



HOOFPRIENTS September 2020

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

As we head into autumn, we look back on a season sadly curtailed by something no one could have imagined. This pandemic has impacted on everyone's lives and sport has not escaped. I read a comment on Facebook recently on the lines that the club had offered nothing this year. Not quite true – we did manage monthly dressage at Howe until lockdown – pretty much the only source of income all year until we put together a jump training day in August. Throughout the summer our activities have been limited to what was permitted by government and British Riding Clubs – with the threat of sanctions against any club failing to comply. At long last there may be a chink of light at the end of the tunnel and recent relaxations in lockdown restrictions now allow us to moving beyond training to competition. Sadly, this comes just as the weather is turning distinctly chillier and Covid cases are on the rise. As I write this Nicola Sturgeon is announcing tightening on numbers of people allowed to meet. Outdoor organised sport is currently unaffected – so, make the most of what is coming up – it may not last!

To close, I would like to thank our volunteers – Linda, Kirsty & Simone for being prepared to help get the training day up & running (how good was the virtual course walk?) – arguably they were at more risk of catching Covid than any of the riders. Separately, big thanks to Liz & Tom Glasgow (plus groundsman Dougie). They have spent the last few days drying out the office unit which was flooded out during the night of the thunderstorms – in case anyone noticed the carpets hanging out on the arena fence! Above and beyond.....





ACTIVITIES AT THE CLUB FIELD

Show Jump Training Day in August

Our first event of 2020 after a long wait was a Jump Training Day. This allowed us to test out the new protocols and ensure that we could safely host training days. We had a small turn out and an early finish with the last rider done by 12.45. Thanks to the helpers from committee allowing this to run fairly smoothly and to time! Feedback from riders was very positive and it was great to see some familiar faces out enjoying their horses.

Feedback from our member Susan Jardine:

“It was a Joy to just be in the club field again and I appreciate that you even organised super weather! Although we were socially distanced, I don't think anyone had any problems with making themselves heard! We've all got good lungs on us! I was particularly pleased to see Linda with the megaphone – it made it more like the old days – and her happy band of helpers. A lot of work had gone into our day and it was much appreciated. Looking forward to the next time”.

Friday Night Jumping Lessons with Sarah-Jayne Bowers

Sarah-Jayne has been holding lessons at the club field on a Friday night and these have proved popular with members.



Pictured: Simonne Adams (left), Kerrie Anne Strachan (centre) and Carolyn Blanc (right)





Feedback from Sarah-Jayne:

After a whole summer without activity at the Club field, finally the COVID restrictions have been relaxed enough to allow sufficient people to gather and train with a coach to make it possible and viable enough for the Club to start offering sessions. With the FRC initial offering of a Jump Training Day on 22 August, and the eventual opening up of British Eventing activities and local Pick A Fence/Sponsored Rides with Jumps/Hunter Trials, it made sense to offer some jump coaching sessions - giving members the chance to go 'Jumping into the Weekend' with local BHS APC Sarah-Jayne Bowers, on the evenings of Friday 28 August and 11 September.

Pictured: Colleen Macrae and Lucas

The focus on the first evening was especially on improving the security and balance of the rider's position on the approach to, and over the fence; which is fundamental to building confidence in both horse and rider. This was built on by working on the quality of the canter to ensure that the horse approaches



each fence with the right amount of pace, rhythm and balance to give the best chance for a successful jump. These fundamentals were continued onto the second evening - along with working on riding in a good forward rhythm between fences, using ground poles, and the vital role of the inside leg/outside rein to maintain a good balance around the corner on the approach to a fence for the 90cm+ group.





We had a much busier second evening, although we were right on the edge of running out of light - so will not be able to run a 7pm group at the field until next year when the nights get lighter again. We are hoping to run some Saturday lessons and some weekday daytime lessons, subject to demand.

Even with fewer restrictions, there is still the onerous task of risk assessments to be completed by the coach, the liberal application of hand sanitiser, and the need to avoid/minimize physical contact, along with the recording of contact details. We are just hoping that we have no further COVID restrictions, and that the Winter Weather Gods decide to be kind as 2020 has been rubbish enough, so that we can keep building on the coaching sessions offered to the members this year.

LOOKING AHEAD

Show Jumping Show Saturday 26 September

At long last, further relaxations in Covid guidelines have allowed us to progress from Jump Training to an actual Show on 26 September open to members only. We will keep up with the current guidelines in order for us to run this safely. Schedule and online entries will be available shortly. This time each rider will be able to enter 2 consecutive classes (e.g. 45cm and 55cm or 95cm and 105cm). Each class will be £5 and each rider may have one helper attend with them.

