



Ashfields Spring Event – 19-20 April

“We’ll cap the entries at 70,” was said with a wry smile at our committee meeting. Mike and I went off for the weekend to the club’s Blandings event while almost 20 extra entries came in online or in the post by Monday morning, taking the total to over 80... We were going to have a busy weekend. (According to the results, 165 people drove in affiliated events that weekend, 19-20 April, 58 at the Midlands Group’s novice qualifier at Thoresby Park in Yorkshire and 27 at Eglinton in Scotland. Only 158 competed in the nationals the whole season last year...)

Ashfields saw ten teams, 16 pairs, three tandems and competitors varying in age from 15 to seventy-plus made up 11 classes including the IPEC para-equestrian drivers, for whom this was a selection event for their world championships at Greven in late June. Some drivers were local and some were planning to go to Brighton, the first national driving trials event, in early May.

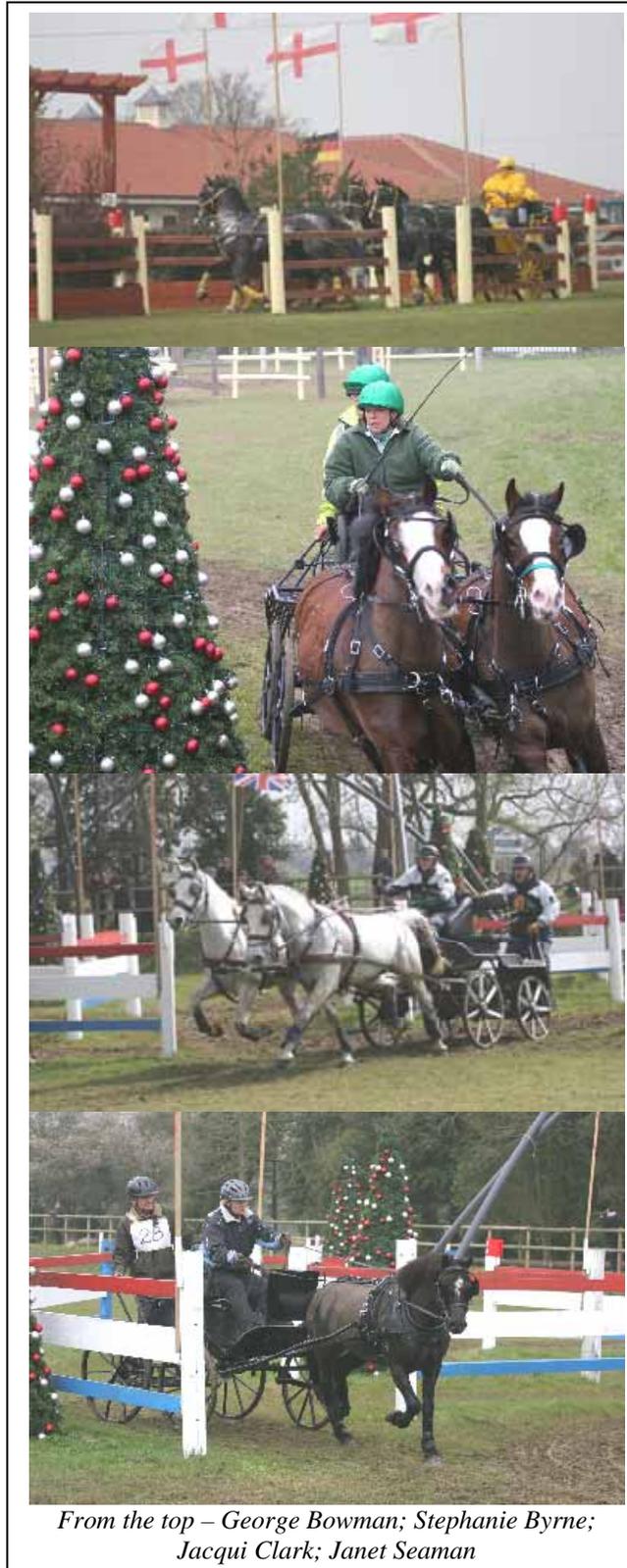
Our judges were heroic: they judged ten different dressage tests in two arenas – five different tests in open pony and also in open horse classes – including the fearsome new tests, FEI 9 and 10 – from 9 to 5 pm. True to the club event format, after their dressage everyone drove the pleasingly uncomplicated cones course, christening the brand new cones with their big yellow balls and easy-

