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The Equestrian World Class Programme

NEWSLETTER - March 2009

Welcome to the latest World Class newsletter. The programme has continued to develop through the early part of the year and with initial planning for the new funding cycle complete we can now focus 100% on the main task in hand – winning medals this year! The development programme is once again supporting the young rider championship at the British Open and the excellent line up promises a thrilling competition again this year. We've been trying some new things out across the training sessions which you can read more about below and many of the riders have made a great start to the season. With UK competitions now starting with a vengeance we will bring you more news on how all the World Class riders are getting on next time.

Will Connell, Performance Director

Performance Eventers Train with Henk Nooren

It is very much part of the World Class Programme to use the best there is in all aspects, and to try new angles in order to improve. Therefore the eventing Performance squad asked world renowned show jumping coach, Henk Nooren, to take a couple of training sessions earlier this year.

Henk worked with riders in groups of 2 or 3. He started the sessions with plenty of basic flat work which then led on to jumping – keeping the fences low in order to continue to address the basics.

Henk focused a lot on the positions of the riders and paid a lot of attention to detail. His sessions were well received and Henk will be coming back to do some more work with the squad later in the year.

This is the first time that he had worked with event riders, and their talent and ability impressed him, appreciating their high standard of flat work which helped him in turn to improve the jumping.

“Henk, like all top class coaches, is a real giver,” said eventing Performance Manager Yogi Breisner, “he showed a great interest in eventing in general and individual riders in particular and we look forward to welcoming him back.”

Top Young Riders compete for BEF World Class Development Programme Championship Title

Twenty three of the brightest young names in show jumping will compete in the BEF World Class Development Programme Championship, at the British Open Show Jumping Championships held at Birmingham's NEC on 16th - 19th April 2009.

After five qualifying competitions, the top twenty-one riders based on points accumulated throughout the qualifying series, and two riders who qualified at the one wild card show, all now have the chance to compete in this prestigious class.

See **HERE** for more news and a full list of qualified riders.

World Class Staff attend conflict resolution training

Key World class staff, including team managers, coaches and support staff, attended a daylong conflict resolution workshop in March. Entitled “Managing relationships, dealing with differences, resolving conflict” the day was delivered by John Sturrock QC of Core Solutions Group.

The group were asked to complete some pre-course work to self-assess strengths and weaknesses and identify example situations – this information was used to tailor the course to the specific needs of the group. The day was a mixture of informative and practical sessions, including role play and games to test the key negotiating skills taught through the early sessions. Working in elite sport all the World Class staff will at some point encounter difficult situations and this course was very well received by those who attended.

Dressage Equine Pathway reselected

Reselection for the World Class equine pathway in dressage took place in March. British Olympic rider Carl Hester and Dutch International Hans Peter Minderhoud led the selection process, which saw some new horses joining existing horses on the pathway.

A number of promising horses have now been identified that the programme will support and work with to continue to develop talent as we move towards 2012. The dressage equine pathway, which is being run in conjunction with British Dressage aims to support the identification of elite young horses that show the potential to win medals for Great Britain at future Championships and Olympic Games. Once identified, assistance is provided to owners, riders and their home teams to help them optimise their horses' competitive career through the network of World Class Support.



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Development Training Update

Home visits or squad-training sessions in all four disciplines have taken place over the last couple of months for the development programme.

The eventing programme has held two squad-training sessions, one that focused on assessment of jumping position and effectiveness with Peter Murphy, and the other, cross-country riding with Jeanette Brakewell.

The dressage programme focused on test riding with Dutch Olympic trainer, Francis Veerbeek and GB senior chief selector, Nick Burton acting as judges.

The first training session for the para-dressage programme was at the beginning of February, where the riders worked with World Class coaches, Nina Venables, Angela Weiss and Erik MacKechnie.

The various sessions utilised the range of support services, that have included strength and conditioning with Carys Jackson from the EIS, sports nutrition with Liz Purcell, sports psychology with Jennie Killilea, physiotherapy with Andy Thomas, as well as equine assessments with John McEwen, David Rowlands. Vicky Spalding, Jenny Hall and farrier Haydn Price. Russell Guire of Equinalysis provided video coverage of the ridden sessions.

