

## FUN GYMKHANA – CROFTON EQUESTRIAN CENTRE

On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

Written by Justine Gwynne – 14 years

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, the Juniors have enjoyed this event at Crofton – Marissa our instructor starts off by asking us all who has taken part in mounted games before? She then explains to us all how the games work – going fast is not always the best thing to do & no whips allowed. Marissa told us that the professionals always end up with bruises on their knees by the time they finish – one to watch out for!

We were then split up into 2 groups:-

Kiera on Brae

Tasha on Fliss

Jess(little) on Oscar

Ellen on Molly

Sophie on Gift

Jess(big) on Cheers

Jake & Martha on Popeye

Justine on Kate

## **And then the warm up games began.....**

**Bending Race** – Weave through the poles at trot with a batten in your hand – turn at the last pole and then weave back to the start to pass the batten onto next team player.

**Mug Race** –Metal mugs turned upside down on the poles – each player had to move the mugs along a pole each time – then do a tight turn at the top and move mugs back again.

**Ball and Bucket Race**– 1<sup>st</sup> team player is handed a ball, they trot up to the bucket, reach down whilst still mounted to place ball in the bucket-*not to be thrown in hard causing it to bounce-else you'll have to get off & pick up the ball, place in bucket then remount!* Trot to the top- dismount then pick up another ball- helpers on hand here to help those remount on bigger ponies!! Then race back down to the start and pass the ball to the next player. The last player to go on the way back had to put the ball in the bucket to finish.

**Flag Race**- You were handed a flag which you had to carefully place in a cone-easier said than done! Then trot on and collect another flag from a

cone, around the pole at the end and place flag back in the cone and trot down to the first flag, pick up again then pass to the next team player.

**Stepping Stone Dash** – The teams went to the opposite ends of the school – 1<sup>st</sup> team player trotted up to the stones- dismounted, then quickly tiptoed along the stones with your pony at your side- unless you had a little grey pony called Popeye who wanted to tiptoe on the stones also!! – Walk on a couple of steps, remount, trot to the end and then the next player went – *no cheating by using the stones to remount!*

We then had a short break - **The real competition then began...**

**Bending Race** –Cheers with Jess(big) loved this race and so did Gift with Sophie.

**Mug Race** – Kiera took this at a steady pace on Brae whilst Popeye with Martha onboard had other ideas! I messed up on putting the mug on the pole-usually my better race?

**Ball and Bucket Race** – it was Jess(little) turn to go in this race but Oscar didn't want to move-he decided to give Jess's leg muscles a work out! Popeye & Jake took to this race with ease, and Ellen's pony Molly had enjoyed games before by the looks of things.

**Flag Race**-2<sup>nd</sup> fastest race – getting the flag into the small cone was sometimes a challenge – foot perfect Fliss with Tasha onboard did some lovely dressage moves in this race.

**Last Race** – Most of us cantered up to the top! – threw ourselves off our ponies to get a chocolate bar which had been hidden under a stepping stone, Chocolate bar found, jumped back on ponies, raced back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> stepping stone to find polos, jump back on again and then trot back to team players unless you were Cheers who had a different idea!!

**Sadly the Fun was Over- we all had a brilliant time** –we all lined up to receive our Rosettes and had a photo session. The 2 Teams drew!!

We then said a Big Thank you to Aly Burgess as this was her last event as our Junior Coordinator-we shall really miss her. Kate Bartlett-Chairman of

Solent Riding Club came along and presented Aly with a bouquet of flowers, followed by photographs.

Thank you to Aly for organising this event and for all you have done for the juniors over the past 3 years. Thank you to Marissa our instructor who made it all great fun again.

Also Thank you to the 'Market Traders' Sam & Jamie Bray who ran their stall from the back of their car – selling items in aid of The Cancer Research Competition....Jamie's selling tactics seem to work!!

*Justine*