

Senior Inter Regional Competition – Keysoe EC 22-23 May 2010

By Sarah Bostock

The 2010 Senior Inter-Regional Championship was hosted by Keysoe Equestrian Centre, Bedford on 22-23 May. This year British Dressage received over 1200 applications, which highlights the growing popularity of the event from when it first started in 2005.

The Championship is aimed at riders at all levels ranging from Prelim level to Prix St George and British Dressage encourages riders of all levels to apply to participate. Individuals who regularly compete and consistently do well at affiliated competitions are recognised as potential candidates to represent their region and form part of a team. Further information about how to be selected for this event and the Senior Home International competition are available on the British Dressage website or through your regional development officer.

This year, a total of forty teams made up eight regional teams for Central, Southern, South West, Eastern, Wales, Northern, North West and Scotland. The competition was held over two days and an average of both days scores count as the final score.

We were very fortunate this year to have received sponsorship from Bernie and Keith Robbins from Freedom Dressage who made it possible for us to receive excellent training from Jo Graham over the two days. Jo was very supportive and influential in helping out our team members gaining those extra marks.

Our Northern team did very well, ending up half way on the leader board. Individually we had some excellent results, with three top ten placing's within the Novice and Elementary classes. Lindsay Hancock came 2nd and Zoë Haigh came 7th in the Novice.

I was very please with coming 6th as an individual in the Elementary classes, especially gaining a score of 70.6% for the second day. There is something about getting a mark of 70% and above that gives you a tremendous feeling of achievement and knowing that it contributes towards the team marks makes it that extra bit more special.

All Northern team members did very well and contributed to high standard of the Championships.

I was pleasantly surprised to find how supportive and friendly all competitors were. The atmosphere was great, everyone was in high spirits and it was nice to see that all Regions were having fun, decorating their campsites and working together to support other team members. It was clear to see that everyone was there for a good time, to ride their best and do well for their team.

Socially it was a great opportunity to meet like-minded people and have fun over the two days. The weather was incredible which was fantastic for the informal hog roast dinner and BBQs; it was a great way to get to know our fellow team mates and people from other regions.

The competition itself was very well organised and very professionally run. We were lucky to have experienced judges; amongst which were list 3a judge Pam Bushel and John Robinson who provided constructive feedback on individual test performances.

At the end of the competition there was an unmounted formal prize giving where all competitors were invited back into the arena. Standing there amongst all competitors you could really appreciate the number of people that took part this year.

John Robinson presented the prizes, adding to that sense of occasion and achievement. Those who were fortunate enough to get placed received a huge round of applause from everyone.

The whole experience of taking part in this competition has given me more confidence to go out there and have a go. I would encourage anybody who is interested, to apply and enjoy the experience of being part of a team.

The training and competition experience was very valuable for me, but above all it was a tremendous amount of fun! I will definitely be applying for Home International and look forward to meeting up with my fellow team mates again.