to-see(?) red and white square numbers. These numbers impressed Mark Ingham, course builder, by their stability in the (bitingly cold) wind. The horse teams had a separate cones course to avoid any mid-day width change and potential hold-ups. The chilly spring breeze kept

people on the move and led to the worst feedback: “Cold!”.

Venue host Terry Chambers’ fund-raising spring ball took place on Saturday night in a magnificent marquee, graced by Essex’s finest and including many of our generous sponsors. Glamorous posh frocks and tuxedos transformed those competitors who attended among the 500 guests, some staying until the early hours without apparent ill effect the next day. Nearly £10,000 was raised for local charity, Little Haven Children’s Hospice.

Seven roomy obstacles were flagged in easy routes by Wilf Bowman-Ripley, much to the delight of drivers in all classes. Wilf’s hard work over the winter resulted in a striking new mound obstacle, painted an elegant cream, sponsored by Sealmaster, number three, and improved water access through the wood in number two. Obstacle seven was a convincingly solid-looking arrangement of coloured plastic pipes. Mark’s ploy of loading it with 14 knockdowns prevented the more enthusiastic and larger turnouts from dismantling it although they took their toll of obstacle four’s more exposed posts. The rain on Saturday night made the going a bit greasy round the obstacles for the first part of the morning but by lunchtime it was more forgiving. The full marathon was 4.75k in section A followed by 900m walk, a ten-minute halt and about 7.5k for section E, with seven obstacles.



From the top – George Bowman; Stephanie Byrne; Jacqui Clark; Janet Seaman

Janet Seaman of Beccles, perennial star of East Anglian open pony class with 13-hand home-trained Storm, led a 16-strong class after dressage and cones and ended third behind national driver and former novice national champion Sara Simmons and current intermediate national champion Tracey Fletcher (who drove twice), who were first and second in the marathon. Sharon Redfern was fourth, beating Fiona Powell into fifth place, after whom came Cathy Willis followed by former national open pony champion Emma Burge with her new dapple grey. Tim Bailey came ninth and the icon of East Anglia, Jenifer Barker-Simson, was tenth. Tracey Fletcher's second pony would have been third had she not been hors concours. Another East Anglian, Roger Driver, who'd been pleased with pony Frosty, had to retire after his wife and groom Jackie hurt herself on the marathon before reaching the obstacles.

Frinton-based fifteen-year-old Charlotte Snow, completing her first three-section marathon with versatile 12-hand Bureside Ringo, three-times East Anglia's indoor driving champions, was a worthy victor in the pre-novice class. She took the lead from the start by nearly 20 penalties in the dressage, following that with her usual double-clear cones round. Indoor driving hasn't done her any harm... Clare Iveagh chased hard with a good marathon to end second and Zoe Napier was delighted with her third place. David Crosby, in his second event, was fourth. Richard Beckwith competed only in the dressage and proved his outing was worthwhile by coming second.

Naomi Harbach led from the front among the novice pony drivers with the best single pony dressage score, followed by an enthusiastic Linda Hill, up from fourth, and consistent Tim Bradford and Ginny White with



From the top: Chris Smith; Frances Collings of Jack-in-a-box; Stephanie Byrne; Heather Clark, one of the para-equestrian contenders; Jenifer Barker-Simson;

Deirdre Luff close behind. Speedy Amy Last lost her groom in spectacular fashion on the Sealmaster mound but they were re-united after she was given the all-clear by the paramedic and finished in sixth place. Harriet Bradford, another of our junior and indoor drivers, came seventh with Katie Bell and Riki Hyde-Chambers following, both hors concours, completing only section E on the marathon.

