

## **World Class Development Newsletter**

### **April/May**

The last two months have seen some exceptional performances and results by riders on the World Class Development Programme.

Lucy Wiegiersma riding Shaabrak, who only just missed out on lifting the prestigious Mitsubshi Motors Badminton Trophy by 1.4 penalties to Nicolas Touzaint (FRA), is one of the five riders selected for the Eventing squad for the Beijing Olympic Games, as is Sharon Hunt, who also used to be on the Development Programme – this surely demonstrates that the Development training pathway, which is structured in such a way to facilitate rider improvement that enables them to progress onto the Olympic Performance Programme is working.

Lucy was the recipient of the Butler Bowl, which is awarded to the highest placed British rider.

Ben Maher has achieved some excellent results in the US and was recently selected for the GB team who contested the 2008 Samsung Super League competition in La Baule, France, where the team finished 6<sup>th</sup>.

A number of Development riders took part in the Junior and Young Rider European Viewing Trials at the Wales and West, a prerequisite for possible selection for the Junior and Young Rider European Championships. Hannah Paul, who is based in the Netherlands with Emile Hendrix, returned to the U.K. to claim the Young Rider Grand Prix in convincing style, with Matt Sampson a very close runner-up in the Junior Grand Prix.

### **World Class Development Eventing Programme**

Lucy Wiegiersma's pre-Badminton run with Shaabrak was in the CIC\*\*\* World Cup qualifier at Fontainebleau in France, where the pair finished best of the British contingent in fourth place. In the other CIC\*\*\* World Cup qualifier at Burnham Market, Ruth Edge, riding her Luhmühlen CCI\*\*\*\* winner, Two Thyme was second, on only his second run back from injury last summer.

Belton, which is widely regarded as a pre-Badminton rehearsal, Lucy Wiegiersma and Ruth Edge, both Badminton bound, won an advanced section each, riding Beckli and Mr Dumbledore respectively.

Chris King, riding Secret Weapon, his Blenheim CCI\*\*\* winner, won a strong advanced section at Withington, beating Tina Cook and Miners Frolic, who were second to the

combination at Blenheim. In the advanced under-25 class, Laura Collett and Rayef demonstrated that they are a class apart, when winning this class 17.7 penalties clear of their nearest rivals.

Besides, Lucy Wieggersma and Ruth Edge, two other Development riders, Emily Baldwin and Georgie Spence were riding at the Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials. At nineteen, Georgie was making her Badminton debut, and was also the youngest rider this year.

After the first day of dressage, Emily, riding Drivetime was lying in second place with a score of 39.3, and led to commentator Carl Hester saying, "I didn't know who Emily Baldwin was when she came in, but I certainly did by the time she went out". On the second day of dressage, Ruth, riding Muschamp Impala executed an outstanding test and briefly led the competition with a mark of 36.1, but at the end of the dressage phase, had to settle for second, with Lucy in third on 37.4, Emily equal seventh, and with Georgie just outside the top thirty.

With the cross-country course causing a fair amount of problems throughout, Emily finished with twenty jumping penalties and twenty-eight time penalties, which left them just outside the top thirty. Unfortunately for Ruth, Muschamp Impala left a leg jumping the second part of the water jump and she had no chance of staying on. Georgie made an impressively cool-headed debut and moved up to seventeenth, with the sixteenth fastest time. Lucy jumped a superb round, but took a couple of long routes, which resulted in 8.4 time penalties that left her lying second overnight to Nicolas Touzaint (FR).

Clear rounds in the show jumping were very few and far between, Emily having only one fence down, moved up to a final placing of twenty fifth, however, Georgie wasn't so lucky and with a few fences down, finished on a score of 57.6 which left her in thirtieth place.

Managing to hold her nerve, after knocking the second show jump down, Lucy jumped the rest of the course clear, that left Nicolas with only one fence in hand, which he used up early on, but he jumped the rest of the course clear to claim his Badminton victory.

A number of riders on the Eventing Programme have been producing consistently good performances over the last two months, which have resulted in top ten placings at various events.

