successful ride for Sid and he achieved another grade 1 so was panning out to be a good little novice horse for me. For my next ride at Dukeries, I thought I would try a longer distance so entered a 40km ride to see if Sid would cope. Here we teamed up with the Corcoran family who I have met out and about on a couple of occasions with their menagerie of horses. They just happened to park next to me and were doing 40km today as well (although Brett was doing 80km so would be going out again after we finished). I always love the Dukeries ride and today was no exception. It was very windy so this helped to keep us cool, and we did a fair old pace finishing in just over 3 hours. I think the flapping tents put Sid's finishing pulse rate up a bit, but he nevertheless earned a grade 3 so again, I was delighted! After this, I had planned to do some more 40km rides, but got involved in the British Riding Clubs team challenge event instead. Other riding club members were dropping out like flies so I went long to make up the team at the qualifying ride at Cirencester which was 30km. We all successfully completed this ride which earned us a place in the BRC finals at Robin Hood (which is the subject of another article). To keep up the team spirit, I arranged to meet up with my team members at various rides to train and keep up the momentum, and Sid continued to clock up the gradings at Lions Tail, Windsor Park, Ludlow and Provost Lodge. The season culminated with our final ride at the BRC team challenge at Robin Hood where our team came 6th out of 11, but that is another story where the plans fell apart! So with 10 rides, 10 gradings, not one ride with a speed of less than 10kph, Sid's first season has been a mighty success. I am fortunate to have him on loan for another season so I have upgraded him and the plan for 2011 is..... well perhaps I will just see how it goes!!



Anne and Sid at the Robin Hood Challenge 2010

Photo Courtesy of David Saunders

New classes for Cirencester

29th, 30th, 31st July
2011

The Heart Of England Group would like to announce a new date and new classes for Cirencester in 2011. As we no longer have to hold the Summer Solstice Ride, we have been able to move the date for the Cirencester Ride, which has allowed us greater flexibility with the classes that we will be running and we will be able to offer carolling, which has been an issue for us for the last few years.

The new ride dates are

Friday 29th, Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st.

New classes are as follows:

Bronze Achievement

NOVICE A one day CR of 64 km to be judged on the following criteria:

Open to all Novice horses which have not competed at Open level. Do not have to be in horse's first year of competition. Entry qualification: Successful completion of at least 2 x 32 km and 1 x 50 km from the start of the year of the championship (Jan). The winner will be the horse achieving a bogie speed of 12 kph and passing the final vetting. In the event of a tie the lowest heart rate will be the winner.

Time penalties will be incurred for speeds either side of 12 kph. For example 12.04 and 11.96 kph = 1 penalty; 12.08 and 11.93 kph = 2 penalties.

Silver Achievement

OPEN A two day CR of 64 km on day 1 and 64km on day 2

Open to all Open horses which have not competed at Advanced level.

Entry qualification: Successful completion of 1 x 64 km and 1 x 80km.

The winner will be the fastest horse with a HR not exceeding 50 bpm at the final veterinary inspection. Horses with a HR of 50 bpm or less will be placed in order of speed. Pulse penalties will be converted into time penalties over 50 bpm 51-52 = 5 minutes; 53-54 = 10 minutes; 55-56 = 15 minutes; 57-58 = 20 minutes; 59-60 = 25 minutes; 61-62 = 30 minutes; 63-64 = 35 minutes; 65 or above = elimination. Minimum speed 10 kph, maximum speed 16 kph. Riding times for each day, taking into account any time penalties, being added together to give the final result.

Gold Achievement

ADVANCED One Day ER of 100 km

Open to horses in their first season at Advanced level.

Entry qualification: Successful completion of 1 x 64 km CR and 1 x 80 km CR or ER or 2 x 80km CRs or ERs. The Championship year will run from the previous Cirencester event (June 2010). The horse must not have up graded to Advanced prior to the previous Cirencester.

Platinum Achievement

ADVANCED Two Day ER of 80km Day One and 80km Day Two

Open to all horse competing at Advanced level. Entry qualification: Successful completion of two rides at 80km or over with at least one being an ER. The Championship year will run from the previous Cirencester event (June 2010). The horse and rider may have competed at Advanced for more than season or be newly qualified in the year between Cirencester 2010 and Cirencester 2011.

These will be stand alone trophies, special to Cirencester and will not form part of a points system or other Championship.

Miscellaneous Group News/Information

Berkshire Downs Southern Championships 25th / 26th June - Helpers Needed

Miscellaneous Group News/Information

The Group is looking to purchase a box trailer, or similar, preferably twin axle, to store all of Group ride equipment so that we can just hitch up and take along to our rides. If anyone has something that might suit or know where one is available, please contact any of the Committee.

Helpers Needed

Berkshire Downs Southern Championships

25th / 26th June

Alden Equicentre Nr.Didcot

Held in the fantastic valley of the racehorse across the beautiful chalk downlands of Oxfordshire and Berkshire this event attracts riders from across the country. To ensure this event runs smoothly we require a significant number of helpers over the weekend period. Opportunities to help range from vet writing to manning a checkpoint. If you are not riding and are able to help please contact Janet Kenward:

janet_kenward@hotmail.com

Thank you for your support!