



## **2012 - an exciting year for the British Dressage Northern Region**

Covering an extensive area from Leicestershire to the Scottish border, the British Dressage Northern Region is looking forward to an eventful 2012. The region will host a number of high profile competitions where spectators and supporters can see some of the country's top riders prepare for the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics where Britain is tipped for medal success.

The season starts with the Northern Winter Regional Championship held at Willerby Hill East Yorkshire the first weekend of March. Spectators will have the opportunity to watch the freestyle to music classes on the Friday evening in the comfort of the new Cheval café. Riders will be hoping for a winning performance to qualify them for the prestigious NAF Five Star Winter Championships in April.

The following weekend Vale View Equestrian Centre in Leicestershire will showcase the country's top Para riders at the British Dressage Para Winter Championships along with the Para Talent Development Programme, which searches for up and coming riders. Later in the year Vale View, will also host the Para Home International where the Northern Region will be represented by two teams of 4 riders selected from regional training events.

In June, Sheepgate Equestrian Centre near Lincoln will host one of a series of National Premier League competitions – the perfect place to spot Olympic hopefuls on their final preparations. Sheepgate is also home to the six day extravaganza, The British Under 25s Championship which riders from Prelim through to International level have the opportunity to compete for the National title and the team competition. The venue will also hold a Petplan Area Festival at the end of September, which is where grass roots riders get a taste of what it's like to ride at a Championship – a real inspiration to aim for our Regional competitions. Arena UK (Lincs) and Northallerton Equestrian Centre (N Yorks) will also hold Area Festivals to ensure have all riders have the opportunity to take part.

Fry's Equestrian Centre in Driffield will host the Northern Summer Regional Championships, which, due to the Olympics, are slightly earlier in 2012 and will be held mid July. Classes will range from Prelim to Prix St George and spectators will not only have the chance to watch the region's top horses and riders attempt to qualify for the Sport's National Championships but also do a spot of shopping.

Bishop Burton College impressed many in the sport with their inaugural Para International competition in August last year and this year they'll be hoping for much of the same. It's anticipated potential

Paralympic riders have their final outing prior to London including regional star riders Sophie Wells and Emma Sheardown.

During October, Bishop Burton College will once again come alive as the British Dressage BYRDS Home International for riders aged 6 - 25 will take place. Riders from each of the eight Regions will have been selected not only to represent their region but also their country. England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales will contest the title and the Northern region will field 3 teams.

As mentioned, riders from the area have three opportunities to represent the Northern Region at competitions; BYRDS and Senior Inter Regionals and the Senior Home International. Regional Development Officer Sarah Huntridge is always looking for new talent so get in touch if you have what it takes – riders from Prelim to Prix St Georges are needed. These are great fun and give a huge confidence boost!

Competitions aren't the only feature of the Northern Region! Training days, camps, lecture demos, talks and social events all feature in our busy schedule. Many high profile trainers, riders and judges are invited to the region to host these events which are open to all – member or non.

For details of how you can get involved with the British Dressage Northern Region visit:

[http://www.britishdressage.co.uk/your\\_regions/northern\\_region](http://www.britishdressage.co.uk/your_regions/northern_region)

Ends

Sarah Huntridge