Jade Jeffery, granddaughter of Jacqui Clarke, was the only driver to complete the event in novice horse class although Lyn Price, returning to driving trials after 25 years(!) was very pleased with her dressage and cones.

Pam Neill, open horse, performed consistently and won by nearly ten penalties over Frances Collings of Jack-in-a-box, who came up from tenth after dressage with a double-clear cones round and very speedy marathon. Third was Jackie Ellis, but only five penalties separated fourth to eighth place: Karen Everett, Lucy McGill, locals Chris Smith and Jill Wood, and Vicky Irwin. Derrick Mayes, Joanna Broadbent – with a new horse – and Malcolm Ladell finished safely. Unfortunately John Keeler got the big E for missing a compulsory flag, as did EACDG's chairman

David Taylor's horse tandem.

The mixed class of tandems and pony teams had some fall-out with five out of the seven getting eliminated or going hors concours. Alan Clarke's team flowed sweetly

round the obstacles chased by Gary Power's four, however Alan was eliminated in the cones – but still picked up the prize for the fastest time for his class's obstacle. Sue Mayes' pony tandem won at the end and she looked very pleased to receive the prize money (husband Derrick is the retiring treasurer of the BHDTA, our governing body).

Dressage judges were unimpressed with the horse pairs' performance, only John Pickford gaining under 70 penalties. Neither did the cones course suit them but Margi Hawkins steamed round the obstacles in fine form to get one of the best scores. The top five in the eight-strong class were within 30 seconds of each other on the marathon. John won with Margi second and Mark Broadbent of Fenix Carriages third, Anthony Cooper backstepping. Terry Selway was fourth with Nick Palmer fifth and David Matthews junior sixth thanks to a quantity of penalties on the sections. Local newcomer Martin Wilson made a quietly gratifying debut with his Gelderlanders in their first competition.

Rachel Stevens, more usually seen behind a pony pair – our current national champion – took a keen interest in her flock of seven para-equestrian drivers and followed them round the course on her quad bike. She says she's having a more relaxing year of training but I see no sign of it. Judi Ralls, driving Rachel's Flashman, won the para-equestrian class with local driver Lindsey Tyas's horse second and Terry



From the top: Sara Simmons; Karen Bassett; Margi Hawkins; Tabitha King; Pippa Bassett

Kirby third, Margaret Lupton fourth. Brenda Hodgson drove a high-spirited pony pair and came a creditable fifth. It seems that there won't be a pairs class at the championships, however, which is a huge disappointment. Amanda Nisbet proved that Brenda's newer pony knows its job at the indoor finals in March and the lively ponies look like an exciting drive. Local Elaine Schaschke was sixth with Yorkshire's Heather Clark a mere 0.26 penalties behind having been blessed by too many falling cones.

John Attenborough opened the new Ashfields Carriage Equipment shop on Saturday, which attracted a lot of interest, and commented all day on Sunday from the centre of the main obstacle field. Spectators crowded behind the rails on the enlarged viewing mound for exciting close-ups.

The horse team drivers' attempts to knock George Bowman off his perch came to nothing. He began with a 12-penalty lead in dressage and won the marathon convincingly, ending on 135.77. Sisters Karen and Pippa Bassett were less than two penalties apart after dressage and cones, but Karen built on this with a marginally faster marathon to come second, 143.73, to Pippa's 147.71. Dick Lane's cones let him down as his decent dressage and second place in the marathon had kept him in contention. Peter Bennett's eighth position after dressage was mitigated by a good marathon and he pulled up to fifth. Cones also took Georgina Frith down the placings and her understandably careful marathon left her in sixth place followed by George Bowman IV and Robert Bowman.

