

WESSEX ENDURANCE NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2015

Committee Members

Chairman, Ride Equipment – Samantha Mowatt
 Vice Chair, Associate Member Sec, Branch Liason – Janthea Newman
 Treasurer – Claire Richards
 Secretary – Geraldine White
 Trophies Steward, Merchandise – Lisa Langrish
 Chef d'Equipe, Trophy Results Secretary – Carol Legg
 Health and Safety Officer – Mark Light
 Safeguarding Officer, Buddy Coordinator – Annette Hansford
 Young Riders Representative – (Required)
 BAM Coordinator – Rosemary Henderson

Wessex Progression Award – Liz Hinings
 Website – Martin Stanley
 Press Release and Marketing Officer, Newsletter Editor – Amanda Tovey



The next Wessex Newsletter will be published at the end of Feb 2016. If you have any articles or adverts you would like included please send to amandatovey@outlook.com

Chairmans Note

The 2015 season has drawn to a close and we hope you all had an enjoyable season!

There have been some great results this season within the group and we look forward to celebrating those achievements at the Wessex Awards Dinner in January 2016. Don't forget to book your places, full details can be found within the newsletter and on the Wessex website.

Provisional ride dates for next season are now available on the EGB website and the provisional dates are noted on the back page. We are hoping to run Wessex Training ride early in the New Year and once the date is confirmed, details will be on the website.

This year we will be at the Westcountry Equine Fair at Westpoint Arena, Clyst St Mary, Exeter over the weekend over the 5th/6th Dec, where we will be sharing a stand with the South West Group and promoting endurance in Wessex and the South West, if you are visiting please do drop by and see us.

Whilst the rides themselves are now over we still have one Wessex event left this year, the Branch Annual Meeting to be held at Donyatt Village Hall. Full details and the agenda are provided on the following page, it is always an excellent social event and chance to reflect on the past year and this year we are lucky to have another excellent talk from Sally Toye. I hope that you will try to attend.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the BAM....

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Wessex Branch Annual Meeting 2015



The Wessex Branch Annual Meeting will be taking place again this year at Doyatt Village Hall near Chard on Sunday the 6th Dec running from 12pm until 4pm.

A delicious ploughmans lunch will be provided and there will be talk from Sally Toye about her successful Cairngorm 100 in 2015. Those who have attended in previous years will know what an entertaining speaker Sally is after her informative talk on her Tevis Cup experiences so we will look forward to her talk on this latest ride.

The 2015 Wessex BAM will be held on Sunday 6th Dec between 12pm and 4pm at Donyatt Village Hall near Chard, TA19 0RG

In the meeting we will see the groups finances, elect committee members, and discuss the past and future season and current matters within Wessex and EGB.

Prizes for the raffle are gratefully received!

A Table Top Sale will follow the BAM for those who wish to take advantage of this opportunity - £5 per table payable on the day to our Wessex Treasurer, Claire Richards – items for sale do not need to be endurance/equine-related!

The Lunch and Talk will take place before the meeting, at 12noon at a cost of £8 per person.

The closing date for bookings is 2nd December

Please book your place by sending a cheque made payable to Wessex EGB to:

Rosemary Henderson,
Shortcombe Barn Cottage, Ridge Lane,
West Harptree, Bristol, BS40 6ES
Telephone 07894477049
Email: rospaniels@btinternet.com

Please include a short note with a telephone number or email address so that your place can be confirmed. Tickets will not be sent out. It is possible to do a bank transfer if you have no chequebook available, please contact Rosemary to book your place and she will forward you the bank details.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last meeting Proposed and seconded
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Treasurer's report (Claire Richards)
Proposed and seconded
5. Chairman's report (Samantha Mowatt)
6. Membership analysis (Janthea Newman)
7. PR & M presentation (Amanda Tovey)
6. Election of Committee – Current members due to retire; Samantha Mowatt and Claire Richards
7. Any Other Business followed by the draw

A copy of last year's minutes and the branch constitution are available to download from the Wessex website.

Could you help??

New Committee members are essential for the Wessex group to become more active, supportive and encouraging to members, non-members, ride organisers and volunteers. However much or little time you have to offer we'd love you to put your name forward to be on the Committee. We generally meet every 6-8 weeks at the Quicksilver Mail, Yeovil. Nomination forms can be found on the Website .

Wessex Annual Awards Dinner

Saturday 23rd January 2016

At The Shrubbery Hotel, Ilminster,
Somerset, TA19 9AR

Tickets £20 7pm for 7.30pm start.

