

Buckingham Riding Club February 2016

Welcome to 2016 - as I write the days are noticeably getting longer, with riding in the evenings now a possibility. The weather, however, seems to be lulling us into a false sense of security. One minute it looks as if it's drying up well, then one day's rain turns everything back into a quagmire. What impact this will have on the preparation for the early events remains to be seen.

Competitions have started. Buckingham was very successful at the points SJ at Moreton Morrell, coming 2nd and 3rd out of 17 teams, with Sarah Higgs and Lionel and my Sophie jumping double clears. We are looking forward to the qualifiers and hope we haven't peaked too soon!

At the dressage winter qualifier we had a fun day out. Only one of us in the rosettes, but our team spirit was the best! Some new combinations, some who hadn't competed for quite a while (and whose owners must have despaired of them doing so again), one lovely hunter who was probably slightly confused but still really looked the part and other team stalwarts made up our teams. We had a great time. An amusing account is on the website - a product of Jo and Jodie's drive home, I believe.

All are welcome for our teams. Don't wait to be asked - just let the relevant team manager know. It makes their life easier if they have volunteers!

At a national level there are some changes in the running of Riding Clubs, but I don't think they will impact at club level. I have been attending various meetings to find out more about the running of BRC, and Jackie Whitaker and I are hopefully soon to be official stewards, so we should be well informed. One interesting outcome of this was being shown the scoring system at the team dressage. With 35 teams, plus extra individuals, the first horse was in its arena at 8.30 and the last at 7pm! The scoring not only has to get results for each arena, but a formula is applied to get overall winners across sections and yet another formula to get team results. That the scores were out so quickly was hugely impressive - thanks in the main to a very computer literate accountant. A huge amount of voluntary help goes into each competition.

Again at national level, there are some Grassroots XC Clinics being arranged. These will be going up on the BRC (British, not Buckingham!) website as they become available, so keep an eye out for them if you are interested. There is also a BRC Riding Test and Style Jumping League. For more information go to <http://bhs.org.uk/enjoy-riding/british-riding-clubs/brc-assessments-and-training/brc-points-league>

As I suspect you all know, hat standards have been changed for this year (Google BHS hat guidelines). You do not need to have your hat tagged, or body protector checked, for rallies but we recommend, and it is in your own interest, that you wear equipment of the up to date standard.

We have another good programme of rallies, clinics and activities. I very much look forward to seeing you at them.

Sue Eeley