Development Rider Successes

Eventing

Lucy Wigersma headed the British contingent during the second week of the eventing Sunshine Tour taking third in the CIC** riding Simon Porloe.

The Jumping and Style (JAS) series came to an end with the finalists from the qualifying rounds competing at Addington Manor, where Laura Collett, riding Vancouver was third in the Open Championship class.

Piggy French began her eventing season with a win and a third place in the OI at Poplar Park with Alvescot Prada and Chase the Moon, and the same result the IN with Flying Machine and Wild South.

In the large OI section at Tweseldown, Lucy Wigersma, just back from the Sunshine Tour was second with French Leave.

Show Jumping

William Whitaker has jumped at three overseas competitions. At Vestfold CSI*** in Norway, William riding Insul Tech Leonardo was second in the puissance, at Bremen CSI**** William was part of the GB squad that finished runner-up in the team trophy and on the Toscana Tour, Italy was placed in several classes.

Also on the Toscana Tour was Charlotte Platt who finished a very respectable 11th in the CSI*** Grand Prix and came 7th in the 1.50m 2-phase class, riding Paulien.

Daniel Neilson, jumping at the Villeneuve CSI*** in France, won the speed Derby on Pikolono, and was second in the feature class, a 1.45m two-phase riding Oscar XI.

Pre-start rider, Joe Clayton, riding Saveur won the Young Riders Championship qualifying round at Rowallan, from a start list of thirty-six young rider combinations, and secured his second qualifying win, again riding Saveur, at Arena UK.

The recently formed partnership of Tim Page and Boy Major headed the winter grade C qualifier.

Dressage

Kate Atlee, riding Corbiere won their first PSG at their first attempt at Solihull, the combination has already qualified for the medium and advanced medium regional championships. Henry Boswell brought three horses to the competition, winning the medium 64 on Skyrocket, coming third in the PSG on Urban and second in the advanced medium on Sinellie B.

It was another good day for Kate at Bromyard EC, scoring 73.42% to take the advanced medium 98 with Corbiere, and 70% for a medium win on Stein. It was with Stein that Kate won the medium open at Kingston Maurward with 67.84%.

Anne Marie-Perry, riding Feine Dame produced an expressive, mistake-free test for a score of 74.29% at Addington Manor Winter Regionals, where Lara Griffith riding Dawning Hopes came second in the PSG with a score of 68.33%.

At Oldencraig, Amy Stovold secured victory in the intermediaire I qualifier with 65.92% on Rimskij Korsakov, a new ride for her.

A new ride for Charlie Hutton saw him win the intermediaire II at Solihull Riding Club, Aljano, an Oldenburg gelding that stands nearly 18hh, hasn't competed for about three years, but is starting to blossom for Charlie.

Para-Equestrian Dressage

The BD Para-Equestrian Winter Championships take place at the end of this month and throughout February and March there has been five qualifying competitions held at various equestrian centres.

At Richmond Equestrian Centre, Alex McNamara scored the highest mark of the day - 77.61% - in the grade II team test riding Don Romano, who he also rode to win the Grade III test.

Sophie Wells, riding Valerius, scored 71.78% a winning margin of 7% in the Grade IV test. As a warm up for this she rode in the Elementary class to finish 2nd with 70.66%.

Natalie Povey, riding Westpoint First Lady has qualified for the grade 1b class with wins at Aintree International Equestrian Centre with a score of 68.82% and Bromyard EC scoring 71.76%.

Oldencraig was the venue where Grade II rider, Natasha Baker secured her qualification, riding Wald Minor, the combination won the team test with 73.33%.

In the Grade II team test at Bromyard, Erin Orford, took 1st and 3rd places, riding Nirvana Pure Indulgence with a score of 71.90% and Nirvana Moondancer with 70%. Edward Chanin riding Rhadamantus claimed 4th spot with 67.14%.

Emma Sheardown, riding Purdey's Dream won the Grade 1a team test at Vale View, the last qualifying competition with 71.18%.