Menu choices and booking form available on the website

<http://endurancegb.co.uk/wessex/Portals/11/Documents/BAM/Awards%20Dinner%20Menu%202016.pdf>

Contact annette.hansford@yahoo.com

The awards will be presented by Anthony Sargent, who many of you will know from establishing the Cerne Giant ride which he organised from 2004-2014. Anthony will also be giving an insight into his adventures at the beginning of 2015 when he purchased a horse from France and devised a route to ride her home, stopping along the way, aiming to take around a month to complete the journey. All didn't go to plan but Anthony will be enlightening of the highs and lows of the ride.

Don't forget that you need to have helped at a Wessex event to be eligible for Wessex awards. If you've help at a ride this season be sure to contact Carol Legg on carol@arabianracehorses.co.uk to confirm where you helped so that you don't miss out on awards that you may have won!

Stourton Snowdrop Pleasure Ride, Sunday 14th February 2016

Bonham Airfield, Stourton, Mere, BA12 6PX

Choice of 22km or 14km routes.

The majority of the route is in Stourhead Woods with very little roadwork, just a small amount of quiet lane at the start and finish of the ride. Ideal as a first ride for novice horses or rides who are new to endurance or equally suitable as early season training for experienced endurance combinations. Parking is on hard standing so no need to worry about getting stuck in the mud if the weather happens to be wet!

Photographer and caterers will be in attendance. Entries are strictly limited to 100 due to space at the venue, therefore entries in advance only.

Entry forms will be available to download from the Wessex website shortly.



Closing date for bookings is Weds 16th Jan 2016

Book your tickets in time and come and join us for a great evening to celebrate the 2015 season and look forward to 2016!



Here are two informative articles on the about riding on the day itself which aim to help ensure all riders have a safe and enjoyable time. We hope they help you and your fellow riders.

THINK ABOUT: PASSING (and give a thought to others!)

Endurance GB wants all its riders to have a safe and enjoyable time.

To achieve this all need to take responsibility for:

- **Clearly Identifying** known kickers (red tail ribbon), nervous horse or rider (green ribbon) or stallion (blue ribbon and bridle discs)
- **Maintaining awareness** of those around them, and offering the opportunity for safe overtaking to those riding faster.



- **Considerate overtaking.** A rider approaching from behind should be prepared to slow down and to ask 'is it OK to/may I come past?' – and when necessary, or asked, wait for a safe place to overtake.

- **Responsible overtaking.**
 - a. Only overtake if the horse in front is settled, and once past take a look behind to check all is well before putting distance between you and them.
 - b. If riding as a pair, tell the rider in front which side you will pass and that there are two horses.
 - c. If overtaking two riders obviously riding together, NEVER upset a novice by splitting the pair.
- **Annoyance.** If you aren't sure that you can maintain a faster pace or certain of where your route goes – stay behind, and even drop back a bit to give a breathing space between you and the horse in front. **Out manoeuvring.** A gate may provide the opportunity to ask to pass slower riders. HOWEVER where riders group or bunch and there are gates or other hazards please be considerate and take your turn. The leader may offer to open the gate provided someone else closes it. Where there are crowding livestock, or the gate will not open easily, or not stay open, consider whether dismounting might be a safer option.
- **Just Good Manners** (which will win friends and influence others):
 - If a rider gets off to open a gate, ensure that at least one rider waits with them until safely back on board.
 - Ensure you return the favour!

Wessex Buddies Scheme

In 2016 we plan to offer this scheme again.....

Wessex Group wants all its members to really enjoy and get the most out of their membership. We aim to send a new welcome message to all new Riding Members and Associates (with a note with some basic pointers about how endurance works). New members are encouraged to ask questions no matter how simple or silly the question may appear.

Our vision is to provide each new members with a named experienced rider (a Buddy) willing to be there for a chat on the phone or by e-mail and give guidance based on their own experience.

To make a start all Committee members have offered to act as Buddies. Their details are on the website, so if you have questions give one of us a call. We'd love other members to come forward as potential Buddies – just email annette.hansford@yahoo.com to put your names/details on the Buddy List. Let's make 2016 a year where all 'newbies' have a fantastic time and all renew/upgrade in 2017.....

