

TALENT SEEKING

5 August 2009

Brook Farm, Essex

We held a very successful Talent Spotting Day at Brook Farm. With 28 entries overall, it was a busy day for the two assessors - James Burtwell and Mark Ruddock - both of whom are Trainers and Judges. The format of the day was that riders in the same age categories were grouped together. First they rode the Talent Spotting Test, and then they came back into the arena for training on their own horses in a group. After this, the assessors swapped the riders around onto different horses. "Try to imagine that a friend from another part of the country has called you to ask if you can go and try a horse they have seen advertised near you and let them know what you think" was the brief. The sheets that all the riders get at the end of the day look for things such as 'Feel and elasticity of the seat', 'Anticipation of movements', 'poise and security', 'effectiveness of the aids'. The second half which concentrates on the training and swapping includes the riders influence on the second horse, their talent and empathy and knowledge of training systems. The first section was the Fledglings - and this was won by Imogen Abblett who rode a nice test and spoke well. In the young juniors section (age 12-14) Beth Turnbull and Take the Biscuit were successful. The hotly contested Middle Juniors (age 15-18) was won by Sarah Thomas, and in the Young Riders, Katie Hamilton came out on top. Well done to everyone who took part, all went home with rosettes, certificates, feedback forms and prizes.