

BEF NEWS ARCHIVE JULY - SEPTEMBER 2009

PAMELA CARRUTHERS

30th September 2009

Pamela Carruthers, one of the world's prominent international course designers, has died at the age of 93.

Although she was best known for her design work overseas, Pamela was also involved with Hickstead for thirty years, where she was responsible for the movable fences used for Nations Cup, Grand Prix and the Queen Elizabeth Cup.

During a career that spanned almost half a century Pamela was assistant course builder at the Montreal Olympics in 1976, and technical delegate at the Seoul Games in 1988; she was also technical delegate for the 1982 World Championships in Ireland. She was responsible for the development of Spruce Meadows in Canada, and successfully developed courses throughout Europe as well as in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Venezuela, Brazil, Ireland and the United States.

Pamela was a show jumper and showing exhibitor in England in her younger days and for a number of years she flew all over the world from her home near Chippenham, to create challenging Grand Prix courses at the most prestigious international events as well as in countries with limited international experience.

She served two terms on the jumping committees of the FEI (International Equestrian Federation), which awarded her a medal for her work. In 1996 she became the first person who was not resident in the United States to be elected to the American Show Jumping Hall of Fame.

Pamela is survived by two sons.

London 2012 to reduce Greenwich Park closure time

28th September 2009

The London 2012 Organising Committee (LOCOG) presented its updated plans for the hosting of Equestrian and Modern Pentathlon events at Greenwich Park in 2012 at a meeting of the Greenwich Societies on 23rd September at the Blackheath Halls.

"We believe that Greenwich Park will be a stunning venue in 2012 but we understand the concerns that local residents may have about usage of the Park during the Games" said LOCOG Chief Executive Paul Deighton. "We are grateful to the Greenwich Societies for organising the meeting and giving us a chance to listen to their concerns and explain our plans in more detail. This is an ongoing process of dialogue; we want to work with local residents so we can address concerns and make the Games a fantastic experience for everyone."

LOCOG announced new details to their plans for Greenwich Park in 2012 at the meeting.

These include:

- A reduction in the time of closure of the Park to four weeks from 6th July-3rd August 2012 (the original period was six to eight weeks)
- The Children's Playground and the majority of the Flower Garden will remain open throughout this four week period, apart from the day of the Cross Country event.
- There are no planned residential road closures.
- Circus Field in Blackheath will be used as an operational compound to avoid the need for large vehicle access the Park, enabling access from the A2 to the Park. This will cause less disruption and impact to the Park itself.
- LOCOG is discussing with The Royal Parks ways of upgrading the Children's Playground and other parts of the Park as a legacy after the Games
- It is also working with The Royal Parks on protective measures for the Park and with arboricultural and ecological experts on a Cross Country course which will not adversely affect any trees. No trees will have to be cut down.

LOCOG will continue to work closely with the Societies and other organisations about the detail of its plans and will undergo a formal consultation process in October/November prior to the submission of its planning application for work to be done on the Park in 2012. Further details will be posted on www.london2012.com/greenwichparkconsultation

Horse Riders Take Action Online as New Cost Sharing Campaign Website and e-Petition to the Prime Minister Go Live

28th September 2009

Horse riders across the UK are joining together to urge the Government to think again about imposing an unfair "tax in all but name" on every horse owner in the UK.

The "Rethink the Horse Tax" campaign, launched today by a coalition of organisations representing a broad cross section of the UK horse industry, is calling on riders, breeders and veterinarians to make their voices heard by visiting a new campaign website -

www.RethinktheHorseTax.org - and take action by writing to their constituency MPs and by signing an online petition to the Prime Minister.

Campaigners are further concerned that plans to create a new agency will place mounting costs on horse owners at a time when Government support is needed to help boost rural economies and encourage wider participation in outdoor sport.

Under the plans, horse owners would be charged on the same basis as keepers of livestock farm animals such as sheep and pigs - despite the fact that a significant proportion of horses are kept for leisure and sporting, rather than commercial activities, paid for from of income that is already taxed.

Veterinary surgeons have also made it clear that plans to create a new agency responsible for animal health could needlessly complicate the process of managing outbreaks of animal disease animal health, putting at risk the clear single line of command essential in the event of a major disease outbreak. A lack of clarity over the roles of the four Chief Veterinary Officers in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland in the proposals has also been highlighted as a major concern by the campaign.

And campaigners have further highlighted the fact that the new body would spend much of its time collecting charges from people who own just one horse (65% of horse owners), meaning that the cost of physically collecting the charge will almost outweigh the charge itself - an estimated £2.3m would be needed to collect just £4.5m from horse owners under the plans. With costs of £14.3m to set up and millions more to maintain the new body in the coming years, campaigners have made it clear that the proposals do not represent value for money for either the equine community or the taxpayer.

Andrew Finding, Chief Executive of the British Equestrian Federation said:

"Through this campaign the horse community has an opportunity to make its voice heard and send a strong message to the Government on cost sharing. The proposals just don't make a convincing case on how hitting horse owners with new costs and extra bureaucracy will benefit either the equine community or taxpayers in general."

Mark Weston, Director of Access Safety and Welfare at the British Horse Society, said:

"We need to make sure that politicians in Westminster are made fully aware of the potential damage that these proposals could do to the horse sector, and the lack of any perceived benefit that they would bring to the millions of Britons who enjoy horse riding each year."