Anna Grayston stitched up the pony pairs class from the first with the best dressage of

the day, 37.97, but blonde bombshell Jo Rennison came back from fourth place after dressage with a best-in-class cones score, 3.59, and a steaming marathon to gain the blue rosette. Local drivers: junior Tabitha King came a creditable third with a consistent performance in all phases and, although Stephanie Byrne was cooking on gas in the obstacles, her unusually generous cones score left her in fourth. Rita McGregor made a welcome return to the competition scene after a long break to come fifth, followed by scurry driver Chris Orchard – who cantered for most of section A, she said – and Gill Anslow.

There was a prize-giving at 5:30 with welcome cash prizes from generous local sponsors for the first three in each class and the fastest in designated obstacles. Beautiful trophies presented in memory of Michelle Chambers for the best single pony dressage and best horse team dressage were won by Naomi Harbach and George Bowman. Terry Chambers enjoyed the prize-giving as much as the recipients and had his photograph taken with everyone.

Without our officials and volunteers we'd have had no event: they rose to every challenge and came up smiling. Judges Sarah Garnett, Mike Cooper, Caroline Musker, Fiona Bonney, Pauline Scott and Andrew Counsell, who was President of the Jury, and their writers, presentation judge Philip Shackleton and writer Heidi Sharp of Sealmaster, Mark Ingham, Wilf Bowman-Ripley and Zoe Morgan, TD and Safety Officer, Jean Lane and Nigel Collins, volunteer organisers Hilary Ray and Jo Meech, scheduler and scorer Mike Watts with assistants Janet Gould and Georgia Ray. Thank you to everyone on the obstacles and sections for your contribution to the event's success. As one of our northernmost drivers reported, "It was worth the five-hour drive".

There were 15 cones rounds under time and nine double-clears, two of which were in pre-novice class, one from Charlotte Snow and the other from John Brooks.

This event was the largest the East Anglian group has seen in the last decade and proves that driving trials thrives at all levels.

p.s. Given that 11 horse turnouts and five pony turnouts had penalties on the walk section, does this feed the recent controversy on the discussion forum regarding walk speed for the horses? Five of the slow horses were multiples. See the discussion forum on www.eacdgc.co.uk

Full results are available on www.eacdgc.co.uk **Results**
 Prenovice: 1 Charlotte Snow 154.51, 2 Clare Iveagh 169.18, 3 Zoe Napier 217.69, 4 David Crosby 235.76, E John Brooks 193.89, HC Richard Beckwith Novice Pony: 1 Naomi Harbach 124.50, 2 Linda Hill 137.72, 3 Tim Bradford 147.19, 4 Ginny White 150.47, 5 Deirdre Luff 155.05, 6 Amy Last 167.30, 7 Harriet Bradford 182.22, HC Katie Bell 137.43, HC Riki Hyde-Chambers Novice Horse: 1 Jade Jeffery 155.46, HC Lyn Price Open Pony: 1 Sara Simmons 116.35, 2 Tracey Fletcher 125.45, 3 Janet Seaman 136.75, 4 Sharon Redfern 138.72, 5 Fiona Powell 141.77, 6 Cathy Willis 147.85, 7 Emma Burge 151.28, 8 Tim Bailey 162.69, 9 Jenifer Barker-Simson 177.88, HC Tracey Fletcher hc 135.36, wd Roger Driver Open Horse: 1 Pam Neill 124.09, 2 Frances Collings 133.54, 3 Jackie Ellis 136.11, 4 Karen Everett 136.61, 5 Lucy McGill 138.74, 6 Chris



From the top: Mark Ingham, course builder, and Wilf Bowman-Ripley; Jane Carter and fellow stewards time and observe the competitors.

