

# BVRC Team News

## 2023 Qualifiers & Champs

### **Winter Novice & Intermediate Show Jumping Qualifiers, Moreton EC - Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

The Show Jumping Qualifiers at Moreton provided another excellent opportunity to meet with members of BVRC who have the same passion for show jumping. It also provided the chance to meet up with members from other Clubs. As usual despite the obvious desire to support your own Club everyone was friendly and keen that the event was fun. The weather was kind to us and stayed dry although not particularly warm. Luckily Moreton has a burger van which seemed to be doing a good trade.

The 70 cm team, which comprised of Ian Spalding, Janet Burnett, Jenny Allan and Francis Hall, were placed 9<sup>th</sup>. Jenny, Francis, and Janet all had one unlucky pole. Bamba, ridden by Ian took an exception to a white filler and had two refusals. The competition was a single round with the second half of the course against the clock.

Susie Pool with Dubai won the 90cm and Ian Spalding riding Rockhill Girl the 100CM so they have both qualified for the Championships. The 90 and the 100 both comprised of two rounds with a timed section in the second half of the second round.

This year the finals are at Onley in Rugby; a new venue for the Championship.

Ian Spalding

### **2023 BRC Arena Eventing Championships, Aston le Walls – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March**

Well, for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row, we qualified both an 80 team and a 90 team for the Arena Eventing Championships. Last year, both teams were placed plus some individual placings. Unfortunately, this year turned out rather different to say the least. With a few horse and rider problems, we ended up with ¾ of the teams competing at both heights, which does create havoc when one has to pull out but by the day before, we had a team of 3 for the 80 and a full team for the 90 but we were all religiously watching the forecast throughout Thursday, expecting the Friday classes to be cancelled. However, BRC seemed to be looking at weather predictions NOT from the Met Office, BBC or Apple, and from talking to an official on Friday morning, they seemed to think that the snow fall we were standing in, wasn't expected till the next day! Frances Hall, quite understandably, felt that driving in the dark, in



falling snow, to get to Aston le Walls for an 0836 competition time, which was unlikely to be able to occur, was not a safe or sensible option and withdrew. Ness Martin and I, having much later start times, both decided to give it a go, knowing that the snow was due to start falling around 7am and stop soon after 10am, but still half expecting the whole thing to be called off when we got there! Completely mad!!

Right on cue, the snow started falling soon after I hit the M40 but the road surface remained clear. Coming off that onto the A361, there was some slushy snow on the road but we were able to continue steadily. Turning onto the B road to Aston, the amount of snow on the road was considerably more but it was only about a mile to Washbrook Farm and I was thankful to have put winter tyres on my car. Within the site, the snow was certainly settling so everything was white. I got Dubai out for a leg-stretch and pee and after only a few metres, her feet



were balled with 2" of snow. There was NO WAY we could ride, let alone compete. However, we went to walk the course and find out what was going on – you couldn't even see the jump numbers as they were plastered with snow! Nigel Taylor had already been at work harrowing the warm-up arena, which was now the only place not white. The initial news was that all the 80 and 90 times would be put back 30 minutes (so they still hadn't found the correct forecast???) A little while later, the news was that the 90 class would be cancelled and the 80 would not start before 1200, depending on the weather – such a shame, when it was the 90 we had a full team for! Sadly I failed in my Chef d'Equipe duties as I did not manage to get hold of Ian Spalding to tell him the 90 had been cancelled, despite several unanswered calls and a voicemail, so he got as far as the M40 before finding out and returning home ☹. It really was not to be Bourne Valley's day as both Ness and I suffered satnav



problems. Unfortunately, Ness' lead to an elimination but mine only to lots of time penalties. Although I knew the course, and that they had removed the water at XC fence 3, as it was deemed too deep, having bypassed it, on the approach to fence 4, my brain said "where's fence 3? I've only jumped 2 in the SJ arena"! I circled round desperately searching for my missing fence before realising I was being a twit. Despite all that, Dubai was uncharacteristically bold and stormed round the 80 jumps, perhaps a bit too strongly as we knocked the last, joker fence down, adding an expensive 6 penalties. Hey ho, it wasn't to be but Ness and I did feel that we had earned our commemorative medals just for getting there and competing.

### **Winter Intermediate Dressage Qualifier, Crofton Manor EC – Sat 18 Mar**

We entered one team and a couple of individual tests by riders also in the team; one Novice and one Elementary. Last minute replacement, Julia Croombs and the lovely Millie achieved the best points of the team members and were individually 4<sup>th</sup>. Adding this to other scores lead to the Team being 5<sup>th</sup> out of 13.

