

# INDOOR FINALS

APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup> - 3<sup>RD</sup> 2005 Keysoe, Bedfordshire.

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April at the unearthly hour of 6.45am and I am on my way over to South Molton with clothes, bedding and enough food for an army to go to Keysoe in the lorry with James and my two ponies Merlin and Griffin. At the beginning of April you have to take lots of clothes and bedding because you simply do not know what the weather is going to do! As it happened it was a glorious weekend, T-shirt weather, although one could be forgiven for thinking otherwise when we got there, as we had to be towed on site as the ground was so waterlogged. This did improve over the weekend and we quite happily drove off unaided on Sunday.

James qualified Merlin and Griffin as a tandem (or tandem pair, according to Doreen Butler our resident compere at Hand). He managed an early 30's P&P, which apparently gets you an invite to the champs (anything under 40 qualifies a tandem). Lorraine qualified Griffin in the novice pony class; I didn't qualify Merlin in the open pony class.

On leaving South Molton the first stop was junction 27 to collect Alex who was going to groom for Lorraine. Some of you will remember Alex as she used to groom for Anne Brummitt in days gone by. After that it was to the Trout's farm at Fivehead to collect Lucy, Jes Bowditch's pony. With only one pit stop for fuel, we arrived at Keysoe at 2.30pm ish.

Saturday is P&P followed immediately by the cones course, James with the tandem did his usual 30 something test and had one ball down in the cones, but with some time penalties, leaving him 4<sup>th</sup> place after these two phases. Lorraine, however didn't do her usual nice test and had one or two balls than she would of liked, Jes did a steady test and had a clear round in the cones course.

Saturday evening the teams entertained us. We had Boyd Excell, Karen Bassett and Dick Lane with the horse teams, and Georgina Frith and Sara -Jane Cook with the pony teams doing two of the obstacles and some cones thrown in for good measure.

BL\*\*\*Y H\*\*L! What a spectacle, They really went for it, hitting the boards on the way round, cones flying along with the rubber and sand from the arena surface spraying over the spectators. James of course managed to ride in the suicide seat with Karen Bassett and thoroughly enjoyed himself, but I don't think the same could be said for David Broome who rode on the back step for Karen for one round. He didn't come back in again, can't think why!

Sunday was obstacle day, Lorraine drove her four, tightly clean and quickly to bring her up to 14<sup>th</sup> overall, Jes did the same and finished 12<sup>th</sup>. James however had an argument with his leader in obstacle number 1 which sorted out his 6<sup>th</sup> place. Griffin argued in such a way that not only was valuable time lost but the little darling took a ball with him, and at that level of competition, mistakes are costly.

Also up there with us were John and Angie Horn who are always good for a tippie or two in the evenings, closely followed by Shirley May who combined business with pleasure to join us. John managed a very credible 8<sup>th</sup> place in a strong Open Horse class. Not to be left out is Brenda, Lorraine's Mum who did a sterling job of containing the Binn's boys (Lewis and Liam) while Lorraine and James were competing and helping me cork the wine bottles for our guests, well we had to make sure it was alright for the others to drink didn't we?

After a busy day, comes the packing up and the long journey home with the correct amount of stops done in reverse order on the way back. Consequently I was the last to bed at 10'clock on Monday morning, but having had a lovely weekend.

**Trisha Luxton**