Smith 139.28, 7 Jill Wood 139.89, 8 Vicky Irwin 141.41, 9 Derrick Mayes 149.43, 10 Joanna Broadbent 162.83, 11 Malcolm Ladell 189.14, E John Keeler, hc Robin Hyde-Chambers 171.46, HC Claire Taylor, HC Goldie Francis, wd Sonny Hillier Tandems/Pony Teams: 1 Sue Mayes 164.67, 2 Gary Power 222.40, E David Taylor, E Alan Clarke, hc Mark Bell 183.81 Pony Pair: 1 Anna Grayston 124.28, 2 Jo Rennison 133.81, 3 Tabitha King 148.87, 4 Stephanie Byrne 154.79, 5 Rita McGregor 170.60, 6 Chris Orchard 173.39, 7 Gill Anslow 201.20 Horse Teams: 1 George Bowman 135.77, 2 Karen Bassett 143.73, 3 Pippa Bassett 147.71, 4 Dick Lane 154.01, 5 Peter Bennett 163.00, 6 Georgina Frith 172.87, 7 George Bowman iv 177.72, 8 Robert Bowman 186.16 Horse Pair: 1 John Pickford 149.14, 2 Margi Hawkins 162.76, 3 Mark Broadbent 164.98, 4 Terry Selway 172.04, 5 Nick Palmer 177.88, 6 David Matthews 187.58, 7 Martin Wilson 207.41, E Jacqui Clarke, wd Mark Lee IPEC Selection: 1 Judi Ralls 135.24, 2 Lindsey Tyas 147.35, 3 Terry Kirby 149.07, 4 Margaret Lupton 159.42, 5 Brenda Hodgson 196.82, 6 Elaine Schaschke 208.00, 7 Heather Clark 208.26

Dressage diagrams query

Please note that the diagrams for the dressage tests, which are available free from the BHDTA website, www.horsedrivingtrials.co.uk, and also from www.eacdgc.co.uk, are *not* the official test. The diagrams are for guidance only and the exact movements of the test should be taken from the written test.

All the dressage tests we plan to use this season are in the club yearbook. (If you have not received yours, please call Fiona 01473 735732.)

Why not get yourself qualified to compete in our National Novice Qualifier class at Blandings, 2-3 August? You might qualify for the national championships at Windsor. Give it a go!



If you have to leave before the prize-giving, please leave a large letter sae with the event secretary for any rosettes you might have won.

Volunteers wanted, Euston – 31

May-1 June and Sandringham – 28-29 June!

Our wonderful volunteers delivered a superb event for 80 competitors at Ashfields – including drivers from all over the country, some reigning and former national champions so the quality of competition was very high. Many non-driving friends and family turned out and helped, too. We always welcome an extra pair of hands and eyes. Can you help? A morning or an afternoon on Saturday or Sunday would help to share the stewarding work around, and you can enjoy close-up spectating and learn a lot – as well as have some fun – being one of the team. Can you help?

Please call Hilary Ray 01206 251339 and leave your contact number if you'd like to join the volunteers.

Rent-a-groom? Buddies wanted?

Groom and driver matching service!

If you would like to go on the back of someone's turnout at an event in any phase or if you are a driver without a groom, please contact Fiona as soon as you can. Please note that we cannot guarantee this service!

We are also looking for experienced drivers to "buddy" or help newcomers competing at events: please call or email Fiona if you'd like to know more or join in.

Qualification/competence forms...

Please note that, if you are a novice or pre-novice class driver and you wish to drive a multiple turnout at an EACDG competition without going through the traditional route of achieving open driver status, we ask you to complete three events with a single, under observation, before entering an event with your pair or tandem. You are very welcome to bring your multiple to a training event, of course.

We do wish to encourage everyone, however, three events are the *minimum* requirement and we feel that it's a reasonable request. Once you are in open classes, you can't go back to novice. We strongly recommend that, when you compete your multiple turnout, you have competition-hardened grooms who are very experienced with multiples on the back, especially for the marathon, for the first few outings.

Your committee debated long and hard on this issue and we feel it's the fairest to everyone; the competitors who wish to compete with a multiple, the other competitors and everyone else – including the horses – whose safety and welfare must be considered. However competent a driver you are and however well-mannered your horses are at home, at competitions there's a lot more pressure. This scheme reflects the BHDTA's card for novice qualifier certification – and you can get your

NQ form signed (when there's a three-section marathon) at the same time if you wish.

