

## SENIOR CAMP

In October we had another fantastic two days at Keysoe! Over 50 people, horses, dogs and assorted friends and lovers descended on The College EC on Friday night. Soon the stable area was a hive of activity with riders finding their stables, seeing which teams they were in and whom they were stabled with. Then it was into the restaurant for a glass of wine, and welcome. Throughout the weekend, teams got points for tidy stables and tack rooms, clean areas around their horses, and clean tack!! On Friday night we had a brilliant talk from David Wooley, Sports Psychologist. Everyone wrote down their fears and aspirations, and several of the fears were then promptly dispelled by David! Throughout the weekend, riders could be heard quoting Tiger Woods or chanting "put deposits in the confidence bank!" and "don't add permanence to it!" Surprisingly, Friday turned out to be quite a quiet night, everyone keen to get to bed ready for the next day. Saturday morning was a mixture of lessons with our four trainers - Dan Sherriff, Julie Hugo, Paul Hayler and Mark Ruddock. In between riding there were also two workshops for everyone to attend - and both were brilliant! In the restaurant, Chris Cowan put everyone through their paces on exercise balls - working on core strength and giving us all exercises to work on that are aimed specifically at riders.



**Eastern Riders on the ball!**

In the indoor school, Phillippa Coles was doing amazing art on horses! Painting in the different muscles in chalk on the horse - it was fascinating to see how those muscles

worked, and to hear how much they should change as the horse starts doing more advanced work. Several people requested more - wanting a whole workshop with Philippa with horses at different levels, so that the progression could be seen. (I'm working on it!)



### **The Painted Horse!**

In the afternoon, test riding took place, and whilst not riding, there was sitting in and writing for the judge, hearing what they had to say and getting some further tips, another exercise which everyone found really useful. Then it was evening stables and tack cleaning, before a few more drinks and dinner. After dinner the teams had to present the answer to a conundrum they had been given the night before by David. Scenarios such as "you have a rider who is too frightened to compete as she claims that her horse always spooks when she goes into the competition arena, and that the judge does not like her anyway" Everyone did a brilliant job, coming up with suggestions and practical solutions to their problems, and the Serpentine and Medium Walk teams won two bottles of bubbly for the best answers! This was just as well, as one of their team members was **Esther Bouma** whose birthday was the next day!

Sunday followed a similar pattern, with workshop on getting your horse fit to compete. The test riding in the afternoon was in the form of a competition, and riders had to plait up and get out the show gear. It was really heartening to see SO much improvement on the Sunday - almost without exception, horses were going better and riders were riding better, preparing more, gaining extra marks - fabulous!

Sunday afternoon finished with our mini awards ceremony! The winning stable team was the Serpentine Team, and the best individual was **Clare Day**! In the competitions

our winners were: Prelim: **Jodie Smith**, Novice: **Amanda Wates**, Elementary: **Moira Gedge**, Medium: **Carolyn Davies**(on her new orange dressage horse) and **Louise Clark** in the Advanced against herself! A great weekend, lots of happy riders and tired horses - and tired organisers too!! Massive thanks as ever to **Paul Cornish** our stable manager who is a complete star and makes everyone's lives so much easier! Also to **Paul Hayler** - the brains behind the operation and the most enthusiastic rider rep ever!