



# Cambridge and District Riding Club

Newsletter January 2021

## Ramblings from the Chair

Dear All,

On behalf of the Cambridge & District Riding Club committee, I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year.

As I write to you, we are now well and truly into our 3rd Covid 19 lockdown. Working from home & spending just that little bit more time with our four-legged friends has become the 'norm' for many of our members, although sadly not for me I might add!

BRC recently contacted us with news of their intention to increase our insurance & affiliation fees with the suggestion that we increase our membership fees by £1 per head to cover this. As a result of this increase, we have had to make a slight increase to our annual membership fees, and these will now be £27 for the first member, and £22 for any subsequent family member.

I would like to say a big thank you to all our members for sticking with us, and renewing their subscriptions for this coming year, despite not knowing what it will hold for any of us. I would also like to say a massive 'thank you' to our committee members for adapting, thinking on their feet, filling out endless Covid assessment forms, and generally keeping going through the most challenging of years in 2020.

If it does seem that we have been overly cautious recently regarding our training sessions, then that has been due to us having to abide by regulations laid down by BHS & BRC and if we do not follow those guidelines, we will invalidate the insurance cover. However, having had a little practice last year at what we can achieve, I am sure we will cram in as much as we can do for the 2021 year.

We are going ahead with our planning for the year in the hope that we will soon be able to resume our activities.

The Area 7 Show Jumping Qualifier, which was due to be held on 16th January 2021, has unfortunately been cancelled, along with the Winter Championships - please see more information on this from BRC below. Cambridge RC would have had a total of eleven teams and some individuals, entered in the area qualifier draw.

The Area 7 Winter Dressage Qualifier has now become an on-line event. All competitors are required to perform their tests in an arena and have the test videoed. The video can then be submitted to the organisers and will be judged and marked accordingly. If you have put your name down for this competition and have any questions relating to it, please contact Serena Allery.

Further updates will be posted on our website and Facebook page when we have them.

Please keep safe

Best Wishes,

Sharron

## Dates for your diary

**\*\*CANCELLED – please see below\*\* Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2021** – Area 7 Winter Show Jumping Qualifier, The College Equestrian Centre, Keysoe. *Contact Sharron Hughes to enter.*

**\*\*NOW AN ONLINE COMPETITION\*\* Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2021** – Area 7 Winter Dressage Qualifier, Online competition. *Contact Serena Allery to enter.*

**31<sup>st</sup> March-4<sup>th</sup> April 2021** – CDRC Holiday to Courtyard Farm, Ringstead – *Contact Kerry Simson to join in – COVID regulations permitting!*

## Message from BRC

### BRC Statement 2021 Championships & Membership

The BRC Advisory Committee met on Wednesday 13 January to discuss arrangements for the 2021 championships. The committee discussed the current lockdown situation across all nations and the implications this would have on the ability of areas to run qualifying competitions, as well as the championships themselves and the potential mixing of people from across the UK. It is with great disappointment that we must announce further cancellations to our calendar of events after losing many of our competitions in 2020. All options were investigated thoroughly, and we feel we have come up with the best solutions available to us, ensuring we adhere to government guidelines and keep our staff, officials, volunteers and competitors safe. Please be aware that the calendar may be subject to further change depending on government guidelines and the evolving situation with the pandemic.

**Arena Eventing Championships 13 – 14 March:** This event will be postponed from its original date and will now take place on 22 and 23 May 2021 at Aston le Walls.

**Novice Winter Championships (Incorporating the rescheduled 2020 and 2021 Novice and Intermediate Championships) 26 – 29 March:** This event will be cancelled. All dressage classes will be run as an online competition with further details to follow in due course. The show jumping classes will not be re-arranged. We know this is disappointing but there are no viable options within the current climate.

**Intermediate Winter Championships 23 – 25 April:** This event will be cancelled. All dressage classes will be run as an online competition with further details to follow in due course. The show jumping classes will not be re-arranged. We know this is disappointing but there are no viable options within the current climate.

**Combined Training Championships 22 – 23 May:** This event will be cancelled with the rescheduled Arena Eventing Championships taking place on this date.

**Horse Trials Championships 6 – 8 August:** This event will go ahead but will run as a short format competition (no roads and tracks or steeplechase). All classes will run as one-day-events.