BEF Grooms Award postponed for 2009

24th September 2009

The British Equestrian Federation (BEF) has decided to postpone the BEF Groom Award for 2009. Due to a number of circumstances, it is in the best interests of the award not to hold it in 2009 and bring it back in 2010 with a new and improved format.

The award, which was funded in its initial years by Frank Kuster and has been running for six years, was searching for a new sponsor to take the award forward. With several organisations interested in supporting the award, all felt that were they to take it on, they would like to take some time to develop the award and build it into something even more exciting in 2010 and beyond.

The Grooms award is designed to recognise the outstanding and vital contribution grooms make to the equestrian industry. The aim is now to take some time to review the award and make changes to it if necessary to ensure we come back in 2010 with something that recognises in the best possible way the contribution of grooms across all equestrian activity.

Thoroughbred Racing and Breeding Seminar to take place at Cheltenham this November

24th September 2009

For anyone with an interest in the health and welfare of horses, and who wants to keep up with the latest veterinary advances and technological developments, the Thoroughbred Racing & Breeding Seminar at Cheltenham Racecourse is an absolute must!

This year's Seminar, now in its ninth year, will include 'Do your wormers work?' an insight into worm control programmes and how to counter anthelmintic resistance, by Professor Jacqui Matthews of Edinburgh University and Moredun Research Institute, Chris Rea discussing the update in the HBLB Codes of Practice in the light of the recent outbreak of CEM in the USA, and Arik Dondi from Defra will review the latest 'Exotic Disease Control Strategy'. Dr Domingo Tortonese of Bristol University will present on 'Biological rhythms, jetlag and athletic performance in racehorses', which will be followed by a presentation by Dr Richard Piercy of

the RVC on muscle damage, covering practical and revolutionary approaches to diagnosis, prevention and therapy of setfast and other muscle problems. 'Diagnosis: Interpreting Images' demystifies the ever increasing array of highly technical imaging techniques, determining which, when and why they should be used. Professor Stephen May of the RVC will shed some light on this subject.

For more information and an application form see [here](#)

Name: Thoroughbred Racing and Breeding Seminar

Location: The Centaur, Cheltenham Racecourse

Date: 12th November 2009

Website: www.thoroughbred-seminar.com

E-mail: Louise.holder@rw-communications.co.uk

Statement regarding the 2010 FEI Nations Cup top league

17th September 2009

Following the FEI's announcement that both Great Britain and Belgium, as well as Italy, will be relegated from the 2010 FEI Nations Cup top league, the British Equestrian Federation does not accept that decision and will be defending Britain's place in the league. The Federation, in conjunction with the British Show Jumping Association, will be appealing against the decision.

Sarah-Jane reins in her nerves

15th September 2009

Horses are sensitive creatures and can easily pick up on their riders' nerves. So for 28 year old dressage rider, Sarah-Jane Elmslie, learning to control them was fundamental to her success.

Sarah-Jane, from Basingstoke, is on the British Equestrian Federation's (BEF) World Class Development Programme which aims to provide Britain's elite riders with the best preparation to represent Equestrian Team GBR at International level. Funded by UK Sport, the

Programme incorporates the three Olympic sports of dressage, eventing, show jumping and the Paralympic sport of para-equestrian dressage.

Sarah-Jane, who also works as a full time tender's coordinator for a laboratory product manufacturer, was selected onto the Programme in December 2008 following numerous wins and placings at Intermediare II and Grand Prix level dressage. Although an already accomplished rider and competitor, Sarah-Jane had always suffered with her nerves, which were then exacerbated this year when she faced various challenges both at home and with the horses.

"I've had quite a tough year and lead quite a stressful busy life so it would be easy to let things spiral out of control. I have felt the intensity grow the more successful I have become so have had to learn to stay focused even when the pressure is on."

In January 2009 Sarah-Jane started to have regular sessions with the BEF's World Class sports psychologist Jennie Kililea, as part of the support provided through the World Class Development Programme.

"Essentially Jennie has given me a toolkit to use which I can then adapt to work for different situations," said Sarah-Jane. "Firstly we started working changing the way I learnt my dressage tests, before progressing to more general situations that might cause anxiety.

"For me, it's really been about putting things into perspective, focusing on one job at a time - the job in hand - and not worrying about things that are out of my control. It's about being self aware, understanding my behavior and how it will impact on my performance.

"The help has been invaluable - and I'm so grateful to the World Class Programme. The benefits are already beginning to show and not just with the horses - people at work have also commented that I seem more confident and positive! I probably wouldn't have considered working with a sports psychologist before, but now, having felt the benefits I'd recommend it to others too."

Selection to the World Class Programme is based on results combined with potential to contribute to team success at major championships. Performance is continuously assessed and riders are regularly reviewed. The Programme is divided into Development (Pre-Start and Start), and Performance squads across each discipline.

For more informatioin on the World Class Programme see [here](#)

World Class Programme provides pathway to podium

10th September 2009

The British para-equestrian dressage team maintained its 100% record in Championship competition, winning the Team Gold at the recent European Championships in Kristiansand, Norway, beating their closest rivals Germany.

The result which leaves Team GBR unbeaten at European, World and Olympic level was aided in no small way by the support of the British Equestrian Federation's World Class Programme.

The World Class Programme, which incorporates the three Olympic sports of dressage, eventing, show jumping and the Paralympic sport of para-equestrian dressage is Lottery funded via UK Sport and exists to provide Britain's elite riders with the best preparation to represent Equestrian Team GBR at International level.