Print a driver qualification card from our website or ask for one before an event. It's then your responsibility to tell us when you want it signed, to keep it safe and to keep the results of the events for which it's been signed. Because we need to brief officials whom to watch, we cannot sign it in retrospect: we must know who's being observed before the event starts. Please leave your card with a suitable sae because we cannot guarantee to get it signed before you leave at the end of an event.

We value your thoughts on this and other issues. If you have any comments or queries, please ask your committee, preferably

before an event or at an event when we are not just about to compete. We'll always find time for a chat. Remember that the course builder, technical delegate and safety officer are very busy doing their jobs at an event and administrative questions should be addressed to your committee members.



Forthcoming Events 2008

Date	Venue	(closing date)
16-18 May	Ashfields Crinkly Camp	full
31 May-1 June	Euston two-day event	(Friday, 16 May)
20-21 June	Blandings Farm training camp	
22 June	Blandings Farm inside-out event	(13 June)
28-29 June	Sandringham Club two-day event	(13 June)
2-3 August	Blandings Farm two-day event with novice qualifier classes	(18 July)
12-14 August	Ashfields Junior Camp	
29-31 August	Ashfields Crinkly Camp	
20-21 September	Ashfields two-day event & club championships	(5 September)
12 October	Blandings Farm inside-out event	(26 Sept)
tb November	AGM, Ashfields Clubhouse	

Crinkly Camp – 29-31 August

The first Ashfields 2008 "training camp for grown-ups" is full to bursting and there are still places on the second. The cost is £250 for one driver (club member) and one groom. If you wish to come on the August camp, please enter and pay online, or send in your form (from the yearbook or website) and cheque, payable to EACDG Ltd. to Mike Watts, Ivy Cottage, Boot Street, Great Bealings, Woodbridge, IP13 6PB.

If you come by yourself, without a groom, the cost is £212.50 (EACDG members). We regret that we cannot guarantee a place for you until we have received payment: "first come, first served". If you wish to hire a stable at Ashfields, please contact Zoe now.

Trainers will include Wilf Bowman-Ripley.

Photos in this newsletter thanks to Mike Watts and Fiona Powell. See lots more on Mike's website, www.mikewatts.com, where photos can be downloaded free.



Strange things seen...

Not UFOs, but strange things have been seen on the marathon... Here are some reminders:

The groom must be on the carriage at all times on the sections while the carriage is moving. If your harness needs adjusting or there's another reason for the groom dismounting, the carriage must be stationary – and it must not move until the groom is safely back on the carriage.

Section A of the marathon can be done at any pace – walk, trot or canter. Section B or D is called the walk to coincide with the requirement to walk for the whole of the section. If your pony jogs or trots for more than five seconds, you will be penalised. You can finish early on the walk but you get time penalties if you are late.

Your groom must stay on the carriage when it is moving and not run along behind!

Section E of the marathon is any pace until the last 500m (or a sign to indicate the last part of the route, at the TD's discretion). You may only walk or trot after this sign – and you may not halt or deviate from the route in the last 500m or you will incur penalties.

You are encouraged to read the rules! (*Ideal if you can't sleep at night...*)

Northernplan.com, photographers Nic and Libby Castle were sadly unable to come to Ashfields but you can see photos from our event on their site and buy them from Photobox.

Ginny White won the bottle of fizzy wine in the feedback form prize draw at Ashfields.



EACDG winners away from home

19-20 April, MDTG Thoresby Park: East Anglian drivers Sue Hargreaves, Janice Parker and Diana Irwin competed in the Midlands Group's event's national novice qualifier class instead of Ashfields. Diana won, Sue came second and Janice was fifth. Because there were seven in the class, Diana and Sue have both qualified for the National Championships. Caronne Daft drove her pony pair to second place.

2-4 May, Brighton, Stanmer Park: Tracey Fletcher romped home in the open pony class. Stephanie Byrne did a blistering marathon but was let down by her cones score and came ninth. Sue Botley, Jacqui Clarke and Terry Selway took their horse pairs to Brighton and brought home third, fourth and fifth ribbons. David Taylor won the horse tandem class. Chris Smith's open horse Romeo was fourth. Alan Clarke won the pony four-in-hand class. Wendy Wyatt was third in Club novice pony class; Tim Bradford was sixth. Stephanie Richards was third in open pony. The club classes had a shortened section A on the marathon on Saturday and drove six of the seven obstacles which were mostly open and flowing.



