

BATTLE & DISTRICT RIDING CLUB

British Riding Clubs NAF National Championships - Lincoln.

As you know Battle won the Area 10 Novice Team Dressage Qualifier to our great surprise and of course pleasure.

(The team of Lorraine and His Ladies Jester, Vanessa Nunn and Herbert the Horrible, Jennie Cunliffe and Dudoso VIII and Linda Westcombe and Axel Van Gertehoeve) - And Kim Boeijink and Reminisce who won the individual Elementary Qualifier.

So off we all went to Lincoln for a weekend of horsey delights! All were nervous and excited with preparations starting the week before to organise everything. It was decided that the team would take two lorries, plus assorted inflatable mattresses, tents and plenty of provisions – yes ok Wine!!

The day came- Friday morning when Di Baker (team manager) and Jennie arrived to collect me so two competing Divas didn't have to drive all that way! All went well until we tried to load Axel who got confused and slipped landing on his back on the ramp – narrowly missing Di. Fortunately despite a scrape and obviously a scare he loaded and we were on our way. Axel was, it has to be said, a bit of a liability as he also managed to hook himself up and cause a problem halfway there...anyway we got to Lincoln relatively unscathed. Apart from meeting a dreadful Battleaxe of a woman who tried to stop us from parking (Di nearly squared up to her..) we managed to park just a little way from Lorraine and Vanessa, And Kim and Henk who arrived just after us. You might think this was all that could happen, but no. Read on.

Next step was checking in the horses. A rather involved process which required leading the horses up to the secretary's tent where their passports and vaccinations were examined. To cut a long story short, one of us was spun. The horse ejected from the competition had been competing for years with no problem, and indeed was on the database so had happily competed at area to qualify. Apparently he had missed his flu vac by two days when he was a foal many years ago. But riding clubs have zero tolerance so the poor boy spent the rest of the weekend in quarantine. Oddly enough he was allowed out to be ridden all over the showground whenever...but not allowed to compete. So we were down to 3 competitors which made it tricky to say the least. We decided to have a large glass or two of wine.....and Kim's Banofi pie and went out the next day to do it anyway!!

Needless to say – we didn't win but it was a heck of an experience especially as two of us had never done it before - so it was nerve wracking. We learnt a lot! One of the things we did learn was to remember to take a wheelbarrow as we forgot and had to lug our haynets /feed/tack and everything else MILES!! We did have lots of laughs and the horses all behaved beautifully.

Lorraine also did very well as she came 4th – which believe me was an achievement.

Report by Linda Westcombe