

Burgie International Horse Trials – 14-17 June

A strong contingency travelled to Burgie in Elgin for the annual International Horse Trials. The event caters for novice competitors all the way up to those riding professionally. The event ran the Taster 3DE that Kerrie took part in last year. This event is run under Riding Club and British Eventing rules and both a Novice and Intermediate class were available this year. Burgie also hosts a 2 day Pre Novice, 2 day Novice, 1 day Novice, CCI* and CCI**.

Kara's report –

Elana and I headed up on the Tuesday morning with Oakey and Ned in order to get settled in for the weekend competition. We had our separate vehicles and trailers as we both had enough gear to last us for a year let alone a week. We had with us our trusty grooms Faye and Kerrie who were to keep us fed, watered, and calm over the whole week! Elana and Faye arrived before Kerrie and me and by the time we got there, they had erected the most fantastic gazebo next to Elana's trailer where she and Faye (not forgetting Ebby, the medium sized dog) would reside for the week in very narrow bunk beds. Kerrie had booked her and I a wee caravan for the week which was parked right next to Elana and Faye's camp and also right outside Ned's stable. Ideal to feeding in your PJ's!

After taking the horses for a walk in hand after the 5 hour drive and settling them down for the night we all settled ourselves down to a night of WINE (and FISH AND CHIPS for Kerrie and I). Fantastic!

We took the horses a jolly around the roads and tracks on Wednesday allowing them to stretch off and view the gorgeous scenery of the Firth of Moray. Ned's eyes were popping out his head! Wednesday was nice day and in fact this was to be the only nice day we had apart from the odd dry and calm spell that occurred randomly over the weekend. Fiona and Lorna Alexander arrived with Fiona's new steed, Duke while Elana and I were schooling in the afternoon. Fiona and Lorna also were staying in a caravan so we had a great we camp by the end of Wednesday night. Once the horses were done, Kerrie got the bargain £7 BBQ fired up and food and more wine were consumed while sitting in the gazebo which was blocking a very cool wind.

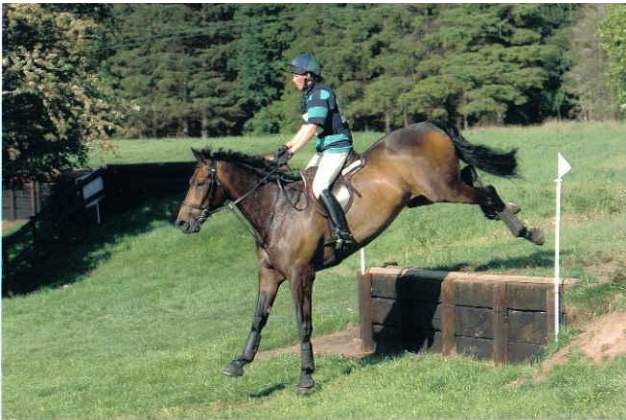
Thursday was briefing day. Most other competitors had arrived and the stables and lorry park were buzzing. Elana and I took the boys for a good canter in the morning which would be their last before XC day. We both had our respective briefings and then I schooled in the afternoon in order to practice my test for the next day. Elana had her trot up in front of Burgie house for the CCI*. Faye got Oakey looking like a prize show horse with his oiled lips, tidy plaits and quarter markers. Elana also managed to spruce herself up but I think Oakey was the best turned out between them both! They passed the inspection with no problems. I did not have an inspection for my class. That would come on Sunday following XC day. Fiona took part in the Working Hunter in the main ring. That afternoon the gazebo blew away!!!

Friday – Dressage day. Ned and I were not on until later in the afternoon so I rode in the morning and then watched some of the CCI* and CCI** tests. As I was doing the Intermediate Taster 3DE, the dressage I was watching made my test look like a jolly round a paddock for 6 minutes! We did a fair test and were lying 5th equal after dressage. Elana did a nice test and Fiona was doing the Intro and Pre novice Arena event in the main ring.