FRC AGM

We will be hosting a virtual AGM on Zoom on **Thursday 8 October**. Further information will follow.

Can last year's trophy winners please contact the Secretary, Liz, about returning cups etc. Her number is: 01592 754809.





Wednesday Lessons

After committee met on Monday night I put a poll on the Members Facebook page to gauge the interest in daytime lessons at the club on a Wednesday. It looks as though there is enough demand for this to go ahead, especially whilst we have the weather! Thank you to all who provided feedback regarding these lessons.

OTHER MATTERS

Craigie Update

As members are aware, the club ran Hunter Trials, Pick-a Fences, One Day Events and Cross Country clinics over the course at Craigie since the late 1970's with the enthusiastic support of Club President, John Foster. John sadly died last year and Mrs Foster suggested it was time to call it a day. Consequently, we no longer had the use of the track. Members were advised of this at last year's AGM. At that meeting it was asked if some of the Club's fences might be relocated to the club field. It was pointed out that most of the fences were unsuitable for relocation – some were in poor order, most were too heavy to move without machinery – and the field layout was restrictive. It was agreed that the adjustable fences could be re-used and possibly a few other lightweight fences. Committee agreed to see what could be saved.

In the meantime, we had a request from Craigie to clear fences and remove equipment currently stored on site as soon as practicable and with minimum disruption to their livery yard, preferably in a single day. It was planned to make a start on this at Easter but by then we were under lockdown which meant we could not get the necessary manpower on site so our plans were put on hold.





At the same time we were approached by a local livery yard about the possibility of acquiring some fences if they were surplus to our needs. When we checked the fences on site, it was apparent that they had deteriorated to a shocking degree with rotted/broken structural frames etc. to the point that they were beyond economic repair.

The other party nevertheless came back with an offer to lift some of the fences (regardless of condition) and make good all damage to the ground as requested by Mrs Foster. They also offered to remove and store the fences which we had identified for use at the field pending collection – this meant we could comply with Craigie’s request of minimal disruption, whilst meeting Covid restrictions at no cost to the club. This was all as agreed at the AGM. It made more sense to salvage what we could and design some new fences better suited to the dimensions of the club field.

To date not all the fences have been removed from Craigie and we are planning a clear out day in October when we will also be uplifting the jumps we set aside for use at Glenrothes - if lockdown restrictions permit.

Sad News

We were sorry to learn that former member, James Aird, died on 20 August. James was a keen showjumper in his younger days – one of the big names on the circuit – and competed regularly at our BSJA Show (then the biggest show in the club diary). He was also a successful producer of show horses along with Trude and Kirsty. Above all, he was a thoroughly decent man, knowledgeable on all matters equestrian but always happy to chat and freely offer advice when asked. Our condolences go to Trude, Kirsty and Robert.





Dressage at Howe

As you know FRC have been running the Dressage at Howe kindly organised by Shona Brearley and Emma Defew. These have been a great success and the income raised for the club should ensure that we finish the year in a better financial position than otherwise. Sadly, the centre had to shut down because of the pandemic and the Covid restrictions on numbers of entries mean that these meetings are not currently viable.

Microchips

Many of you will have received mail from the government about new legislation requiring all horses to be microchipped by March 28 2021. If you are not sure if your horse has a chip, your vet may be able to advise or check your horse passport. BHS is offering. A “Chip and Go” day on 27 September for £5 – and passporting can also be done. Check out the BHS Scotland website for more information.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Show Jumping Show – Saturday 26 September
- FRC Virtual AGM – Thursday 8 October. Details to follow.
- The Area 22 AGM – Sunday 1 November. Details to follow.





SHOW JUMPING SHOW SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER

This event will be open to MEMBERS ONLY.

Each rider may have ONE HELPER attend with them. We will require you to provide us with the name and address of the helper on your entry form.

There will be NO SPECTATORS allowed at this time to keep numbers to a minimum.

Classes will be £5 per round and competitors may enter a maximum of TWO CONSECUTIVE classes.

Entries will close midnight on Wednesday 23 September.

On arrival at the club field please park 5 metres apart from other vehicles. A Covid-19 Compliance Officer will ask for your name and check that you only have ONE helper with you.

Please follow all Covid-19 guidance and maintain social distancing at all times.

Please bring your own mask and hand sanitiser.

Show Jumping will be pre-entered online and times will be given before the event – the schedule will be posted shortly on Club Entries which can be found at the address below:

<https://www.clubentries.com/fiferc/index.php>

There will be no toilets/catering available.