**National Championships, Dressage to Music Championships and Quadrille:** We are monitoring the situation closely and will issue another update that covers these events later in the spring.

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# Upcoming training

*Unfortunately, due to the latest COVID-19 lockdown, all face-to-face BRC training is cancelled. However...*

Worried about not being able to keep your eye in with COVID-19 restrictions? Fear not, because CDRC trainer Jon Bard has come up with some good pole work exercises to keep us all busy...

## Polework 1

In my opinion polework is very useful for education and physiological development of the horse.

Many people shy away from pole work as they are unsure of the correct distances for the placement of the poles. In this first episode I have given examples of a simple grid of poles for walking, trotting and cantering over with the distances for each of the gaits for an average horse of around 16 hands. Despite the simplicity of this exercise attention to detail is critical. Make sure your approach to the polls and your departure from them is straight and that your rhythm remains the same on the approach as it does on the departure.

### Common problems:

#### **My horse speeds up**

Ensure your horse is on the aids. Try incorporating single poles to start with, and work over poles in the walk until your horse is relaxed. Try making shorter approaches to your poles.

#### **My horse slows down**

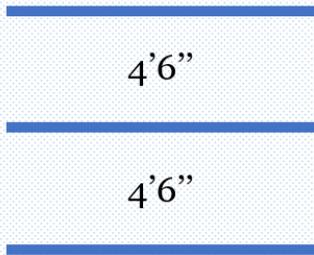
Make sure your horses on the aids. Ensure you approach the poles with sufficient impulsion for the gait you are in. Look up and ahead, and focus on where you want to go.

#### **My horse trips or kicks the poles**

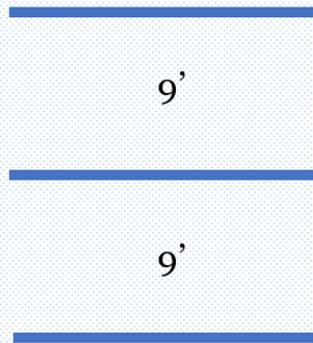
Make sure the horse is on the aids, because if this is the case, then it means that the horse is lacking impulsion. Be patient, it is harder for horses to work over poles than you might think! Focus on basics, keeping your position balanced in the saddle, look forwards and keep a soft arm. Make sure your rhythm and tempo stay even on approach and departure, and finally, don't look down at the poles!

## Basic pole work

Trot poles



Canter poles



Walk poles



99% of polework exercises will originate from these distances. In the episodes to come I will give some ideas for simple pole work exercises you can try at home.

For polework to be beneficial it is important to incorporate it regularly into your horse's schedule of work. A handy tip for working pole exercises, if a helper is unavailable, is to use flat planks or half round rails instead of poles so that if your horse knocks one it will not move.

More ideas and exercises to come! Stay safe and enjoy your horses

*Jon Bard*

Show us how you got on! Post your training videos on Facebook and be sure to tag us so we can cheer you on!

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# Top Spec Dressage to Music Championships 2020, Bury Farm Equestrian Centre

Congratulations to Marianne Fletcher, BRC Dressage to Music  
Elementary CHAMPION for 2020!



*Maz and Hollandia (Maisie) on their way to becoming Champions!*

For those from the club who know me, you know I have 2 horses – everyone's favourite, Pumpkin, who is so easy and turns up and does her best at all of the club events; and I also have Maisie... the 17.3hh, chestnut Hanoverian mare with a fiery attitude! (Not dissimilar to her mum). Now 10, I have had her for 6 years and she has tested me to the limits at every opportunity - just to get her to go down a centre line has been a challenge in the past. Many times she has waved at the judge, or put in any move she can to remove me from her back mid-test!

After coming 3rd in the Music qualifiers at Keysoe I had decided that would be the last time Maisie (Hollandia) and I danced between the boards to that floor plan and music and we would start to master a medium floor plan. So, when I got the message to say we had received a wildcard to the finals I was over the moon not just because we had got through, but it meant we got another chance to dance to that floor plan again.

The test went well but not without incident! Maisie was on her toes as always and wasn't sure about the judge sitting at a table at E so kept giving him her best "lemon face" impression. I watched the test back and thought there was some good bits, so I thought we were in the chance of a top 10 finish, which was my goal.