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British Paralympic trio Sophie Christiansen, Lee Pearson and Simon Laurens were joined in Norway by Jo Pitt, a non travelling member of the Games' squad together with World Class Performance member Sophie Wells and World Class Development member Emma Sheardown - both competing for the first time at this level.

Despite their relative inexperience, both riders enjoyed individual Gold medal success, with Emma pipping teammate Sophie Christiansen in the individual freestyle in what was a reversal of fortunes from the individual event, while Sophie Wells won two individual gold medals at grade IV; a level in which Britain has struggled in the past.

David Hamer, World Class Development Programme discipline coordinator comments: "The final placings in the team event at the European Championships couldn't have been closer, demonstrating how the margins for success and failure are becoming smaller all the time. The aim of the World Class Programme is to have in place a sustainable system that can deliver more medals on the international stage now and in the future. These results show how well this is working.

"Sophie and Emma have progressed from the World Class Development Programme and competed at the top level for the first time, but both did extremely well and added to the Silver medal that another graduate, Felicity Coulthard, won at the Paralympics."

Commenting on the support given by the World Class Plan, Sophie Wells said; "The World Class programme prepares you for the ultimate challenges, so when you get the chance, like I did in Norway, you are ready to take it.

"The support staff look at even the tiniest details so when I went to the Championships I felt completely prepared. I have been on the World Class Plan since 2004 and without the funding and coaching support I have received I don't think I would have been able to come back with the medals I did."

BEF presents Sam Barr with Medal of Honour at Burghley Horse Trials

4th September 2009

The British Equestrian Federation (BEF) presented Sam Barr, founder of the Welton Stud based in Hartpury, Gloucestershire, with a BEF Medal of Honour during the Land Rover Burghley Horse Trials on Friday 4th September. The medal recognises the outstanding achievement and contribution that Sam has made to the International Equestrian World.

"Over the years Sam, wearing many different hats, has made a huge and significant contribution to the sport of Eventing," comments Mike Etherington-Smith, Chief Executive of British Eventing (BE). "He has competed at the top level, he has bred horses that have won at 4 star level and represented Great Britain through his well known Welton Stud. He has supported many riders over the years and given them excellent opportunities to ride his horses and has also been instrumental in raising the awareness of the importance of breeding in GB."

The BEF Medal of Honour is an award designed to recognise activities connected with international endeavour in relation to equestrian sport, it is awarded for outstanding services to the British Equestrian Federation or one of its member bodies. This can be in recognition of riding prowess or other support of the British international effort.

Born in 1920 into a dairy farming family, Sam took care of the family farm through the war. He loves hunting and in 1961 bought a yearling colt which he raised amongst the heifers. He started breeding with the colt, Welton Gameful and the progeny became very successful, so much so that in 1978 Sam decided to sell the dairy herd and concentrate on breeding event horses with Gameful as his foundation stallion. They named it the Welton Stud.

Since its small beginnings Sam, with his wife Linda always by his side, developed the stud to the internationally renowned status it now enjoys. Dozens of eventing horses with the prefix Welton have competed and still compete at international level, plus Sam has bred numerous other successful horses that do not bear the Welton name.

At the 1995 European Champions in Pratoni del Vivaro, Italy, three horses bred by Sam competed, including the European Champion, Welton Romance. Welton Chit Chat (by Welton Louis) won Bramham in 1991 with Ginny Leng and Santiago Centenera was placed at the 1993 European Championships in Achselschwang, Germany. In 2000, Welton Envoy ridden by Bythe Tait, won the Rolex Kentucky 4 star event on Sam's 80th birthday.

Welton Louis and Welton Crackerjack (both by Welton Gameful) are both top sires in their own right, with more than 20 event horses sired by Welton Louis competing in international three-day events. Welton Crackerjack's offspring include Welton Houdini, winner at Badminton in 1993 with Ginny Leng, Just A Cracker, Welton Comedian and Welton Greylag, winner of the 1991 Burghley Horse Trials with Mark Todd.

Sam started eventing himself at the age of 50 and Welton Gameful sired his ride, Welton Friday, at the 1984 Burghley Horse Trials, where he made his debut at the age of 64.

Always very keen to promote British breeding and the best that Britain can produce, in 2002 Sam co-founded the BE Breeding committee with Jane Holderness-Roddam, Patrick Rolfe and Vincent Jones. This committee instigated the BE Breeding Championships which were rechristened the Young Event Horse Championships in 2007. This series has grown in stature and prestige year on year and Sam personally offers a substantial prize for the Best British Bred mare, with the intention that the winner uses this prize towards a stallion fee or other breeding purpose.

Mike Etherington-Smith adds: "On top of all his great achievements Sam has a huge passion for the sport which has been clearly demonstrated over the years. He understands the sport from all angles and has earned respect for his thoughts and suggestions which are always perceptive and constructive. In all of this he has had the support and enthusiasm of his wife Linda who has also been very much at the forefront of all that he has done, a true team effort.

"It is thoroughly befitting that Sam is being awarded the BEF Medal of Honour for his outstanding contribution over many years to the sport of Eventing and I speak personally and on behalf of many people who believe that this is a richly deserved recognition."

"The British Equestrian Federation is very proud of all the hard working individuals who make equestrian sport the success it is in this country," comments Andrew Finding, Chief Executive of the BEF. "Without the dedication and commitment of individuals like Sam we would not be in the fortunate position of being one of the greatest equestrian nations in the World. On behalf of the British Equestrian Federation I would like to congratulate Sam on his well deserved award of the BEF Medal of Honour."

