

OFF THE HOOF



“He’s no failure. He’s not dead yet”
Gwilym Lloyd George. 1894 – 1967

I have just finished watching the Badminton Horse Trials at which Great Britain attained 2nd and 3rd place. It certainly looked hard work and one has to be dedicated to put that much hard work and commitment in. Those fences do not fall down on the cross country.

In the last edition of “Off the Hoof” I reported that Joanne Burns had qualified two horses for the Blue Chip Winter Championships. Joanne, on Mr. and Mrs. Wilson’s, *Swallow* won the class and came 4th in another event so is doing extremely well. Congratulations. Joanne is now working for the Summer Qualifiers and has seven horses to compete towards them - so more hard work.

Andrew Sater has returned to the village after working in Germany and is busy both competing as well as producing horses for both competing and selling on.

The BSJA have recognised there is a big gap in classes. To allow youngsters and young horses coming through they have introduced a new Qualifier for the Horse of the Year Show which is a 1.2 metre height. (4 feet). This gives a better chance for the one horse rider to progress and opportunities for all.

One up and coming rider is Chloe Foulston with *Billy Whizz* who seems to be going from strength to strength. They now go to the Pony Club which offers so much to encourage young riders of all disciplines. At their second rally Chloe was off the lead rein and on Sunday 4th May they went to their first show of the season at Messingham where they came 3rd in the Nursery Stakes. We will

certainly keep watching them.

We all know Foot and Mouth, Bird Flu and Blue Tongue are notifiable diseases to Defra. They have an alert service which advises subscribers of any outbreaks. Did you know that Strangles is still a notifiable disease? Well it is and when I phoned Defra they said it was not on the list as no one ever reports it! How scary is that. We had an outbreak in the village a few years ago, so if you hear of it again or get it in your yard please report it and maybe it can go on the Alert system.

In a previous issue of “Off the Hoof” the question of a special licence for towing caravans and trailers was highlighted. The latest is a “Certificate of Competence.” This applies to all persons transporting horses for reward or as part of a business or vehicles sporting a logo. I am a bit sketchy on it but for further information the Defra Website: www.defra.gov.uk or for information regarding training for the certificate www.haddontraining.co.uk/transport.



At the time of writing the weather has just started to improve but with typical Goxhill soil which has horses on; it is wet in some parts, rock hard or poached in others which makes it difficult to get on. The fertilizer is now due to go on, and at £300 a ton, it does not bode well for future expenditure on hay and grain foods.

As always, this time of year brings with it Laminitis, particularly for ponies. Sweet Itch from the bites of midges and allergies from the rape fields. With Laminetic ponies reduce the intake of grass, which does not mean starving them. Perhaps a muzzle should be considered.

Sweet Itch – keep a good fly repellent handy or turn out in a fly sheet. Keep them away from muck heaps or ponds where insect activity is at its worst and remember to remove droppings off the fields. If possible, bring in the stable and put a fly curtain up at the door.

Allergies – seek advice from the vet but it could help to ride early morning and watch the pollen count on the weather report.

Remember, this is the time we must all be vigilant in pulling out Ragwort in a bid to stop it spreading. A bright yellow daisy like flower with crinkly leaves. To be dug out and burnt.

Now for the tips of the issue. What I am finding most useful are cable ties. Apart from keeping cables together I am using them to suspend bird feeders and fat balls. Using them as a tie up point in both the stable and in the trailer. They can be extended by joining them together as a temporary repair to fencing. I have even been known to lace the back of a rubber/plastic curry comb with one to extend its life. Whenever you are tempted to use string a cable tie is neater.

I had some sharp edges in the stable, so I used a water pipe protector which I just opened up and snapped on. This can also be used as a stable guard. A length of rope or chain with a clip either end. Cover with pipe protector and put across the stable door, handy if you wish to leave the door open.

I still do not have a date for Barton Show but East Halton Show is Sunday 10th August and Goxhill Show Sunday 27th July.

Keep your news, tips and results coming in. Until the next issue...

Take care – Ride safely.

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