We weren't allowed to stay and wait for results due to pesky Covid so the results were published whilst we were still on our way home.

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When you get a call to say “I think you have won” and you are driving in pitch black, pouring rain... it is hard to concentrate!!

We had won with an amazing score of 73.75% and 7 marks clear of 2nd place. I was shocked, stunned and ecstatic!! Finally: all of that graft, grit and determination had started to pay off and we had struck gold!

After some time off, we are looking forward to working on our medium floor plan for next year and we will be hoping to represent the club in February at the Dressage qualifiers 2021.

A big thank you to everyone at the club for your support and encouragement, to Serena Allery for getting us all organised and to my very best friend Spider Desmond who came with me on the day, put up with some awful weather and groomed for me.



*Due to COVID, Maisie only got to wear her Champion's sash a few weeks later...*

## Congratulations to Evelyn Little – 2<sup>nd</sup> place Advanced Medium!



*Bindro T (Dino) and Evelyn Little – in the only dry bit of carpark left!*

2020 has definitely been a strange year for many reasons, among those was seeing the usual competition calendar thrown out, but shortly after the first lockdown was eased I and three other CDRC members managed to qualify to represent the club at the BRC Dressage to Music Championships.

The Championships were due to be held at Addington in October, however a short notice change of venue to Bury Farm kept us all on our toes, and so did the weather over the planned three-day show! Myself, Marianne Fletcher, and Helen Taylor were all due to compete on the Friday, with Harriet Froud competing in her Junior Novice DTM on the Saturday.

I arrived first on the Friday as my Advanced Medium DTM class was scheduled before the larger Elementary DTM later that afternoon, and on arrival I warned the others that they were likely to get wet, really wet. It was obvious from the start that the show was extremely well organised, with COVID-19 measures well in place, but even with this “new normal” the show felt welcoming and friendly. Maybe not quite the Championship feel we are used to, but it certainly tried its best, and didn't disappoint.

Dino was not particularly keen on the weather (he gets more opinionated the older he gets) but he warmed up well and we were both grateful for the use of the smaller indoor arenas to stay dry (ish). We went into our test really looking forward to riding through our music, inspired by

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Sherlock Holmes, but as I had only ridden an AM floorplan to this music just three times I wasn't sure quite how we would find it. As expected the trot and canter work worked out fairly well, two of our changes were a bit iffy, and I did get well ahead of my music so found myself yet again making my walk work up on the fly (not recommended). There were some good moments throughout, but most importantly we both enjoyed ourselves. The music element is both the fun and the most challenging bit of DTM.

Under the COVID-19 rules, we picked up our CD and left the show with no real idea of what our score or result was, so it was a very pleasant surprise to find out that Dino and myself had come second. I then spent the evening checking the Elementary results to see how Marianne and Helen had got on. Both ladies had a cracking day, Helen came 6<sup>th</sup> in what was a very strong class, and Marianne became the Elementary DTM Champion!! Saturday saw another top 10 placing for the club with Harriet coming 7<sup>th</sup> in her Junior Novice DTM class, so it really was a fabulous weekend for us all.

We would all like to thank the club, especially Serena for organising all our paperwork and making sure we had everything in place, and of course the venue, staff, and volunteers of BRC for hosting a great event.

## BRC Arena Eventing Qualifier, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020, The College Equestrian Centre, Keysoe

The Arena Eventing qualifier was our first ever attempt at arena eventing and our second attempt at competitive cross country. We are fairly new to the riding club, having only competed in dressage to music this year competitively, so we were just going for a great time and to support the 'pros' of CDRC. However, Romeo was super brave and flew round the whole thing for a double clear! Unfortunately, we were a little bit too quick (unheard of for us, as we're always joking about jumping in our dressage collected canter!) but still ended up 7<sup>th</sup> in the 80 class so we were so pleased with a top ten result!



*Helen Taylor and Boogie Knight (Romeo) in the arena eventing qualifier 80cm class*

CDRC hosted the British Riding Clubs Area 7 and Area 14 Arena Eventing Qualifier at Keysoe by kind Permission of Simon Bates.

We had around 272 horses/ponies and riders taking part over the weekend, and apart from a few minor tumbles, the event ran very smoothly, helped by the fact that the weather was very kind to us.