BEF presents Medals of Honour at European Championships

28th August 2009

The British Equestrian Federation (BEF) presented six BEF Medals of Honour during the evening performance of the Alltech FEI European Dressage and Jumping Championships on Thursday 27th August. The medals recognise outstanding achievement and contribution to the International equestrian world.

The medals were presented to:

Sophie Christiansen - Para-Equestrian Dressage

Tina Cook - British Eventing

Bob Ellis - British Show Jumping

Emma Hindle - British Dressage

Simon Laurens - Para-Equestrian Dressage

Maggie Maguire - Endurance GB

The BEF Medal of Honour is primarily an award designed to recognise activities connected with international endeavour in relation to equestrian sport, it is awarded for outstanding

services to the British Equestrian Federation or one of its member bodies. This can be in recognition of riding prowess or other support of the British international effort.

Sophie Christiansen, although just 21 years old, has successfully represented Great Britain Internationally for four years. Her first major International competition was the 2004 Athens Paralympic Games, where she won individual bronze in the Grade I category. In 2005 Sophie took treble gold in the European Para-Equestrian Dressage Championships and followed this with freestyle gold and individual bronze at the World Championships at Hartpury in 2007. At the 2008 Paralympic Games she won team gold, individual silver and freestyle gold, a performance she matched at the 2009 European Championships, helping to ensure that Great Britain remain unbeaten in Para-Equestrian Dressage.

Tina Cook is one of Great Britain's leading senior event riders who recently won individual and team bronze at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. Tina rode throughout her childhood and was an active member of the local Crawley and Horsham Pony Club, where she had her first taste of serious competition. She went on to win numerous medals at junior and young rider level. Tina's successes at senior level are too many to mention; she was on the gold medal winning team at The Hague on General Jock in 1994, has competed and been placed numerous times amongst others, at Badminton and Burghley, as well as Gatcombe and Lexington. She won team gold at the European Championships in Italy in 1995 and again at Luhmuhlen in 1999.

Bob Ellis is an International Judge and one of the World's leading course designers. His career started as a successful pony show jumper and progressed to International competition, jumping successfully throughout Europe on horses. Bob's mentor in course building was the late Sheila Elstone, he then began travelling overseas assisting Jon Doney and Pam Carruthers. He went on to design at major shows throughout Great Britain with huge success and has been invited to build around the world, including at the famous Spruce Meadows in Canada. Bob is currently the course designer at the Alltech FEI European Jumping Championships.

Emma Hindle has represented Great Britain in International level Dressage competitions for nearly 20 years, competing consistently well at junior, young rider and senior Championships. As an under-21 she was on the team for the junior European Championships in 1989 and 1990 and the young rider European Championships in 1992, 1993 and 1996. In Emma's Senior Championship debut in 2003 she helped the team win bronze at the European Championships and was the highest placed British rider with Wie Weltmeyer. She has been a stalwart of the British team ever since including producing one of the best British Performances of all time to finish 7th at the Olympic Games in 2008. Just this week she was part of the silver medal winning team at the European Championships at Windsor.

Simon Laurens started his Para-Equestrian Dressage career in 2005 and was a member of the winning British team at the 2006 Hartpury International, where he also won the individual

and team tests. He won team and freestyle gold at the 2007 World Para-Equestrian Dressage Championships. Competing in his first Paralympic Games in 2008, Simon won gold as part of the team and silver in the freestyle test. He recently represented Britain at the 2009 European Championships in Norway where he helped the team to gold and picked up two individual bronze medals.

As Chair of Endurance GB's International Committee, Maggie Maguire has been responsible for delivery of a project to reform and improve the arrangements for the development, production and participation of British International Endurance teams at both senior and young rider levels. Maggie works in an environment where funding and resources are limited, working tirelessly and often at great personal expense, Maggie has led, inspired and directed Great Britain's performance back from an almost "zero" base to achieving very respectable fourth team positions in the most recent senior and young rider European Championships. Maggie will be stepping down from her post at the end of this year but her endurance legacy to EGB is to leave the systems, processes, commitment and squad of riders and horses for Great Britain once again to compete as a major player on the world endurance stage.

"The British Equestrian Federation is very proud of all the hard working individuals who make equestrian sport the success it is in this country," comments Andrew Finding, Chief Executive of the BEF. "Without the dedication and commitment of our riders, executive staff and volunteers we would not be in the fortunate position of being one of the greatest equestrian nations in the World. On behalf of the British Equestrian Federation I would like to congratulate all the worthy recipients of the Medal of Honour this year."

Clubmark achieved by two Equestrian Centres

Quob Stables Equestrian Centre and Runningwell Equestrian Centre have both achieved Clubmark Accreditation.

Clubmark, introduced in 2002, is the Sport England mark of high quality clubs, reassuring both parents and participants that the club is a high quality, welcoming environment for young people. The mark is awarded to clubs that can satisfy minimum operating requirements in the four areas of the playing programme; duty of care and child protection; sports equity and ethics and club management.

The mark is an accreditation scheme covering a variety of different sports and is specifically designed for clubs with junior sections.

The BEF is the approved agency and delivers the Clubmark scheme in partnership with the BHS. Clubmark is available to all clubs and centres who are accredited or approved by a British Equestrian Federation Member Body.

Margaret Linington-Payne, Director of Standards at the British Horse Society said "We are delighted that both BHS Approved centres have achieved Clubmark Accreditation. We believe that both centres and their clients will benefit thoroughly from the scheme."

