

AREA 10 DRESSAGE TEAMS, Maresfield

Sarah Baldwin

Senior Open Team:

Sarah Roth	Teak	1 st
Sarah Baldwin	Rock Buster	2 nd
Clare Walton-Cole	Hollywood Girl	4 th
Michael Smith	Grand Merlot	1 st

Overall team placing = 3rd

Senior Novice Team

Fiona Brenninkmeijer	Bluewood Uralia	4 th
Jo Rizai	Amazing Grace	8 th
Val Worthington	Rory	13 th
Nicky Saint	Smartie	12 th

Overall team placing = 11th

Senior Individual Medium

Michael Smith	Grand Merlot	1 st
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Senior Elementary Dressage To Music

Sarah Roth	Teak	2 nd
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Senior Individual Riding Test

Sarah Baldwin	Rock Buster	3 rd
Clare Walton-Cole	Hollywood Girl	13 th

Each team member also rode a riding test 6 and all did a creditable job. Riding tests are judged very differently to dressage tests and I think maybe a practice for members next year might be a good idea. RT's are judged on how the rider rides the horse not how the horse performs ie if the horse is not going well and the rider is seen to be changing it then the marks will be given. Marks are also given for the rider's position of body, hands, legs etc and these make up the collectives. A tip for anyone – when I went in the arena I imagined I was Anky Van Grunsven and it worked!

Thank you to the following for being RVRC helpers for the day: to Barbie Marceau, Lesley Reed, Veryan Pollard, Caroline Turner and Jane Holbrook. On behalf of everyone I would like to say a HUGE thank you to Tina Ricketts-Smith for the lovely buffet lunch she prepared for us – that Eton Mess was amazing. I would like to personally thank the entire senior and junior teams for their outstanding turnout. A special mention to Nicky Saint for managing to plait Smartie's mane which is about 5 inches thick!

The first disaster to hit the teams was when Michael telephoned me the week before the competition to tell me he had had a fall and broken a rib but that he would dose himself up on painkillers and ride for the team – and he did, how marvellous of him not to let his team down.

The second near disaster was on the day when Michael put Merlot's double bridle on to find that the hook for the curb chain had vanished! After frantic efforts made by Fiona, Tina and the tack shop man we finally managed to secure the chain with an elastic band. I couldn't find anything in the rule book to specifically disallow this so we just prayed no-one noticed – and they didn't.

I think you will all agree that the senior teams/individuals all did really well. Our newer team members were also a credit to the Club and managing without a chef d'equipe too.

On a very sad note, Sarah Roth and Teak rode a fabulous novice test in the team however, due to the fact she was wearing a hat without a strap (against RC rules), she was eliminated. The trouble with riding clubs is they have this 'rules are rules' policy and there is no budging them. The rule states that you will be eliminated just for riding on the showground in a strapless hat. Sarah had been through the tack check and no-one said anything, although the tack checkers were obsessed with measuring the length of everyone's whip! I was riding at the same time so I didn't notice. Sadly we didn't have a chef d'equipe on the day as volunteers are not forthcoming in RVRC and it would have needed to be someone who had a good understanding of the rules and all those members were at Jo Collings wedding! The worst thing was they let Sarah ride her test and then pounced on her as she came out of the arena. How pointless, when she was at no competitive advantage. I feel very strongly that the tack

checkers should have to take more responsibility but the rules state that it is each rider's responsibility. This does beg the question 'what is the point of tack checkers at all'. If I were not currently tied up with trying to get the flu certificate rule changed I would take this rule up on Sarah's behalf. I have written to BRC and suggested that they design a tack checkers check list sheet (that takes some saying!) to include all items which need checking as standard, as clearly that status was obviously not on the tack checkers sheet.

It is fairly obvious that in order to have teams we need to have a chef d'equipe (non-riding). If anyone would like to volunteer for this and/or the team manager's position please contact any committee member.

Now on to more positive stuff.

Junior Dressage Team & Riding Test Team

		<u>D</u>	<u>RT</u>
Rebecca Manford	Calipo	1 st	3 rd
Katie Manford	Brophy	1 st	9 th
William Furlong	Fancy That	3 rd	2 nd
Meg Parr	Golden Guinea	2 nd	15 th

Overall dressage team placing 1st
Overall riding test team placing 1st

**A junior whitewash and they are off to Lincoln in
Sept!**