Firstly, I would like to say a massive 'thank you' to Rachel Casbon for all the many hours and days that it took her to organise this event and to ensure that everything ran to plan on the day.

Thanks to the lovely attitudes and happy competitors, the weekend was a pleasure.

We are hugely grateful to those of our members who so kindly gave up their time to help us, and also to those members from other clubs within Area 7 and Area 14 who took on the arena party

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duties and ushered competitors into and out of the arena in such a timely fashion, enabling us to get through in excess of 200 riders just before the daylight completely faded!

On behalf of CDRC I would like to say thank you to our own Mary Groombridge for keeping us all so well fed and watered on the day; to Colin Ellison for building such a lovely flowing course; Gary and Michelle Dodman and Danny (Huntingdon RC), for ensuring that our competitors were parked sensibly and safely over the two days; to Sue Casbon who spent the entire weekend fence judging the ditch and water complex; to Rebecca Robinson (Huntingdon RC) for judging on Saturday, and helping out where needed on the Sunday; Charlotte Quinn-Smith, our judge; Beth Callus for assistant judge and commentator; Claire Bond (Huntingdon RC) and Spider Desmond for running the collecting ring so smoothly; Jon Bard, who was on hand all day to warm up all 200+ competitors; Charlotte Freeman, Kelly Belham, our Official Steward for Saturday, and last but not least, a really really massive thank you to Helen McIntosh (Wittering Academy RC) who had the unenviable task of checking all 272 passports prior to the competition and acting as our Official Steward for Area 7.

It was great to see so many of our members, both junior and senior, representing the club. Well done to all our riders!



*Kira-Sian Richardson and Star in the Senior 80cm Arena Eventing qualifier*

On Sunday 18th October I headed over to Keysoe with my mare Star for our first Cambridge District Riding Club competition and first ever attempt at arena eventing. We travelled with friends who were also competing and I was pleased to see lots of familiar faces when we arrived. The venue was great with lots of facilities and the day was very well organised.

I was feeling a little apprehensive after a few hiccups in training the week prior but I needn't have worried as Star took everything in her stride and we had a lovely round with only one stop and an unlucky pole.

I thoroughly enjoyed the day and the friendly atmosphere and would most definitely like to be a part of next year's arena eventing.

## CDRC Results

### 100

Alice Ellison & Elsalinda S – ind. 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Sophie Roach & Noble Checkmate – ind. 14<sup>th</sup>

### 90

**Cambridge St. Johns – Team place 5<sup>th</sup>**  
Polly Taylor & Cassiopeia  
Samantha Bennett & Sand Dollar

Darren Francis & Fourfields Harlequin  
**Cambridge Juniors – Team place 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
Anna Braybrooke & I Should Coco – ind. 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Fionn Braybrooke & Culaherine Girl – ind. 1<sup>st</sup>

Harriet Froud & Mollys Choice – ind. 10<sup>th</sup>  
Ruby Morris & Wilful Diamond

### 80

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### **Cambridge Darwin – Team place 10<sup>th</sup>**

Jo Clarricoates & Willow  
Helen Taylor & Boogie Knight – ind. 7<sup>th</sup>  
Kira Richardson & Star  
Karen Howse & Bobs the Lad

### **Cambridge Churchill – Team place 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Claire Elbrow & Benson  
Sophie Morris & Tinkerbelle  
Georgie Morris & Widlake Sequels  
Sundance – ind. 6<sup>th</sup>  
Heather Mussett & Commanche Finale  
**Cambridge Juniors – Team place 5<sup>th</sup>**

Poppy Barber & Chi Roo – ind. 9<sup>th</sup>  
Chloe Blair & Elphin Sparks  
Katie Hughes & Heidi  
Jessica Lonnen & Eastlands Alice Springs

### **70**

### **Cambridge Clare – Team place 5<sup>th</sup>**

Carey Mussett & Drum Dara  
Mandy Jackson & Skie  
Marianne Fletcher & Pumpkin  
Michelle Cottee & Periwinkle Blue

## CDRC Camp 2020



*Camp dogs: Scout and Trevor*

During the relaxed Coronavirus restrictions in the summer, we were very lucky to be able to host our annual summer camp, this year at Blackwater Farm, Great Witchingham.

