

Summer Camp 2023 - Report

The BDS Hampshire summer camp 2023 proved as popular as ever with members coming from as far away as Bedford, Swansea and Newport.

This year we had three young drivers as well, it was lovely to see them doing so well and enjoying their ponies.

Friday evening started with Kelly and Jamie Adams singing whilst enjoying a meal of Lasagne, macaroni cheese or beef stew followed by fruit salad or apple pie. It was lovely to enjoy the sunshine and meet up with friends that some people haven't seen since camp last year.

This lovely weather lulled us into a false sense for what was to come on Saturday! The first turnout set off on the treasure hunt around the farm at 10.00am and shortly afterwards we felt the first few spots of rain! As the morning progressed these few spots turned into heavy rain and I think I can safely say we all came back drowned!

After all turnouts were safely back in the field - we had a quick break for lunch and then started with the dressage and cones throughout the afternoon. Nearly everyone braved the weather with a couple retiring back to their tents and lorries. I decided to move Saturday nights entertainment into the barn and out of the weather so we had a quick clear out and moved the tables, chairs, etc. Now that everyone had dried out the party started! DJ Francis entertained us until midnight and we all enjoyed a hog roast with various salads, etc followed by cheesecake. The weather got worse and worse and throughout the night we had various marquees, tents and gazebos take off and land in the field next door.

However, Sunday morning everyone woke to sunshine and all seemed in good spirits. We then had our long reining trec competition followed by the Driven Trec and then the Obstacle. This year was an Under the Sea theme, having to go over a blue tarpaulin with sand on and going under a tunnel with hanging seaweed, dolphins, etc. The obstacle didn't have numbered or lettered gates - we had pictures of sea creatures - a dolphin, fish, octopus and starfish. These had to be driven in Alphabetical order - a big thanks to Chris and Karen Laing for setting out the dressage arena, cones course and obstacle.

We finished on Sunday afternoon with the Presentation of rosettes and trophies followed by lots of tea, coffee and cake.

A big well done to Sami Illston with her cob Hugo who took Champion in the Novice section with Lisa Williams and Billy being Reserve Champion.

And congratulations to Modris Kesans who took Champion in the Experienced section with Sue Vella and Freckles being Reserve Champion.

Points were added up and the trophy for the overall winner was awarded to Modris with his pair of ponies - Dusty and Scotty. Dusty is a pro at things like this but this was Scotty's first event where he behaved impeccably and took it all in his stride.

These events can't run unless we have lots of help. So, firstly thank you to Roger and Sue Page for allowing us to use their farm to hold the camp. Thank you to John Siviter for judging

the presentation on Saturday and the Trec on Sunday. Thank you to all the stewards and helpers - Sarah Simmons, Clare Grover, Marcy and Paul Thompson, Sarah and Steve Jones, Sami Illston, Flick Homden, Bea Searle and anyone else who helped throughout the weekend. Thanks to David Stone for judging the Dressage and Liz Frew for writing for him.

We were let down by the caterer for the Friday evening at the last minute so a big thank you to Alison Kesans for sorting all the food - we could never have done it without you.

Well, despite the bad weather everyone had a good time and left smiling. I'm now planning what theme we are having next year!