THINK ABOUT: YOUR SPEED

Endurance GB has established speed parameters for **Advanced/Open, Novice and Pleasure Ride classes** to reflect the experience and fitness of horses and riders. **The minimum speed/maximum riding time allows Ride Organisers to know when all riders should be safely back, and then stewards can be 'stood down'.**

- **Trot is the all-purpose endurance pace.** New riders need to develop a **series of gears in trot** so that rather than slowing to a walk, a slow trot can be used to 'catch breath'.
- A free trot (**'in your stride'**) will cover the kms at minimum effort both on the level and uphill and then, as balance and experience develops, downhill too.
- A **controlled canter** may be appropriate when your route is clear, but you should NEVER gallop.
- For safety's sake, and EGBs reputation, when you meet walkers, bikers and other riders:
 - a. As you approach make them aware of your presence
 - b. Ask if "OK to pass"
 - c. **Pass at walk**
 - d. Look back to ensure horse/rider are OK.
- **Ride Organisers plan routes and start times** to keep the fast and experienced apart from the novice and nervous. But remember, this will only work if you keep to your time - otherwise you may get tangled up with faster riders on their second loops.
- Fit and experienced endurance horses/riders want to work consistently 'in their stride' and will quite rightly want to overtake when safe to do so.

Studying your map beforehand, to identify slower sections and calculate times to check points will allow you to monitor your actual riding speed and make changes accordingly. Relying on electronic devices/apps to monitor your speed as you ride could lead to you being out of time if you have unexpected delays/slow sections of the route. Being 'ahead of plan' gives you time in hand to come in slower and hopefully achieve a lower pulse and better grade.

Discovering Endurance – Sarah Davenport

At the beginning of 2015 I really didn't have a clue about Endurance, I just thought it was riding in horrible conditions through really tough terrain, basically everything the word endurance sums up:

Endurance / ɪn 'dʒʊər(ə)n s,ɛn-, -'dʒ-, -ɔː/ **noun** 1. *The ability to endure an unpleasant or difficult process or situation without giving way.*

As I discovered, Endurance Riding, although tough sometimes, it is the most fun I've had with my pony and I love it.

Feb 2015 - Snowdrop Ride, 20km PR, Average Speed 6.1km/h

The first ride we attended was a 20km Pleasure Ride. I was at a stage with my 6 year old New Forest Pony, Blakeswater Wilfred (but known to his friends as Pickles), that I wanted to start doing something other than hacking around where we lived. This was the first fun ride on the Riding Diary website that was pretty local to me, the fact that it was run by Endurance GB worried me slightly as I knew nothing about EGB, but I wanted to do something after a miserable winter, so I roped my livery buddy Tracey in for support and off we went.



It was the first time I think either of us had experienced riding in such a beautiful setting and really let our ponies go for it!! We went hell for leather, lost our map, lost our way and had a blast. Whilst riding through the woods we met Shanti Roos who told us a little bit more about this 'Endurance Riding' as we rode and peaked our interest. We had a thoroughly enjoyable time and thought the ride was organised really well. We were now looking forward to the next one...

April 2015 – Hardys Ride, 20km PR, Average Speed 11.8km/h

This ride was a bit of a nightmare for me, right from the start Pickles decided to bolt, twice before we even got out of sight of the start point. The ride itself was again, beautiful, great scenery, we did get lost.. again. Looking back now, I know this is rider error, we just didn't prepare properly, didn't study and understand the map. We were at the top of a hill in a vast big open space and Pickles bolted again. We met Sam Mowatt at a gate when we were deciding if we had gone wrong. Sam told us that we had taken the wrong route and we needed to go back, to which Pickles needed no encouragement and proceeded to bolt back the other way. This time he really scared me, apart from having no breaks whatsoever, I couldn't even steer him. The app that I had running on my phone recorded our maximum speed of 41.9kmph, not sure that is particularly accurate, but I do remember thinking as the ground was rushing past, that if I fell



off, it was going to hurt. Thankfully he stopped and I got off as I was a bit shaken up and my legs had turned to jelly. I'd lost my bottle a little bit (ok a lot) so insisted on taking the rest of the ride at a more sedate pace. When we got back, Pickles was a pain to load and I was fed up with him, decided we were not right for each other and I promptly put him on Preloved. He was on there for a couple of days before I calmed down and loved him again.