25 horses, 27 humans and several canines all made their way down to Blackwater Farm, Gt Witchingham on Friday for our annual camp. It was touch & go as to whether this year's camp was actually going to be allowed to go ahead, but with prior approval from BRC we were lucky enough to be able to run!

Campers & horses started to arrive from 3pm on Friday, and were settled into the tents, lorries and stables. Several went off hacking round the farm for a leg stretch before a fabulous dinner cooked by our camp Mums for the weekend, Sharon Mac & Mary. Pimm's was flowing and a fantastic evening was had catching up with friends who hadn't seen each other in months

Saturday morning saw the lovely Jo Stannard (Fluent Dressage) give the horses & riders a good flatwork workout, whilst Owen Moore put some combinations through their show jumping paces. After lunch saw all horses & riders out on the cross-country course, with both Owen & Petros Spiliopoulos encouraging the riders to make their horses brave as tigers! The majority stayed dry... however some did not as the heavens opened and a mini tornado whipped through camp taking a tent & a gazebo with it!!

Saturday evening we feasted on a BBQ cooked wonderfully by Sharon, Mary & Nick, and the gin started flowing and laughter could be heard for miles.

Sunday saw the final lessons of the day with Tamsin Conyers taking the show jumping and Owen teaching flatwork.



*It was lovely to see everyone again – albeit from a distance!*

Camp awards were awarded to the following:

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**Most Improved Dressage:** Spider Desmond & Charlotte Freeman

**Most Improved SJ:** Anna Stockwell & Jo Braybrooke

**Most Improved XC:** Jo Lawrence & Spider Desmond

### Special Awards

**Dressage:** Sue Casbon & Erin Braybrooke

**SJ:** Karen Tyrell & Anna Braybrooke

**XC:** Fionn Braybrooke & Chrissy Scott

Sunday afternoon camp was packed up and everyone eventually got home safely. It was lovely to see members old & young, existing & new all club together to support each other and have a fun weekend. Just what we all needed!



*Above: Lydia Wilson and Gromit making light work of the XC*

*Right: Most improved XC winners Spider Desmond and Amelia*

*Below right: Dressage special award winners Sue and Josh*

*Below: It was some of our members' first trip onto an XC course since the lockdown... far too exciting!!*



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# BRC Christmas Cracker Online Dressage Competition

## CDRC Results



*Rachel Casbon and Burj Hatta (Squirt) in their fabulous 2<sup>nd</sup> placing test!*

Well done to all our members who took part in the Christmas Cracker Online Dressage competition – especially with lockdown restrictions causing havoc for some! For a national competition we were delighted to have so many placings, including:

**Arena 5 (BRC D3)** – An amazing 2<sup>nd</sup> place for Rachel Casbon & Burj Hatta 72.2%

**Arena 4 (BRC D3)** – 7<sup>th</sup> place for Ruby Morris & Wilful Diamond 68.4%

**Arena 7 (BRC HT100Q)** – 9<sup>th</sup> Lisa Mancuso & Prince Flynn 72.37%,

10<sup>th</sup> Serena Allery & Pocket Of Silver 72.11%

## CDRC Holidays 2020



We feel lucky to have managed a few trips away this summer to Whitehall Farm Burnham Thorpe in August, Abbey Farm East Walton in July and September, and weekends at Little Lodge Farm Santon Downham and Mill Farm Wells. In fact, all our favourite haunts over the summer once lockdown was lifted!

We slept in our horseboxes and used our own WC facilities where possible. Social distancing is much easier when you can sit outside under a gazebo or on horseback during our leisurely rides!

We took the canoes to Whitehall Farm and played in the water at Burnham Overy Staithe with the dogs. Shirley spotted the illusive White Tailed Eagle at Whitehall Farm that has since been reported in the news and we came across an escapee mummy pig and her babies roaming free in the woods near Abbey Farm (we didn't squeal to the livestock manager).

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Our final weekend away was at Courtyard Farm Ringstead in October with lovely rides on the headlands around the farm and a rather wet (as usual) ride to the beach on the Saturday with a few new faces.

We have booked Courtyard Farm over Easter 31st March-4th April 2021, if Covid allows, and fingers crossed we can visit Burnham Market Horse trials to see the professionals in action for a pre-badminton run. Send me, Kerry Simson, a message if you would like to join us.



*CDRC riders on the beach on the Courtyard Farm holiday*

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