



Ballyhale Ride 22nd June 2014

This was definitely the warmest ride yet this season and it certainly presented its challenges to both riders and crew on the testing course that is the Ballyhale Venue. First to arrive at this beautiful venue were the Open League Competitors Terri with Jehol's Song and Evelyn with Gales Hill Boffin. Both riders were quickly vetted by Sinead and headed out on their 81km ride, with Michael on hand to crew.

They quickly complete the first 34km and came in for the first of two midway vettings with both horses easily passing, hold times were 30 minutes on the day to allow for the warm weather. The decision was taken by the riders to slow down on the next loops to allow for the combination of the increasing heat of the day with the challenging course. At the second vetting again both horses passed with ease calling for vet at the same time. This meant they left for the last leg together. Both horses crossed the finish line at the same time and when it was down to heart rates the winner was declared to be Gales Hill Boffin and Evelyn, the speed on the day was 11.5kph. We expect to see great competition between these two at the next leg of this League.

Next out on course were the two Anns, Ann on Jasmine with our other Anne on Gales Hill Simmie, both riders completed 15km with ease. Anne then took over crewing Terri and Evelyn for the remainder of the day.

Two of our Novice League competitors were next out on course, Martin on Maggie and Rosemarie on Zara. Our third competitor was Susanne on Apache, who headed out slightly later. The course was set at 50km on the day and the set speed was 12kph. Martin and Rosemarie were ably crewed by Mary and Danny with daughter Natasha crewing Susanne. Riders rode the course according to their horses needs and although Susanne was the fastest on the day, Martin and Rosemarie were closer to the set speed. The winners came down to heart rates with Martin and Maggie declared the winners on the day. The final of this League will be at Stradbally on the 6th of July.

Mary Balkin with Princess was next out on course with her daughter Breffni on Murphy, both riders undertook the 17km course and competed it easily. Kim with Dancer and Melanie with Cloud 9 arrived down to see the setting and were delighted to be back out riding. Both undertook the 17km course enjoying the sights in the sunshine.

Natasha with Bronti and Eileen and Billy headed out on the first loop with Susanne, all three riders undertook the course at a swift pace with Bronti proving this wasn't his first season, we hope to see more of Natasha and Bronti out this year.

Andrea with her Intermediate Qualified mare Spice headed out for their first ride of the season. Andrea doing a trail ride in order to get back in time to allow daughter Willow to do a trial ride on her pony Charlie. Willow and Charlie did the 10km course, adding to the significant mileage they have already clocked up this year.

Madison with Molly's Sister along with Alana on Bobbi headed out to do the 23km course. After completing 26km at Timahoe the two ponies and riders easily managed the terrain in Ballyhale to complete the ride looking ready for more.

We had some new riders out in Ballyhale this year, with Mick on Murdock, Aidin on Massey, Gerry on Molly and Karl on Roslan all heading out to do the 17km loop, Gerry finished after this distance with the others riding out to do the shorter loop and finishing with 23km under their belt. All enjoyed the day and hope to continue to do some more Endurance riding.

We had a great day down in this venue which always seems to bring the sunshine. We would like to thank the O'Carroll family for organising the event, the Dempsey Family for hosting the venue in their farmyard and Coillte for allowing us to use the forestry tracks. Special thanks must also go to Sinead Murray for vetting on the day. All of these people are essential to the successful running of our events so we are grateful for all of our volunteers.