

Stop press...

Duignan enjoys cross-country win

LIBBY Duignan, 14, finished equal first in the novice section at the finals of the BHS Cross-Country Championships, which took place at Eland Lodge Equestrian, Derbyshire (30 September).

Libby finished on the optimum time on her Loxley to share first place with two other riders.

In the pairs class young riders scooped the prize in the special dressing fence competition. Riding under team name "Whatever", Evie Peel, 12, on her Arab mare Taragun and Emily Robinson, 14, on her pony Denstone Diva, were the winners, with a perfect score of 20.



Lock finds key to a year of success

MERCEDES Lock, 11, crowned a fantastic mounted games season of Mounted Games Association (Great Britain) competition with victory in the under-12 section at the Southern Individual Championships (20-21 October). "After a hard fought three

sessions, held over the two days, Mercedes entered the final in first position and again had to work hard all the way to win first place," said her mother, Jo.

Mercedes (left) and her pony Daisy also won the under-12 world individual title at Arena UK in July, and her team, Sussex Minis, was victorious at the Norman Patrick Inter Counties Championships at the end of August. Their accumulated points throughout the season mean the team has won the under-12 Mounted Games Association national league.



Pilbeam wins four out of eight

EAST Sussex-based Lisa Pilbeam (right), 21, scooped first place in four of the eight sections of the 2007 South East Eventers' League.

Lisa took the Bill Kear Arenas & Gallops Leading Owner-Rider Award and the Lodge Farm Leading Under-21 Award with her eight-year-old mare Cullawn Celtic Queen (pictured). She also finished first and second in the Team Opposition Leading Mare Award with Cullawn Celtic Queen and her six-year-old full sister, Cullawn Holly. Cullawn Holly and Lisa also won the Equiguest Novice Award.

Lisa is a full-time event rider, and has scored five British Eventing wins this year and 17 top-10 placings.



Staines proves to be a star

TASHA Staines (above) won the overall junior and young rider

sections at Under 21s UK's search for a star final (23-24 October) at the Unicorn Equestrian Trust, Glos.

The two days consisted of riding a test, a written paper, an interview, judging a test, a training session on your own horse and riding two other strange horses.

"You have 10min to get the best tune out of them that you can," said Tasha. "I gained 100% for star quality, correct position, straightness and balance, feel and suppleness."

Tasha is planning to move up to young rider level with her current ride, Alacran II.

Sam speeds seven lengths clear to win

Sam Twiston-Davies takes the 148cm pony racing final on Otterburn Lady, who is in her first season racing, reports Catherine Austen

SAM Twiston-Davies pulled out all the stops to win the 148cm final of the Charles Owen pony racing series at Aintree Racecourse (27 October).

Riding Otterburn Lady, the 15-year-old son of Cotswold trainer Nigel Twiston-Davies passed hot favourites Philip Prince and Rose Bengal with a furlong to go and won comfortably by seven lengths.

"I thought I'd be lucky to be fourth or fifth on form!" said Sam. "It was a brilliant experience, and I couldn't believe it when I passed the post."

Sam said he was particularly proud of his pony, six-year-old "Holly", because this has been her first racing season.

"We really didn't expect her to do so well in her first year," said Sam. "She's a lovely person — really nice to deal with."

Sam, with lots of help from Celia Holman, has done plenty of dressage and show jumping with Holly to muscle her up,

and plans to hunt her with the North Cotswold and Heythrop this winter.

"Dad said she'd have a good chance if she stayed and if I rode her properly," said Sam. "He said afterwards it was the best ride I had given her — I did exactly what I was told to do."

Philip Prince finished second, and Annabelle Heath was third on Lucy. Fourth were Ryan White and Benjamin Boy.

In the 138cm race, Connor Flint and Stambrook Marquesa from South Wales kept up their brilliant record, winning by 10 lengths. They have only been beaten once in

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Sam Twiston-Davies

on his trainer father's verdict

20 races. The Flint family have had the nine-year-old mare for three years.

"It was a real achievement just to get there, and a bonus to win," said 12-year-



LUCY SMITH, 15

from Hertfordshire won the Osborne Refrigerators national young rider and exercise vehicle championships at the BDS Jubilee Show with The Smith Brothers' Hackney pony stallion Royal Sunshine

HOW DID YOU GET INTO DRIVING?

My family have always driven and my dad [Eddie Smith] taught me from a young age. I do ride as well, but I prefer driving. I'd tell anyone who doesn't drive to have a go because it's fun.

I help out at home by riding horses we've got in for training, but I've never shown under saddle. However, I hope to compete in a ridden class at next year's Hackney breed show at Ardingly.



Connor Flint and Stambrook Marquesa take the 138cm race