May 2015 - Cerne Giant, 36km PR, Average Speed 11.1km/h

This ride was stunning, the weather was good and we had a fabulous time. We had a slight bolt, but nothing serious. Towards the end of the ride my lower legs and ankles were starting to hurt, then cramp started in my calf muscles as we were cantering across a field, it was soooo painful. There were 4 or 5 of us, so pulling Pickles up was not an option so I had to keep gripping and wait for the cramp pass. We were still really riding for fun and not riding with a strategy, but this is the ride where I really caught the bug as I decided to sign up and become an Associate Member.



June 2015 – Three Rivers, 33km PR, Average Speed 13.8km/h

We absolutely loved this ride. There were lots of lovely long straights that you could canter for ages and I was becoming more interested in the sport behind just riding for pleasure. It was after this ride that I bought my first stethoscope and started to read up about training your horse and getting him fit. I decided that I would upgrade to full membership as we were at the half year point and use the rest of the year as a practice for graded rides ready for the 2016 season.

June 2015 – Piddle Ride, 28km PR, Average Speed 10.4kph

This is the last Pleasure Ride we did and the first ride we did solo. It was a miserable wet day and it was a horrible ride. Pickles from the start was very wound up, he was in full bolt mode, and just wanted to catch up with any horse in the distance. My shoulder muscles ached so much from trying to hold him for the entire ride and he managed to break his standing martingale from sheer pulling. A fellow rider told me that he had blood coming out of his nostrils, which I thought initially was just from a scratch from a bush as it had been one of those 'turn him into the hedge to stop him' kind of rides, but after somebody else pointed it out, a lovely lady called Jan from the SW Group, I dismounted and was shocked that it was not from a scratch it was definitely coming from inside my naughty pony. I rode the rest of the ride as slow as I could and by the end of it I was glad it was over. When we presented at vetting to do the trot up, well, it got worse. As we trotted back towards the vet, Pickles stretched forwards, coughed and all this pink foam (akin the strawberry milkshake) just literally poured from his mouth and nose. It came in waves and was very very scary. The Vet checked him over and kept an eye on him, his heartrate was 60bpm, quite high, but not so high that he had hadn't completed the ride. We think he had really just overstressed himself, possibly burst a blood vessel in his lung resulting in the bloody nose and then had maybe choked a little. I kept Pickles in for a week following this ride and he seemed fine, so I decided to see how he did on the next ride and if he was really cut out for Endurance.



Photo courtesy of AGC Photography



July 2015 – Penpont, 33km GER, Average Speed 12km/h, Riding Time 2.44hr, Grade 2

Our first graded ride. My partner and I had decided that we really couldn't let Pickles keep bolting, so we tried a harsher bit and I have to say it has made the world of difference, no more bolting, I had regained control.

It was a very foggy morning on the moors, we could barely see from one flag to the next, the terrain was dotted with partially hidden rocks and it was one of my least favourite rides, mainly because I like winding trails and this ride was just wide open spaces. Tracey on the other hand really liked this ride, so its a preference thing. Pickles tripped during a canter and we both took a fall, but thankfully all was ok, Pickles took full advantage of his little lie down and had a snack whilst his mouth was so close to the ground, typical forester. I was elated when went to pick up our rosette, we had achieved a Grade 2, I couldn't believe it, I was so so proud of Pickles, especially after the fall and after what happened at Piddle ride. Maybe he was cut out for Endurance after all.

August 2015 – The Phoenix Ride, 34km GER, Average Speed 10.5km/h, Riding Time 3.13hr, Grade 2

This was a tough ride for the ponies, lots of steep hills but we really enjoyed it. Tracey and I entered the Phoenix Pairs Competition and only went and won. Fantastic. I think it was after this ride that I put my name forward for the Home International Team for Red Dragon, drunk on our victory I think.

August 2015 – Barbary Castle, 31km GER, Average Speed 12.9, Eliminated Lane RH

This was a lovely ride also, we really enjoyed it. Unfortunately when we presented for trot up, Pickles came in Lane on his Right Hind. There was no sign of it during the ride so I was really disappointed as he had gone really well.

I kept Pickles on box rest for the next 3 weeks, but then I received an email to say that we had been selected to be part of the Home International Squad and ride for England at the Red Dragon Festival of Endurance. So I gently brought Pickles back into work, he was sound and showed no signs of any injury, so we prepared for Wales. He was already fit, so really it was just a case of maintaining.