Brighton - from top: Alan Clarke; Tim Bradford; David Taylor; Wendy Wyatt

Blandings Training Camp – 20 & 21 June

There are still places available: two sessions each day. You can come for one or two days – and get some useful practice – general flatwork, dressage, cones and obstacles. Please call for details: 01473 735732

Score! (1)

Who's the person most interested in your scores? You!

Do you know how your score is calculated? Do you always add up your dressage scores? Do you remember how many cones you cleared (or didn't)? Were you fast or slow? On the marathon, were you late on the walk or on sections A or E?

Our stewards are wonderful people who turn out in all weathers to help us to run our events, but sometimes we don't get the whole story on the score sheets. You can help by knowing the (latest) rules and checking your times and scores as soon as they are published – and by making sure that the correct times, including hold-ups, are written down on your “green cards” at the start and ends of the marathon sections. We are always happy to answer your queries about scoring but asking them sooner is definitely better.

You can try the stewarding experience yourself: call Hilary. I guarantee you will appreciate the volunteers' hard work even more than you do already. *Thank you!*

Your committee 2008

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Volunteer Co-ordinators	Hilary Ray 01206 251339 or 07795 148199 Jo Meech 01376 325158

No responsibility is taken by the EACDG Ltd or by any individual for any item or animal advertised in this newsletter or on the website.

Wanted Palomino Section A gelding 11.2 to 12hh. Age 6 years plus. Preferably broken to drive (single, pair and tandem). Would consider breaking experienced ridden pony. Contact Boyd Coote 01473 736776 evenings.

Small pony news

There are many drivers of small ponies who'd like to compete in EACDG events and who find the whole marathon too long, despite their ponies being fit, and who'd be more comfortable with more generous time allowances for little legs.

We will be experimenting by offering an optional small pony class starting with the Euston event. You'll drive the dressage test according to your normal class and do the cones course the same as everyone else but with more time allowed. You'll drive section E only (the part of the marathon with the obstacles in it) with a longer time allowance than the pony classes.

We set the height limit at 11.2 hands and under and the class is optional and open to singles and multiples. Please note that your ponies must still be fit enough to enjoy their experience, of course. Please write on your entry form if you'd like to take part in this class – with the opportunity to win your own class rosettes.

If you would like to send a letter, photo, advert or article for publication in the newsletter, please get in touch – Fiona Powell, 01473 735732, fiona@eacdg.co.uk

For sale

Black and white cob colt, 3 years, quiet, has just been broken to drive but very green. Plenty of feather. 14.2 hands. £1400 ono. Also **black and white cob colt**, 2 years, halter broken, quite to handle, good bone and feather, should make 14.2 hands. Very handsome. 01205 319171/07866 845877 (Boston, Lincs) Will geld at cost. **Pony harness**, Webster (black leather and Zilco-type), easy to care for, very nice condition. Complete set including 4.5" bit. Suit 12.2 hh. One careful owner from new two years ago when it cost over £500. £369 ono. Call Fiona Powell (owner is on holiday) 01473 735732

Sandringham Club event – 28-29 June

We are aiming to make this a much better event for club competitors by providing:

- a separate club event stable field area to benefit those arriving later
- our own scorer and event administration
- a free club get-together with drinks and nibbles on Saturday night

Please help us by getting your entries in early!

Score! (2) Are you good with figures?

Are you or do you know someone who's good with figures and who'd like to learn how to score? The scorer is one of the key jobs at an event (and one of the few jobs where you can stay warm and dry!) It would also be suitable for two people who could work together. Lunch and refreshments provided.

You calculate everyone's scores and work out the winners and placings. We will give full training if you'd like to take over this important role: call 01473 735732.