Maggie Still, head of Regional Development at the British Equestrian Federation said "Participating in a quality environment is a key factor in ensuring a good experience and retaining riders, drivers and vaulters within the sport. The BEF encourages clubs from all Member Bodies, especially those with Junior Sections to link with the BHS, find out more about Clubmark and explore the potential benefits for themselves".

Beth Davies of Quob Equestrian centre said, "The process of applying for the Club Mark Accreditation was straight forward and we had great support from the BHS. We found most of the principles of the Clubmark Accreditation were already in place at Quob Stables, but it enables us to re-evaluate all areas of the Club. Since applying for the Clubmark Accreditation we have forged stronger links with the local schools."

Ruth Dowie of Runningwell Equestrian Centre said, "Runningwell Equestrian Centre are extremely proud to have achieved the Clubmark Accreditation. The staff at the British Horse Society proved very helpful and informative on the portfolio process, which at first did seem daunting!

This accreditation will allow us to continue to expand our work with local schools, Essex County Council, RDA, Young Carer Groups and Youth Organisations. Hopefully this will enable us to offer horse riding to children from all walks of life and give them the same opportunities as children with their own horses."

For further information and pictures, please contact: Ellie Layton, The British Horse Society, 01926 707795 or e.layton@bhs.org.uk

Talented riders from the North are put through their paces

7th August 2009

Some 32 riders from across the North region attended the Regional Foundation Squad induction day last week (27 July) at Bishop Burton College, Beverley, Yorkshire.

The Squad, which is designed to produce a pool of up and coming talented riders, has been set up through funding from Sport England and is being co-ordinated by the British Equestrian Federation (BEF). The aim is that it will identify talented riders who are not currently on the BEF's World Class Programme.

The selected riders from across the four Olympic disciplines - dressage, eventing, show jumping and para-equestrian dressage - attended the un-mounted day to learn more about the Squad.

"It was great to meet all the riders who were unanimous in their enthusiasm," said Emma White, Regional Development Coordinator & Regional Coach Yorkshire & NE BEF. "I feel privileged to be involved in a project like this, working with potential equestrian stars of the future - and I'm sure it's going to be a challenging, yet rewarding experience."

Suzanne Genery, Head of Sports Development, BEF, said: "I was particularly impressed by the day - and by the Regional Foundation Squads in general. It's the first time, to my knowledge, that a project which involves athletes working together over a significant period of time, will be rolled out across the country. It's been a major achievement to get the programme up and running."

The North Regional Foundation Squad coaches are as follows:

- Dressage: Hannah Moody
- Show Jumping: Susie Gibson
- Eventing: Heidi Woodhead
- Para Equestrian: Erik Mackechni

For a full list of riders on the North Squad please see [here](#)

Subsequent squad training sessions will take place at Edge Hill University, Ormskirk, West Lancashire - which is providing its facilities, and access to its top sports physiotherapists, psychologists, and other equestrian specialists, for free.

Riders reap rewards from preparation

Para-equestrian dressage riders Emma Sheardown and Sophie Wells have their sights set firmly on success in the run up to the London 2012 Paralympic Games, after a successful start to their seasons saw them selected to represent GB at the European Championships next month in Kristiansand, Norway.

Both athletes have been putting in the hours not only in their riding, but also in the gym and physiotherapy treatment rooms at English Institute of Sport (EIS) Loughborough, in a bid to maintain their strength and agility over a tough line-up of competitions.

In April the duo had impressive performances at the Moorsele CPEDI in Belgium. Emma and her ride Purdy's Dream proving unbeatable winning the Grade 1a team, individual and freestyle tests, all with scores of more than 70%, and Sophie, who competed two horses, scored two wins in the grade IV individual and freestyles tests with Pinocchio and a third in the team test with Valerius.

Sophie also dominated the grade IV section of the para-equestrian dressage International competition at Hartpury last month. She rode Pinocchio to victory in the individual, team and freestyle tests posting an impressive score of 77.26% in the freestyle.

Based in the East Midlands, Sophie and Emma have had the full support of the strength and conditioning coaching and physiotherapy services provided by the EIS at its Loughborough University base for the past two years.

"With Sophie, the aim has been to keep her injury free so that combined with her physiotherapy work, she would be training and competing more regularly to a higher level," says EIS Strength & Conditioning Coach Mat Bramhall. "She has been working really hard on getting stronger and keeping injury free in the build up to the Euros and it's great she's had such success already this year."

"With Emma, she overcame some issues she was suffering in her leg by working closely with Emma Deakin (EIS physiotherapist)," continues Mat. "Emma came up with an effective strength & conditioning and physiotherapy programme to help target specific areas that Emma needed to work on - which has removed the problem and hopefully marks the start of further success."

Committed to her tough training programme Sophie Wells is hoping for ongoing improvements with the support team in place behind her.

"It's been a great help to have the strength and conditioning and physio support from the EIS at Loughborough," says Sophie. "It's the little extra strength and fitness that can make a big difference in my riding. With the problems I have with my legs, it's taken a lot of work from Mat Bramhall, Matt Ashman and the doctors, all liaising in conjunction with our World Class support staff, to figure out how to get the best out of them. It's not been straightforward but it's great to know we have a great support team behind us. There's still a long way to go, and I'm taking training day by day, but I'm totally committed to it" she adds.

With the European Championships ahead for both riders, Emma Sheardown rates the access to support on top of their riding.