Georgie Spence, riding Song for Gull galloped round the indoor cross-country course at The British Open, to claim the title and trounced her older rivals by three seconds.

Squad training sessions have been held at Charlton Down Farm, Westonbirt, where the focus has been on dressage training with Angela Tucker and Yogi Breisner, show jumping techniques with Peter Murphy, and cross-country training with Yogi and Jeanette

Brakewell. Sarah Verney and Sports Psychologist Joce Brooks held six-month rider reviews with a number of riders.

Ruth is also a well-known pure dressage rider, and at the winter dressage championships, rode her own Shadowfax to second place in the open elementary championships, only losing out by a very small margin, however they won the Biotal medium open with a score of 71.89%.

### **World Class Dressage Programme**

The Addington Manor CDI-YR-J-P provided Natalie Allen a win in the young rider team test on her new ride Duke 77, a former rider of German young rider medallist Jessica Werndl. Natalie has been training with Emile Faurie, but has recently moved to be based with Katie Byrom.

At the Winter Dressage Championships, Lara Griffith, riding her own Warlock won the intermediaire 1 music with a score of 71%, Lara who trains with Emile Faurie, rode a bold, forward test, and with this combination already qualified for the intermediaire 1 summer championships, they plan to compete in small-tour premier leagues this year.

Simone Ward has been putting her training with Emile Faurie to good effect, with promising results at PSG level. Simone won two PSG classes at Sheepgate with her eight-year old Dutch-bred gelding Scaramouche and was runner-up with Mikado VI and Oberon VI in the intermediaire I. Simone went one better at Frensham, by winning the intermediaire I with Oberon VI and the intermediaire II with Mikado VI. With the support of World Class funding, Simone started training with Emile in 2007 just before the nationals, who she credits in helping her to develop more expression and concentrate on the quality of each movement.

After losing her top horse at the end of last year, Lisa Hopkins made an impressive debut with her new horse, Likeur II to lead the PSG at Manor Farm, and the plan is for Lisa to contest small tour on him this year.

At Manor Grange, Darryl Thickitt added to his tally of qualifying wins with the stallion Urban Hit, taking the elementary qualifier with 75.35%. This seven-year old has contested two medium and two elementary qualifiers and won all of them. Darryl also won the advanced medium qualifier riding Strawinsky, who is aimed at small tour this year.

Darryl was also in winning form at Field House, which attracted big entries for the latest round of Shearwater young horse qualifiers, where Darryl scored 83% in the five-year-old national section riding Warlocks Charm.

Fresh from two months' training in Germany with Jonny Hilberath, Charlie Hutton riding Abira finished fourth in both the young rider individual and freestyle – the latter with a score of 70.1% at the CDI\*\*\* at Saumur in France.

### **World Class Para-Equestrian Dressage Programme**

A number of Development riders were in action at the Para-Equestrian Dressage competition at Kingswood, West Midlands.

Emma Sheardown rode her new horse Purdys Dream to win the grade 1a restricted with a score of 69.38%, Emma who has had the nine-year-old gelding for only a few weeks hopes to take him to an international in Belgium. Although scoring 71.18% in the grade 1a open, veteran Para dressage rider, Anne Dunham, beat Emma. In the grade 1b class, Natalie Povey was third with a score of 67.65%, behind Ricky Balshaw and Lee Pearson. In the grade II class, Felicity Coulthard riding Roffelaar beat Paralympic Dressage veteran, Nicola Tustain with a score of 76.18%. In the grade III class, Toby Pawson, won with a score of 61.15% riding Sheepcote Nairobi, a relatively new partnership. Denise Shawns riding Leander won the grade IV class with 71.779%, 5 marks from her nearest rival.

At the Para Winter Championships, the Development riders produced some excellent results – Natasha Baker won the grade III individual with Wald Minor, who became lit-up in the freestyle, which was won by Erin Orford riding Nirvana, whose aim is the Hartpur international, with second place going to Felicity Coulthard riding Roffelaar.

Emma Kent took the grade III championship riding Gentle II, who with fellow Development rider Sophie Wells won the 'Hand in Hand' competition. Toby Pawson won the grade III music on Oyster II.