Friday night was spent getting my gear ready for Saturday. My trusty groom who had consumed numerous bottles of vino since our arrival on Tuesday needed to be prepared for my Roads and Tracks, Steeplechase and XC just in case Ned lost a shoe or boot and cut himself and if indeed I needed some liquid refreshment...not wine, as Kerrie had drank it all by then!

Saturday – XC day. How nervous was I?? I wasn't on until the end of the class at 1110. Irene Young (Sara Horse Therapy) arrived to do her rounds and she looked at Ned. He was a bit tight here and there but nothing major. She did her magic and we left Ned to relax for a while. Its not great hanging around waiting but once I was tacked up and on Ned at 1040, I felt slightly less nervous, however Lorna did mention I did look a lovely shade of green until I finished the Steeplechase. I had spent a

good bit of time calculating my times for the XC phase as any time over the optimum time would result in heavy penalties. Phase A was classed as the warm up which would last 18 mins. Ned set off through the start flags with some renewed excitement and energy. He seemed to understand what was happening however he could see a nice wee grey horse on the horizon 2 mins in front of us and seemed to want to catch up with it. We got to Phase B with a minute to spare. This gave me time to relax before heading into the start box of the Steeplechase. This was 1000m with 6 jumps. I was to do this in 2 mins. I have never tried this before so was a bit anxious however once we got over the first jump we were OFF. Ned flew around the course. It was absolutely amazing and Ned just seemed to love it. We crossed the finish line with 30secs to spare and started straight into Phase C which was the second part of the Roads and Tracks that was classed as the half hour recovery period. WELL, Ned had decided by that time, he was RACEHORSE! He wouldn't stop. The nice little grey horse was still 2 mins in front and he was going to close that gap. My relaxing Phase C was spent holding onto Ned who was jogging, doing fancy big trot, lovely shoulder in and traverse, mini bucks and canter on the spot. What a loony! I finally got him to settle and walk for the last 5 mins prior to trotting the last 100 yards for the vet to check his soundness. His heart rate was fine and I entered the



D box where Kerrie, Lorna, Faye, Elana and Fiona were waiting to cool Ned and me off before heading off on the XC 10 mins later. All was well and I set off on the XC at a rapid speed. Ned was still in Steeplechase mode. I liked the new Ned! There were 21 fences and Ned cleared them all and finished with time to spare. The vet checked him 5 mins later and he was as good as gold. Fit as a fiddle. We spent the afternoon watching the CCI* and CCI** XC in between taking Ned for walks so that he didn't seize up. I was lying 5th after the XC in the Intermediate Taster.

Kara and Ned in action at Hexham in 2004

Sunday – Showjumping day. The first job for today was to get Ned all smartened up for the Horse Inspection. Once Kerrie got up from her late night partying, we got him all polished and he looked great despite the rain. We passed the trot up and went then to walk the SJ. The class was in reverse order so I was almost last to go and after one horse failed the inspection, I was moved up to 4th place going into the SJ. Ned warmed up beautifully with the expert help of Kerrie and Elana. The course was not big but the distances were a bit odd and I was going to have to have my wits about me. Well, in fact, I didn't! Ned was not being very helpful. I guess just tired from the day before. I also was riding like I was on a donkey beach ride at Blackpool and was not very convincing. We had 2 refusals and time penalties and ended up 19th in a field of 30. Too bad, it wasn't to be our day however I had the most AMAZING time. I just loved XC day and the whole experience. It's not much of a holiday but it was a great social time spent with Ned and the rest of the gang. I thoroughly recommend the competition to all RC members. Good preparation is essential and does take a bit of time and commitment but its well worth it. Ned is out in the field being a HORSE for a week or so before I get ready for some events in July and August.

I must thank Kerrie, Lorna, Fiona, Faye and Elana for helping me in the D box on Saturday. They made me sit down which is rather unnatural for me but forgetting their bullying, I was very grateful for their help in keeping me and Ned right before we went off on the XC.

Elana completed the CCI* as did Samantha Whiteford. Alison Newton completed the Novice 2 Day. Robert Wilson was also there competing in the One Day Novice.

Kara