"As a World Class Development rider, to have access to these facilities is a real bonus," says Emma. "Working with the EIS and Emma Deakin in particular is already beginning to reap rewards, especially in light of my team selection for the European Championships."

Sophie and Emma are on the British Equestrian Federation's UK Sport funded Equestrian World Class Programme, which supports a pathway to success for eventing, show jumping, dressage and para-equestrian dressage athletes. Both riders are on the para-dressage squads, with Emma on the Development programme, while Sophie has recently been promoted to the top level of Performance. As part of their programme, they access EIS support services out of EIS Loughborough, based at Loughborough University.

The Championships take place from 20th - 24th August in Kristiansand, Norway.

Greenwich Park Cross Country course builders appointed

6th August 2009

The London 2012 Organising Committee (LOCOG) has taken the next steps to building the cross country course for the Eventing competition at Greenwich Park during the London 2012 Olympic Games.

It has appointed London Eventing as the course builder - a consortium made up of some of the most respected horse trials course builders in the UK. Jonathan Clissold, Adrian Ditcham, Andrew Hunter and Scott Brickell between them are responsible for the cross country tracks at numerous British Evening one day events, a selection of international events and one of the world's leading four star courses at Burghley Horse Trials.

Their brief is to support the London 2012 Organising Committee's Equestrian Manager Tim Hadaway and Course Designer Sue Benson by developing plans for and building the cross country courses for the test event in 2011 and the Olympic Games in 2012. They will initially be advising Sue as she develops her jump designs and will support the Organising Committee in establishing a plan that will not only ensure the course in 2012 is of the highest standard but that it is developed respecting Greenwich's status as a World Heritage Site and a much loved and used public Park.

Tim Hadaway commented, "We are very pleased with the appointment of London Eventing. We were in the privileged position of being able to consider a number of teams from the UK all of whom would be considered as being amongst the leading builders in the World. The team coming together as London Eventing to deliver the Olympic course has many years of experience delivering courses at every level in the UK and abroad including working as a team on the course at Burghley."

Jonathan Clissold, Project Manager for London Eventing said: "We look forward to working with the London Organising Committee. This is a stunning venue and we can't wait to develop a course that will showcase Greenwich and its unique heritage. Our team has a lot of much experience of developing courses in historic Parks including Burghley and Windsor Park and we will be looking to this as we work in this beautiful environment."

Two New Directors Set to Boost NED

3rd August 2009

Both Lynne Crowden and Jane Holderness Roddam have been appointed by the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) as new Board Directors of NED Ltd.

Breeder and producer of sport horses at the Woodlander Stud, Lynne Crowden is also Chairman of the Lead Body for British Sport Horses and Ponies (PSHP), Secretary of Warm Blood Breeders Studbook, trained judge, BEF Futurity evaluator and Managing Director of a recruitment firm with responsibility for project management and financial control; Lynne brings a wide set of skills to the Board to enable NED Ltd to build on the successful launch of its online database. "NED goes from strength to strength" says Lynne. "We have a lot of work to do to improve the pedigree data in NED and I hope to be able to explain clearly and simply to British studbooks what this means and how, by supplying as much data as we can, we can help breeders make better choices. NED is pivotal to the development of the British horse industry".

Working hand in hand is breeder and producer of sport horses and 1968 Olympic Team three day event Gold Medallist Jane Holderness-Roddam CBE LVO. Owner of the world-renowned West Kington Stud, FEI technical delegate and international judge, Chairman of the Riding for the Disabled Association and President of British Eventing, Jane's experience will help consolidate the links between NED and many of its important data suppliers. Said Jane "NED is the new improved British Horse Database with more capacity to help breeders and producers, buyers and sellers and moreover the one horse owner, by providing verified information to inform and protect members of the equine community. I am thrilled to be part of this exciting development which our Country really needs".

Join Team GBR Ontrack Today

3rd August 2009

Team GBR Ontrack is now live, launched in partnership with the equestrian Olympic and Paralympic teams via British Eventing, the British Show Jumping Association and British Dressage, bringing together all equestrian and horse sport activity in the UK under one supporters club. Visit www.teambrontrack.com to join today.

Supported by the vital organisations that help produce our medal winners including The Pony Club, The British Horse Society, The Riding for the Disabled Association, The Association of British Riding Schools and also the equestrian sports of Reining, Driving, Endurance, Vaulting, Horseball, Polocrosse and Mounted Games. Team GBR Ontrack aims to raise the

profile of equestrian sport in the UK and to provide funds to help potential medal winners train, compete, and achieve their goals.

Join today for your chance to win a VIP trip to the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games 2010 in Kentucky, USA. The first 500 members will also receive one of just 500 exclusive black membership cards.

Team GBR Ontrack is designed for anyone that has an interest in equestrianism and the countryside and who wants to be part of Team GBR and show their support. It offers a range of benefits and includes two options to join - basic membership is completely FREE and full membership includes a one-off fee of just £20.

All members will receive a monthly e-newsletter to keep you abreast of what is going on across the equestrian sports and a variety of special offers and discounts. You will also receive invitations to exclusive GBR Ontrack fund raising events and access to the online publication Impulsion, which will now only be available to GBR Ontrack supporters.

Full membership includes a one off fee of £20 and includes significant further benefits including a Team GBR Ontrack membership card, which also acts as a loyalty, discount and prepaid debit card. This card will give access to a wide range of further discounts, special offers and additional benefits. The discounts are on the things you really need - feed and forage, veterinary services, saddlery, tack, clothing and tickets at selected events.

