



Cullenagh Ride 3rd April 2016

Well as most who intended to attend the ride will know, this ride was originally to take place in Stradbally as part of the IDHBA Laois Branch Event, however due to the excessive rain in the last few weeks the Event has been postponed until the 8th of May. So at the last minute Barry Fingleton very kindly stepped into the breach and allowed us to run the ride in Cullenagh from his premises. We are so grateful to Barry for allowing us access as otherwise we would have had to cancel our event.

Despite the constant torrent of rain our Chairperson Paddy went with organiser Anne on Saturday and marked out the course for Sunday morning, both were wondering who would brave the weather for the following day. However luck was with Endurance Ireland with Sunday dawning dry if not bright and staying that way for until we finished for the day.

First to arrive at the venue were the first of our 14 trail riders, Shaeffe Monteith and Niamh O'Huid with their mounts, Sparkie and Serkai. All four headed out on the 15km course, returning back in having had a good catch up and sight of the fantastic views.

Vickie McMullen and Liz Burbage were the first pair out on course on the day to undertake the 15km, with their mounts Duke and Maggie, the ladies enjoyed the course with the new tracks proving a big hit.

Next in was Madison Flaherty the first of our CR riders, Cullenagh was the venue for the first leg of our 40-50km League. Madison brought Bobby over to be quickly vetted by our Endurance Judge Yvonne Croke, who had kindly offered her services for the day. Madison then headed out on the 41km course.

Two local riders Lara Brennan and Regina Quinn came to Cullenagh having enjoyed the day at Wolfhill. Both ladies had a number of good canters out on course enjoying the nice dry day.

Our next CR rider to hit the venue was Patrick Byrne with mare Amber, Amber had decided to remove one of her shoes on the way over but luckily an on-site farrier was on hand and the pair soon headed out to undertake the CR course. Patrick was accompanied by Bobbie Ovington on her mare Coolhenry Hanna for his first loop.

Our first father daughter duo of the day were next to arrive with Pat Cooney and daughter Niamh bringing their enthusiastic mounts Ringo and Gypsy. Pat and Niamh did the highest distance trail ride of the day at 30km, this was no surprise to anyone who has seen them at other events with their fit and willing mounts. Niamh will be a serious contender in the Interschools category this year.

Our second father daughter pairing of the day was Mia Reynolds with her father John, John proving the true hero of the day when he accompanied Mia on foot around the 15km course. Well done to

both, Mia has been clocking up the miles this season on Molly's sister, a pony very familiar with Endurance.

Gerry and Debra were next out around our course on their mounts Topaz and Pips, they really enjoyed the new tracks at this venue and moved quickly around the 15km course.

Our last trail riders out on course on the day were Dee Morris on her pride and joy, Malachy and Catherine Bartley on the Mighty Timmy. Both ladies headed off around the course enjoying the scenery and the trails.

Last to arrive were Terri and Evelyn Moore bringing the familiar Gales Hill Sabre and Boston Rose. These ladies were the last entrants in the CR competition of the day and weren't long about heading out on course.

The course rode well with all the CR riders commenting on the favourable going, which was evident in many of them presenting to vet quickly. With all four passing the vettings all that was left was for Chairperson Paddy Miller to announce the results of the first leg of the league. The results were as follows:

1st Place Evelyn Moore on Boston Rose

2nd Place Teresa Moore on Gales Hill Sabre

3rd Place Patrick Byrne on Amber

4th Place Madison Flaherty on Bobby

Well done to all the competitors and indeed all who took part on the day. We would like to thank Barry Fingleton, the Foyle Family and William White for allowing us to use their facilities. Thanks also to Paddy Miller and Yvonne Croke for giving up their time on the day, without volunteers we wouldn't be able to run these great days.