

Bookham RC at The NAF BRC National Winter Show jumping Indoor Championships

It was an eventful weekend following an eventful qualification round. The team consisted of the following members:

- Jackie Stevens riding Bailina
- Jo Haslam riding Widget
- Lauren Faggetter riding The Cardinal II
- Kate Morris riding Damona (substituted Evita)

Lauren set off for Hartpury early on Friday afternoon and took 3 and 3/4 hours to get there due to traffic as it was Easter Friday. Jackie set off at a similar time and arrived after 10.15 in the evening due to a gear box giving up on the M25! After a 2 hour wait for recovery she then had to borrow a car (and a very nice one it was too) and get a new cable from Halfords to connect the power for the lights etc. They arrived to be greeted by Lauren who had been there hours and enjoyed a ride in the beautiful facilities after her rigorous check-in (it wall like arriving at the Olympics!). It was pouring with rain beyond belief so Bailina and Demona were unloaded and put in the stables promptly - albeit the isolation block as they had not had passport and vaccination checks due to arriving so late (everyone from BRC had gone home for the night). Jackie and her girls found their rooms and took their gear up then put the horses to bed at 11pm!



Palatial stabling

The day started early Saturday with the Jackie and Kate's mounts being checked in at 07.30, we then walked the course which for 80cm seemed quite challenging - and consisted of 15 elements including a wall double, combination and two sets of planks - one of which was wiggly! and some pretty floral decorations not to mention Horse and Hound cut outs), the whole course was well up to height and had some wide spreads. Kate and family (including her 4 month old Nathan and collie called Dillon) arrived as did Jo and her husband so they walked the course and we were soon ready to start with Jackie starting the day as the first round the course at 09.00. Jo's morning was eventful too as she had a panicked Widget when she had to load at I think 4.30am to make her way to the Championships, Widget was not used to being in the trailer at such an ungodly hour when it was still dark - so we were lucky she made it also.

Jackie's mare Bailina and Kate's borrowed mount Damona get very upset when separated at shows so Katherine (Jackie's daughter) rode her around the collecting ring in order to keep the peace - fortunately it worked as Jackie rode a lovely clear to start the day off on a good note. Jo was 2nd and rode another clear which was spot on then Lauren rode Sidney another clear round and finally Kate rode the loaned Damona and finished on 8 faults after having both planks down (not bad given she had only ridden her once before).



The course



Lauren and The Cardinal II

There was a lunch break which was finished short due to the day being so long, we almost missed the course walk as we were mostly in the restaurant having something to eat and wasn't aware they were closing the course walk so soon. We then all jumped the 2nd round which was a new course and the jumps went up - now they looked quite imposing! Jackie rode another super clear and picked up one time fault followed by Jo who unfortunately had the planks (on a dog leg across the middle of the school) down giving her 4 faults and then forgot the course (which left no room for error - as it was all pretty tight) so she had to circle and got another 4 faults as there was no way she could avoid crossing her tracks. She also accumulated 16 time faults which meant she finished on 24 faults which was a shame as they jumped really well. Lauren went 3rd on Sidney and had one plank down finishing on 4 faults which was lucky after dropping her right rein as she took one hand off to give Sidney a tap to get him into the combination, she then lost a stirrup and managed to pick up the knitting and get a stirrup back after the last part and before the next fence which was off a turn again. Finally Kate rode Damona round and picked up 8 faults as she had 2 down. Meanwhile Lauren and her husband Mark were with the officials as Jackie's girls had noticed time faults were given to Jackie in round 1 but they were not announced so she was unaware so sadly were finished the first round on 7 faults when we thought we had none (we were actually listed as finishing round 1 on 8 faults when it was 7 as they didn't reset the timer as Jackie crossed the line to start her approach to the first fence, the director of the event agreed this had happened and could see from video evidence that a mistake was made with timing but we agreed not to take it further as it would have reduced Jackie's 15 time faults to 7 yet Kate finished on 8 faults so it only made the 3 best scored taking up from 21 to 20 faults at the end, which wasn't quite enough to get us into the top 10 placings and wouldn't have meant we jumped off still. There were only 2 teams to finish out of 29 teams (I think - as the original number of teams was reduced due to withdrawals and problems with passports) in the 3rd round jump off so the course proved to be tough for every team.

The Bookham team all had a lovely day despite the weather (it rained on an off all day) as fortunately the warm up and competition were both indoors. It was a very long day or two days for some of us but it was well worth it as Hartpury have the most beautiful facilities on site and it was lovely to represent the club in a national Championship. The team made a great effort and all rallied round to help each other, we all hope we get to try again next year!