Vitality, by purchasing full membership and using your card you will be helping to raise funds to help potential medal winners train, compete and achieve their goals.

Although equestrian sport in the UK receives substantial lottery funding, unfortunately this financial support is not enough to cover all the costs associated with sending individuals and teams to international competitions, especially when they are abroad.

In particular, Team GBR urgently needs to raise additional funds in order to take a full team to Kentucky for the World Equestrian Games in 2010. With eight sports included in the programme, totalling over 50 horses, this is a very big and expensive logistical challenge and one for which we really need your support.

One lucky GBR Ontrack supporter will win a VIP trip for two to the 2010 World Equestrian Games in Kentucky, USA. The first 500 full members will receive an exclusive, limited edition black card - join online today at www.teamgbrontrack.com

BEF helps establish a New Polocrosse Club

27th July 2009

The only Polocrosse Club in Buckinghamshire is now open and just in time to welcome new

members for the summer season, thanks to support from the British Equestrian Federation (BEF).

Horse / sport enthusiasts are invited to join the Vale Impi Polocrosse Club, near Aylesbury, to learn and take part in the team sport which is fast, furious and action-packed.

The Club, run by Karen and Neil Smith, offers riders the opportunity to take up or develop their skills in the sport via the use of a carefully managed pitch, loan of equipment and expert tuition and advice.

Funding from the BEF has helped the Club evolve in a bid to help increase participation in the sport, which combines racquet and ball skills with horsemanship.

"We are really excited about welcoming new members to the Club and hope that we can help grow this exciting sport," said Karen Smith. "We welcome riders of all abilities and ages - taster days will be arranged during the season and Neil can help find suitable horses or help re-school your own horse to play.

"But you don't have to be a horse rider to get involved. We are always looking for people to help out on match days either goal judging or scoring - it's a really exciting spectator sport, plus we also hold plenty of social events like barbeques and gymkhanas too."

BEF, Head of Communications & Marketing, Anna Greenway said: "This is a sport that people may not be aware of, but with the opening of this new Club we hope that many more people, young and old, will take the opportunity to come along and try it - it's a thrilling sport to play and watch."

The Vale Impi Polocrosse Club is affiliated to the United Kingdom Polocrosse Association (UKPA).

For more information on becoming a member or to learn how you can get involved with the Club visit www.valeimpi-polocrosse.co.uk or call 01844 299299.

World Class Riders promoted to Performance Programme

27th July 2009

The Equestrian World Class Programme has announced four riders that have recently been promoted to the World Class Performance Programme

Three eventing riders; Nicola Wilson (33), Lucy Wieggersma (32), and Ruth Edge (29), along with para-equestrian dressage rider Sophie Wells (19) have progressed from the World Class Development Programme to the World Class Performance Programme, while eventer Tim Rogers (17) and show jumper Joe Clayton (19) have moved from Pre-Start onto the Start programme.

“The promotion of these riders shows the depth of talent we have in this country,” commented World Class Performance Director, Will Connell. “This is essential if Great Britain is to win more medals on the International stage at European, World, Olympic and Paralympic level and demonstrates the value of the tiered development approach. The standard of riding on the Performance Programme continues to improve year on year.”

The World Class Performance Programme is Lottery funded via UK Sport and exists to provide Britain's elite riders with the best preparation to represent Equestrian Team GBR at International level.

Yorkshire-based Nicola has achieved consistently good results since making her four star debut at Badminton in 2007 finishing 16th. In 2008, she improved on this coming seventh and had top five placings at the British Open and Burghley. This year she has already enjoyed further top five finishes at Burgie, Bramham and Burnham Market.

Lucy has been ranked in British Eventing™s top ten for the last two years; ranking sixth in 2006 and rising to fourth in 2007. Other major results include seventh at Badminton in 2006 and second in 2008, which cemented her place in the Senior Eventing Team for the 2008 Olympic Games with Shaabrak. Unfortunately, due to an injury to Shaabrak, Lucy was forced to withdraw. The pair bounced back with a sixth place finish at Badminton this year while Lucy enjoyed a win in Arville on her horse Simon Porloe.

Ruth has won two British open championships; in 2004 on Two Thyme and in 2008 on Mayhem III. In 2006 she also fulfilled a long-held ambition to win the Scottish Open Championships on Marsh Mayfly. In 2007 she scored her first win at four-star level, taking the honours at Luhmühlen, Germany, again on Two Thyme. But injury ruled the horse out of contention for the European Championships that year and for last year's Olympics. Ruth has

moved on this year with a top ten finish at Badminton on Mayhem III, a second place at a three star event in LuhmÃ¼hlen and a first and second at Burnham Market on Marsh Mayfly and Nick of Thyme.

Sophie is the youngest rider on the World Class Performance Programme. In 2007 she finished sixth in the World Para-Equestrian Dressage Championships as well as taking third place at the Hickstead Under-21 International in the able-bodied junior advanced medium class. She had more success at the Hickstead Under-21 International in 2008, this time winning the junior rider International class, thereby becoming the first para rider to win an able-bodied International competition. This year she dominated the grade IV section of the Para Equestrian Dressage International competition at Hartpury. She rode Pinocchio to victory in the individual, team and freestyle tests posting an impressive score of 77.26% in the freestyle as well as claiming second place in each class with her own Valerius.

The World Class Performance Programme incorporates the three Olympic sports of dressage, eventing, show jumping and the Paralympic sport of para-equestrian dressage. Together with the Equine Pathway it comprises the Equestrian World Class Programme.

