

## Beccles and Bungay RC take on Houghton Hall



*Mandie Bradley and 'Harley'*

Following some atrocious weather, Sunday brought with it the sun and an exciting day for all at Houghton International Horse Trials. This year, although fronting a diminished team due to unforeseen illness, 'Beccles and Bungay' gave the BRC team dressage their best shot.

The atmosphere was buzzing, with British Show jumping classes, Pony Club jumping teams and the last leg of the 4\* 3 day event taking place at the same time. Although Michelle Hurst's 'Hugo' (ridden by Emma Taylor) is a seasoned professional, the other equine team members, 6 year olds 'Harley' (ridden and owned by Mandie Bradley) and 'Albie' (ridden and owned by Suze Close), had never seen so many other horses, tannoys, spinning tea cups, food stands, alpacas or tents in their lives. Needless to say, they behaved perfectly.

All three combinations took up the opportunity to ride a warm up test; Prelim 14 or Novice 30. In the novice arena, Mandie Bradley and 'Harley' rode a lovely test, finishing 9<sup>th</sup> with a very respectable 63.46%. Emma Taylor finished 6<sup>th</sup> with a solid 64.23% – first place was 66.93% so a very closely contested class!

In the Prelim arena Suze Close and 'Albie' (or Prince Albert, as he prefers to be known) put in an equally solid performance to finish 4<sup>th</sup> with a score of 66.67%.

The team tests were Prelim 12 judged by Jackie Hagan, and Novice 24 judged by Marcia Fenwick. Again, Mandie and 'Harley' rode a very lovely test scoring 63.27% (nothing but consistent!), putting them within 1% of placing. Poor Emma and 'Hugo'



*Emma Taylor and 'Hugo'*

rode the last test of the day to the accompaniment of a circus of small children back-flipping and rattling plastic bags within a metre or so of their arena. Understandably 'Hugo' was a little distracted and Emma did incredibly well to keep her cool scoring 59% in very difficult conditions. It is worth mentioning that 'Hugo' and Emma had also taken part in the 90cm Pony Club teams for Waveney Harriers earlier in the day, jumping a fabulous clear round to finish 4<sup>th</sup>, alongside BBRC member Imogen Sheldrake who jumped clear in the 80cm team to finish 4<sup>th</sup> as well!



*Suze Close and 'Prince Albert'*

The Prelim 12 arena was very tight – the top 6 places finishing within 2%. Despite the odd buck (just to remind us he is still a baby) Suze and 'Albie' scored 66.2% finishing in 6<sup>th</sup> place, missing out on 5<sup>th</sup> by one collective mark.

With all three scores counting, the team finished 9<sup>th</sup> overall with a score of 188.7 and went home with a bucket-load of lovely rosettes that feature the silhouette of the beautiful Houghton Hall – our background for the day.

The team competition was won by Cambridge & District RC.

Overall a great day was had by all – it was a great opportunity for the young horses to gain some experience at a bigger event, and for Emma to make her dressage team debut.

A big thank you must go out to Corinne Bullock for being our support from the ground, looking after and calling for us – without her hard work these events would not be possible and we really appreciate it.

***Report by Susannah Close***