October 2015 – Red Dragon, 42km GER, Average Speed 12.4km/h, Riding Time 3.22hr, Grade 3

We rode on the 3rd day and after being at Red Dragon for the whole time, I think Pickles and I were both chomping at the bit to get out on course. I'd bought a Polar Heart Rate Monitor (as we were riding for our Country I needed one), well it showed that Pickles was super excited as before we even left the showground, his heart rate was 238bpm, I didn't even know if went that high. We were meant to be riding with my team mate Rachel Mullen as we were both Novice riders and wanted the support I think, but Pickles had other ideas. He just wanted to go. Every time I tried to hold him back, his heart rate shot up, so I decided I would be exhausted if I kept holding him and he would probably exhaust himself by trying to go and not being allowed and Rachel and I parted as she had a well behaved horse that was happy to pace himself, unlike my little pocket rocket.

We got to our first Crewpoint at approximately 11km in, this took us roughly 40 minutes and Pickles was still like a demon possessed. Its funny thinking about it now, but I think he gave my partner a bit of a shock, giving him a slosh as well. We didn't hang around and we were off again. It was a fantastic ride, challenging and without a doubt one of the most beautiful, it'll definitely be on my list for next year. We loved it.

Before the ride we had secured ourselves sponsorship from Equi-N-icE. When we finished the ride we quickly bandaged up Pickles' legs with their ice socks and popped on his Rapid Cooling rug. Understandably I was nervous at vetting, I would have been gutted to be vetted out again, but we did it, came in with a grade 3, I was so proud of Pickles.



Photo courtesy of David Saunders

October 2015 – New Park Rufus, 45km GER, Average Speed 12.2km/h, Riding Time 3.44hr, Grade 1

Our last ride of the season and our longest. This was also a brilliant ride but had its moments. This time we found ourselves in a bog, my clever New Forest Pony knew better and refused to go any further, promptly planted me face first into the bog. My riding buddy, Jac, thought this was hilarious until her 17hh horse suddenly sank. It was a tense couple of minutes but he managed to pull himself out and we finished the course in good time, not after I'd fallen off again due to saddle slippage whilst opening a gate. We used the Equi-N-icE products again and I believe the rug cooled him sufficiently to get his heart rate down to 44 meaning we finished the season on a high with our first Grade 1.



Photo courtesy of AGC Photography

Pickles is now taking a well earned rest for a couple of month, enjoying being part of the herd and just filing his days with grazing and in rolling mud.

Pickles was bought from the New Forest Sales at 6 months of age for just £28 and I think that it just goes to show that to enjoy this sport you don't need to have an expensive endurance horse, you just need a horse or pony that wants to and enjoys this kind of riding. Pickles on the other hand would be rubbish at Dressage, but at Endurance he is proving to be a little star. Bring on 2016 where we are planning to attempt our first 80km over two days.

And looking forward to next season.....

We are always looking to promote our sport and from next season we will be asking for our members help to promote our rides in the local areas. Posters will be sent out to members a few weeks before each ride and we will be asking where possible that you print out and display the posters in your local tack/feed shops etc. if you are within a reasonable distance of the ride venue. More details on this will be given at the BAM.

As we look to recruit new members we also look to help educate them about our sport. A great way to learn a bit more about Endurance is to help at a ride!

As you plan your 2016 season please remember that helpers are always needed, without them rides cannot run so please leave a space in your diary to help at a ride!



RIDE SCHEDULE 2016 TBC

Contact

Sun 14 th Feb	Stourton Snowdrop Pleasure Ride Bonham Airfield, Mere, Wiltshire	Claire Richards
Sat 16 th April	Hardy's Ride Loscombe Farm, Winterbourne Steepleton	Liz Ashmead
Sun 1 st May	Cerne Giant Cerne Aabbas, Dorchester, Dorset	Janthea Newman
Sat/Sun 4 th /5 th June	Three Rivers Tenantry Farm, Rockbourne, Hants	Pauline Beach
Sun 3 rd July	Piddle Ride Piddletrenthide, Dorchester, Dorset	Sam Mowatt
Sun 7 th Aug	Phoenix Ride Treborough Common, Wheddon Cross, Somerset	Jane Hudson
TBC August	Quantocks Pleasure Ride, TBC	Shanti Roos
Sun 4 th Sep	Bonham Ride Bonham Airfield, Mere, Wiltshire	Claire Richards

Dates of rides will be confirmed after the National AGM. We hope to provide a training ride at the beginning of the year and details will be posted on the website soon.

You will find the new website at www.endurancegb.co.uk/wessex

Please send any ride reports or articles for publication to Martin: martin1975@martin1975.f9.co.uk