Emma Kent riding Gentle II retained their form at Blue Barn Dressage, scoring a personal best of plus 76% in the grade III team test qualifier, which included a nine for her riding, and also won the grade III restricted with 75%.

Recently at Patchetts, Emma won the grade III open with a score of 73.46%, beating Toby Pawson who had a much-improved score of 71.53%.

Sophie Wells, riding her new horse Touchdown, won the grade IV class with a score of 76.07%.

At the CPEDI \*\*\* Moorseele, Emma Sheardown riding Purdys Dream was 4<sup>th</sup> in the Grade 1a Individual and Team Test and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Grade 1a Kür. In the Grade IV competition, Denise Shawns riding Leander was 4<sup>th</sup> in both the Individual and Team Test and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Kür with an excellent score of 77.81%.

At the CPEDI \*\* Manheim, Felicity Coulthard riding Roffelaar was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Grade II individual, with Natasha Baker finishing in 10<sup>th</sup> place. In the Grade II freestyle, Felicity scored 72.31% to finish 2<sup>nd</sup>, with Natasha in 8<sup>th</sup> place.

In the Grade III individual, Toby Pawson riding Sheepcote Nairobi was 7<sup>th</sup> with a score of 64.53% and in the freestyle was 8<sup>th</sup> with a score of 66.66%.

A squad training session was held at The Unicorn, which focused on music test riding with Jennie Loriston-Clarke, and individual training sessions with Angela Weiss and Nina Venables. Michel Assouline, World Class Performance Para-Equestrian trainer gave a talk on preparations for Hong Kong. Paul Malone and David Rowlands gave a Sports Science lecture that focused on Fitness Regimes for Horses.

### **World Class Development Show Jumping Programme**

A number of Development riders have been competing abroad – At the Hamburg Global Champions CSI\*\*\*\*\* show, Germany-based Richard Robinson, who has recently leapt up the BSJA rankings list took third place in the speed Derby with Chaplin 46, as well as steering Olli Pop to a placing in the Derby. Ben Maher, who has returned from a successful tour in America, finished third in a 1.35m class with the stallion Quainton Quirifino Z.

At the Wellington CSI\*\*, Ben, riding Rolette, jumped one of five double clears in the Suncast Grand Prix to finish third in a very hot class.

Charlotte Platt has also been competing in America at the CN Winter Equestrian Festival, which takes place at the Palm Beach International Equestrian Centre, Florida, where besides being placed in several National classes, Charlotte represented GB in the FEI Nations Cup class with Lacanda, where the British team finished in fifth place. In the 5\* Grand Prix class, Charlotte switched to Paulien II, where they finished a very creditable ninth place.

At the Eindhoven CSI\*\*\* show, Gemma Paternoster, riding Osiris finished fourth in the grand prix jump off and was placed on the first day in the 1.50m two-phase. Gemma was also placed in a two-phase on the inexperienced six-year-old True To You, who is her London 2012 hope.

At the British Open Show Jumping Championships, William Whitaker riding Arielle finished third behind his uncle Michael and cousin Robert in the final, but went on to win the puissance with Insul Tech Leonardo.

Although William had qualified to compete in the FEI Rolex World Cup Final in Gothenburg, his horse Arielle was unfortunately sold a week before the competition to a Saudi Arabian rider.

At Royal Windsor, Daniel Neilson riding High Tone Z won the young rider class and was fourth in the grand prix. At the Le Touquet CSIY/J/P/A show, Daniel claimed the junior grand prix, and was also in the frame in two 1.40m classes at Auvers CSI\*\* in France.

Jackson Reed-Stephenson, riding Landora scored a double in the seven-year old classes at Vilamoura CSI\*\* in Portugal.

At a recent squad training session at Richard Davison's, riders worked on suppleness, straightness and general ride-ability of their horses, for improved performance in the show jumping arena. Andy Thomas, Team GB physiotherapist attended to assess the riders.

The squad training days are filmed by Russell Guire, thus providing the riders, their home coaches, owners etc. with a record of the squad training sessions.