Selection to the World Class Performance Programme is based on results combined with potential to contribute to team success at major championships. Performance is continuously assessed and riders are regularly reviewed.

The Development Programme is selected via bi-annual selection trials where riders must first meet set minimum criteria. They are then invited to viewing trials for an initial ridden assessment by British and International trainers. Successful riders are then invited back to selection trials where they are assessed on their ridden skills and interviewed to assess their suitability for the Programme. The Development Programme is divided into Start and Potential squads across each discipline.

Chairman of British Riding Clubs dies

24th July 2009

It was with much sadness that the Trustees of the BHS and the members of the British Riding Clubs National Executive Committee learnt that Laurie Punnett died on Thursday 23 July. BHS Chairman Patrick Print said "Whether it was as a Trustee of the BHS, Chairman of the BRC NEC or Chairman of Gower Riding Club, Laurie's commitment was total.

"In his element as a cross-country controller, witty and informed in the commentary box and totally dedicated as 'chef d'equipe' for his wife Sarah, Laurie put his heart into the Riding Club movement, earning the respect and affection of all those who reaped the benefit. I will not be the only one mourning the loss of a very good friend today."

Regional Foundation Squad (North) Riders invited to induction day

Some 32 riders from across the North region have been invited to attend the Regional Foundation Squad induction day on 27 July at Bishop Burton College, Beverley, Yorkshire. The Squad, which aims to produce a pool of up and coming talented riders, has been set up through funding from Sport England and is being co-ordinated by the British Equestrian Federation (BEF). The aim is that it will identify talented riders who are not currently on the BEF's World Class Programme.

The selected riders from across the four Olympic disciplines - dressage, eventing, show jumping and para-equestrian dressage - will attend the un-mounted day to learn more about the Squad and understand what will be involved.

Subsequent squad training sessions will take place at Edge Hill University, Ormskirk, West Lancashire - which is providing its facilities, and access to its top sports physiotherapists, psychologists, and other equestrian specialists, for free.

"We were overwhelmed with applications and to narrow it down to the final 32 was a real challenge," said Emma White, Regional Development Coordinator & Regional Coach Yorkshire & NE British Equestrian Federation. "It's great to see that we have such a wealth of equestrian talent across the region and it fills us with great optimism for the future success of our sport.

"We are extremely grateful to Edge Hill University that has so kindly offered to host our un-mounted Squad training sessions for us, together with the advice of their experienced sport and equestrian teams, for free. This additional support will be of real value to our Squad riders."

For more information visit our [Regional Foundation Squad pages](#) or www.britisheventing.com, www.britishdressage.co.uk, or www.bsja.co.uk.

RDA National Championships 2009: A resounding success

23rd July 2009

The Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) National Championships held at Hartpury College, Gloucestershire on Saturday 11th and Sunday, 12th July 2009 was a huge success attracting approximately 300 riders and more than a 1500 visitors from all over the UK. The rain held off, allowing a record number of 72 classes of equestrian competitions to proceed on Saturday.

There were many winners at this year's championships as under the watchful eye of British paralympians Sophie Christiansen and Ricky Balshaw, the RDA riders displayed incredible skill and sportsmanship. Several riders came away with rosettes, trophies and big smiles on their faces.

The annual National Championships is RDA's flagship event and the biggest of its kind in the world. It brings together people from different backgrounds of all ages and disabilities to compete together, celebrate personal achievement and have a good time. The event involves a range of competitions, equestrian sports and learning activities including Dressage, Vaulting, Countryside Challenge, Arts and Crafts Competition, Horse Care and Knowledge. This year's event also featured a demonstration of para-equestrian show-jumping.

Chief Executive of RDA, Ed Bracher commented:

"This year's National Championships was even bigger and better than last year's. It was a fantastic event displaying the breadth of what RDA riders and volunteers are capable of achieving. I would like to say a huge thank you to our incredible riders and dedicated volunteers for another outstanding and successful event."

Chairman of RDA, Jane Holderness-Roddam CBE LVO said:

"Thanks and congratulations to all on a really superb weekend. Everyone I spoke to seemed thrilled with the National Championships event and I received nothing but positive comments."

The continuing success of RDA is wholly dependent on voluntary help and donations. In our 40th year, we need help more than ever - to find out more or get involved, please visit

www.rda.org.uk or call 0845 658 1082

New Director Takes The Reins

23rd July 2009

Jenny Hall has recently been appointed the new British Equestrian Federation (BEF) Director for Equine Development.

Taking over from Graham Suggett, who is now the Chairman of the National Equine Database (NED Ltd) Board, Jenny's appointment was confirmed at the BEF Council meeting in June.

From a farming background and having had an interest in performance sport horses since childhood, Jenny now runs a thoroughbred breeding and sales enterprise as well as being a founder partner in a busy veterinary practice in Berkshire.

With experience of working as team vet to the senior three day event team and also with the BEF's World Class development programme, Jenny brings with her a wealth of experience and the ability to 'hit the ground running'.

Says Jenny, "I am thrilled to have been appointed and think I am well placed to understand the commercial and practical realities of the equestrian industry. I have always had an interest in the characteristics of the elite horse and have had the benefit of the experience of working first hand with the systems that have produced them".

Alongside Jenny, BEF Director of Sports Development, Dennis Bell, was reappointed by BEF Council for a further term. This reappointment will enable Dennis to capitalise on the tremendous work already undertaken in the Sports Development area, and Dennis is, "absolutely delighted" to be staying on.