

On the 20th of April I received a message from HCTG team manager Toni Tait, asking me if I would like to compete for HCTG in the arena eventing qualifiers. The senior 90 team needed a fourth member and after thinking about it for a few minutes I said yes, I'm so pleased I did. Having been a club member and regular camp/ lesson attendee for a couple of years I was keen to give team competition a go. I have heard from others how fun and exciting being a part of a team is, however I was also slightly nervous as my young horse hasn't done many competitions at this level and I knew it would be a challenge for us both. After getting reassurance from club instructor Hazel Towers that it would be a great educational experience for myself and my horse Annie and from my other team members that I wouldn't let them down if I had a couple of poles I arrived at Richmond ready to compete. The qualifier and championship courses both consisted of a course of show jumps immediately followed by cross-country fences all on a surface. They then finished with the last joker fence, which was set at a discretionary 10cm higher than the rest of the course.

The whole team had a lovely time at the qualifiers, all horses went well and riders rode brilliantly. Results included clear rounds from both Phoebe towers and Arber B and Jane Lee and Gorgeous. Tessa Downs and Flash Sunday and myself on Burnlea Catwalk had just 4 jumping penalties each. The team's efforts at the qualifier left us with a total of only 4.8 penalties, putting us in first position. I couldn't believe it, we were going to the championships!

A month later we all set off to Aston-le-walls, upon arrival after a super early start we received our qualifying medals from a friendly steward at the gate (mine is now displayed in my living room). It was a grey day (this seems to be the norm at the moment despite it being nearly June) but our spirits and attitude were sunny even though the weather was not. We walked the course which we all thought was challenging but equally rideable and looked like it was going to be fun for both horse and rider. Our team each completed their rounds, each with just a couple of poles, time penalties or knocking down the very tricky final joker fence. All riders rode well and enjoyed the day very much, with the four horses putting in brilliant performances making us all very proud of our equine partners!

If anyone is thinking about team or individual competition for the club I would recommend that you go for it. The friendly and encouraging environment made me feel very welcome even as a last minute substitute riding a young horse. The team was brilliantly organised by Toni who made sure we had completed all forms and photographed all correct documents prior to the competitions. She made it stress free so that we were ready to compete upon arrival and we knew all the rules, especially in the unprecedented times of CO-VID and EHV forms. Now that I have purchased the team kit this will definitely not be my last appearance for team Harewood, it is an experience I would recommend to any club member.

Thank you again to all those at the club who help organize the teams and entries, especially Toni. Also to my lovely team: Phoebe Towers, Jane Lee and Tessa Downs we were awesome!! Xx