



Portlaw Ride 28th July 2013

Endurance Ireland returned to the beautiful venue of Portlaw on Sunday the 28th of July. Organiser Emily Miller hosted the event for the second year in a row, arriving down early on Sunday morning to mark the 31km course. Emer Lennon was on hand to give her some help marking the course and vet Sinead Murray arrived to perform veterinary duties on the day for what was the 4th Leg of the Endurance Ireland Novice League.

First to arrive at the venue were Teresa Moore and daughter Evelyn with their favourite mounts FEI veterans Jehol's Song and Gales Hill Boffin. Both horses passed the first veterinary check quickly and headed out on course. Both riders aiming to complete a 64km course with Emer Lennon on hand to provide crew for the pair. The first 2 loops were quickly completed with both horses flying through the vet check and off again to do another 32km. After completing the course both horses arrived back in with low heart rates and were presented to vet immediately passing with ease.

Next out on course were another two 64km competitors, Andrea and Peter O'Carroll. Peter was riding his stallion Shannis Rian who has competed at FEI level, he was accompanied by wife Andrea who was undertaking her mare Spice's first Intermediate ride. All four headed out on course after passing the first vet inspection and completed the first 2 loops in good time, returning back in to be ably crewed by Majella, Zoe and Willow. Once vetted and rested for the 20 minute hold, they headed back out on course to complete the 64km well within time and vetted quickly. Spice is now half way to her Intermediate qualification.

The 4th Leg of our highly competitive Novice League was held as well with Anne Kinsella and Mike Cuddihy the first of the competitors out on course. Anne brought Gales Hill Simmie to the event, who was undertaking his first competitive ride in a number of years which he undertook like the seasoned veteran he is. Mike Cuddihy brought Gales Hill Sabre to the event. Both riders headed out on course at a good pace enjoying the brilliant scenery and views of Waterford City and the Landmark Suspension Bridge, which can be seen from the course. The two pairs arrived back to the venue looking fresh and both passed the vet with ease. This was Mike's Novice Final and he is now Novice qualified so Congratulations to Mike.

Eamon Conway arrived with his Irish Draught gelding Francie. The pair quickly vetted and started out on the 36.8km course. Each loop was completed exactly at the set speed of 12kph and on final vet Francie passed with his usual low heart rate, giving Eamon the win on the day. Congratulations to Eamon. Our final competitor on the course was Lorcan O'Rourke on his mare Apache. Lorcan and Eamon were tied for points at the start of the ride so the pressure was on to win. Again Lorcan paced himself extremely well, coming in 2 minutes off the optimum time to place 2nd on the day.

With one Leg of this league left, the winner is still unclear with Eamon leading the pack and Lorcan and Amy Schwan tied for 2nd place. The final ride on the 25th of August is sure to be hotly contested by all.

We also had a number of trail riders on the day, with Suzanne O'Rourke bringing Bronti out to undertake a 30km trail ride, they enjoyed the day and were available to crew Lorcan on his return to the venue after his CR.

Mary-ann Balkin and Rosemarie Ryan came for the day as well. Mary-ann was back riding for the first time in over a year with Charlie while Rosemarie was on her firm favourite Zara. Both riders enjoyed the 30km course easily completing it and remarking on the favourable going and scenic views.

Claire Caplice on Ralph, Marcus McCormack on Odie and John Lidieth on Merrywood joined us for the 18km loop. All riders were new comers to Endurance Ireland and were delighted with the great tracks that are available down in Portlaw. All 3 enjoyed the day and we hope to see them at our next event on the 25th of August.

Endurance Ireland would like to thank Emily for organising another fantastic day out, Sinead Murray for her work as Vet and Emer Lennon for all her work on the day. We would also like to thank Coillte for our use of their forest and their help in organising the day. As always without our volunteers and the co-operation of Coillte these days are not possible so a huge thank you from all the riders.