#### **Team – 5<sup>th</sup> (14 points)**

Rider	Horse	Test	%	Place	Team Points
Susan Wheatley	Bamba's First	P18	64.62		8
Julia Croombs	Millie	N28	68.96	=4 <sup>th</sup>	2
Susie Pool	Dubai	N30	65.96	7 <sup>th</sup>	5
Catherine James	Sportsfield Dusty	E42	65.78	7 <sup>th</sup>	7

### **Individuals**

Rider	Horse	Test	%	Place
Susan Wheatley	Bamba's First	N28	62.71	
Susie Pool	Dubai	E42	64.06	10 <sup>th</sup>

### **Combined Challenge, Moreton EC – Sun 9 Apr**

Sadly, we only had 2 individuals for the Challenge Qualifier this year; Frances Hall with Bellindene Magnum in the 70 and Fran Harper with Corabbey Tiger in the 80. Even sadder, on the day, Tiger was a naughty little pony and lead Fran a merry dance around the field, not wanting to be caught, and pulled his front shoes off in the process thereby ending their day before it started. In contrast, Frances and Snoopy had a brilliant day finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> with a double clear and only 2 cross country time faults. A great result, well done!



### **Combined Training, Sparsholt – Sat 15 Apr**

It was a much better BVRC turnout for this Qualifier and we were able to field a Team plus an individual in the Prelim/75cm. Unfortunately, poor Jenny Allan with Redhill Corporal had to withdraw at short notice but as Ian Spalding with Bamba's First was riding a different Prelim test as an individual, he was able to step into the team spot in addition. A very busy day for them!! The others in the team were Melinda Veal with Harley Maxx (Prelim 2/75), Ness Martin with Helsington It's For Free (Nov 27/85) and Susie Pool with Dubai (Nov 28/85). None of us set the world on fire but Ness and Susie posted clear rounds, adding nothing to their dressage scores, and achieved individual placings, as did Melinda. With those 3 scores added together, the Team achieved 5<sup>th</sup> place.

### **Winter Intermediate Show Jumping Championships, Onley Show Ground – Sat 22 Apr**

Having won their respective classes at the Area Qualifiers in early March, Ian Spalding (Rockhill Girl) and I (Dubai) headed off on Friday 21 April to the new Championships location of Onley Showground, Rugby, to overnight before our Show Jumping Championships. Ian was driving their new lorry, his wife Susan was there as support crew, and most importantly, chef as well as Chef d'Equipe and all I had to do was look after Dubai and ride. The 90 for me was held in the morning and the 100 for Ian in the afternoon. Each competition consisted of 2 rounds, the first in a lovely outdoor arena and the 2<sup>nd</sup> indoors, which was being live streamed on Horse & Country TV. I was definitely very excited at the thought of being on TV jumping Dubai however, the less said about my efforts, the better. I had carefully walked the course on the Friday evening with Ian, then walked it again on Saturday morning on my own and made sure that I had in my head how I would ride the left turn to number 8 and the right turn to number 10. Sadly, I obviously didn't drill into my head that, as 9 was not in line with 8 across the diagonal, I needed to drift left to jump that, before the right turn to 10. Very, very, very annoyingly, I drifted right instead and went straight past fence 9. As an individual, my elimination meant that I did not get to jump the 2<sup>nd</sup> round (indoors) and that was the end of my competition. I



was very fortunate that Susan and Ian had brought their delightful Cocker Spaniel, Gypsy and I was able to go for a long walk round lovely footpaths in the sunshine and return in a better mood. The focus then turned to Ian and “Tally” and they had a much better round than me (not difficult) but a “miss” after the turn to fence 8 caused a refusal plus 3 time penalties. However, I was then able to help them warm up for their 2<sup>nd</sup> round, which with the current format follows only 30 minutes after the first. I was able to slightly make up for my faux pas by ensuring Ian got the necessary canter and kept it when riding a turn into the practice fence and they went into the indoor arena jumping well. The course there was causing a LOT of problems, especially the treble and many of us thought the distances were very long when walking the course. It definitely needed forward riding. They both did a brilliant job, achieving a clear round in the first phase but their faults in the first round meant that they did not continue with the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase jump-off.

### **Combined Training Championships, Aston le Walls – Sat 20 May**

Although Melinda Veal and Harley Maxx were not the “highest placed individual not in a winning team” at the Qualifier, I was delighted to receive an invitation to the Championships for them as a “reserve”. To my utter amazement, I later received an invitation for me and Dubai too, as a “wildcard” entry! Game on – let’s try to make up for my dismal performance at the WISJ Champs!!

Melinda had a very early start to get to Aston le Walls for her Prelim 2 followed by 75cm show jumping. With a clear round, she and Maxx pulled up 7 places to finish 8th in a very competitive Arena. I had a



much more civilised departure but it did mean that the roadworks on the A34 added another 30 minutes to the journey. However, my dear Dubai seemed to be in a fairly obliging mood and did a test that I was pretty happy with. The judge commented that “some tension spoilt it today” but I was delighted with how little there was so she was actually **forward!!** A clear round also brought us up the leaderboard and we finished 2nd in a tight section where fractions of percentage made a difference. An excellent day for BVRC, and both riders were a credit to the Club having made sure they were correctly dressed, despite not being involved in a formal prizegiving.



Susie Pool