

Pilbeam savours breakthrough year

By Glenn Garrett

EVENTING: It has been a breakthrough year for Etchingham eventer Lisa Pilbeam – one that has seen her and eight-year-old mare “Lady” Cullawn Celtic Queen rise to prominence by finishing second in the South East Eventers League and taking a whole host of first places in open races across the area.

The 21-year-old secured four of the nine titles and four other prize-winning places in the eventers league on Lady and her six-year-old full sister Cullawn Holly.

Those performances meant that in the Devoucoux leading horse and rider rankings, despite competing head-to-head for points against the top advanced horses, she and Lady took second place, winning a valuable Colibri five-pointed breastplate from Devoucoux.

The successful team also finished first in the leading mare, under 21, novice and owner-rider rankings.

With Holly she was equal fourth in the owner-riders, third in the under 21s, and second in the mares.

“Apart from once, we’ve placed every time we’ve been out,” Pilbeam said. “It’s just been a good year for both of us. Lady did well last year but she has just improved more and more and that has given me more confidence riding her. Our show jumping has improved no end and that has helped my results.

“Coming second in the South East Eventers League was obviously a highlight as was winning three novice events in a row.”

It’s a remarkable rise for someone who has only been eventing since 2003.

“It’s all down to my mum, Tina, really,” Pilbeam, whose horses stay at her stables in Stonegate said. “She started eventing and I had a horse so I began riding at introduction level and moved

up from there. Then my mum decided she didn’t want to compete any more so I took over her horse, Rossi.”

From there Pilbeam has never looked back, winning five events this year as she made the step up to the intermediate level. Unsurprisingly one day she is hoping to compete alongside the greatest eventers in the world at Badminton although she admits those days are a long way off.

“Next year I would like to do advanced and two star levels – the fences are bigger so we will see how I get on. To get there it’s just a case of more training and more lessons with my dressage teacher, Liz West.”

And, like in any sport, reaching the top often comes down to funding.

“I really need sponsorship,” Pilbeam said. “It would help a lot towards my eventing. Fees go up as you enter higher level competitions and of course there’s the travelling costs.”

If anyone can help, contact Pilbeam on her website – www.lisapilbeam.com.

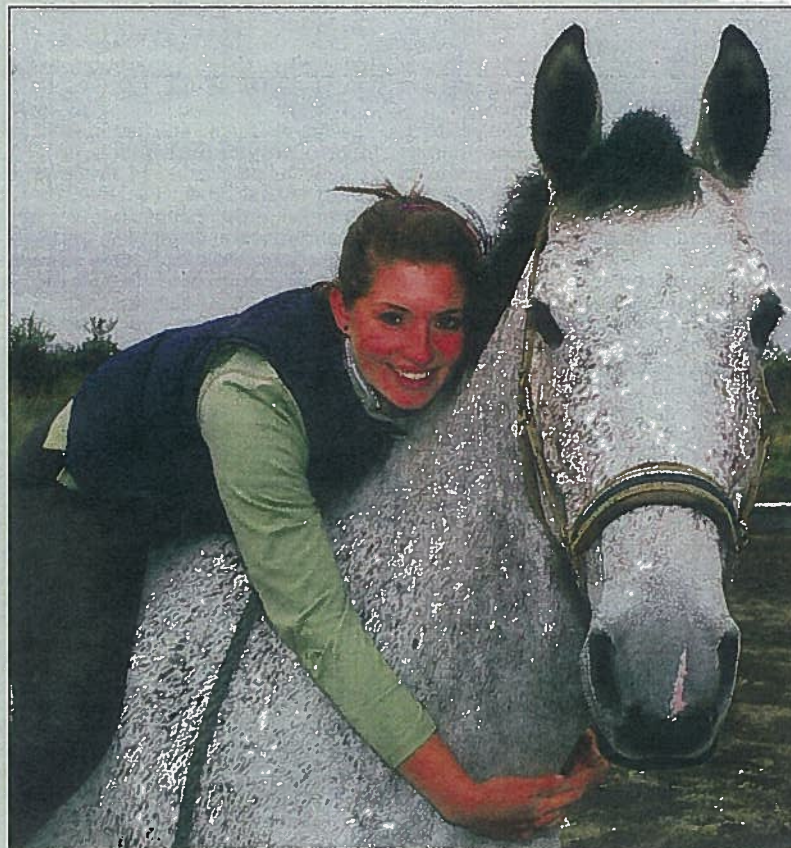
At the end of a successful eventing season for local riders Hayley Crush (Hadlow) was the deserved winner in the Local rider Grassroots Pre-Novices section on her own five-year-old Gorgeous Gordon.

She was also fifth in the Equiguest Novices on Andy and Janey Williams’s Kells Celtic Silver.

She was also in contention for the Seahorse Working Riders while she was working full time with her husband Shaun for Action Paintball.

However, her time is now also been spread for her son Alfie plus running a yard at Honnington in Tunbridge Wells.

Ellie Hughes (Matfield) successfully defended her title in the Working Riders while holding down a job as Eventing Magazine’s country-trotting Assistant Editor. Kerrie Daykin (Plaxtol) was



MY FAIR LADY: Lisa Pilbeam with her horse “Lady” Cullawn Celtic Queen

third on Primitive Star in the rankings while Sweden’s Anna Hilton (Sandhurst) was equal fourth in the Devoucoux overall rankings on David Ashby’s Lester De La Pree.

Wadhurst owner Jenny Nolan’s Ensign won the Racehorse Sanctuary Racehorse-to-Eventers with her daughter Pippa Funnell, who was also third Overall and second in the Owner-Riders.

Rita proves she’s the Best of the bunch

BOWLS: The Royals’ successful summer season reached its conclusion recently with the club competitions finals day.

Results (winners, runners-up): drawn pairs: Colin Owen and Fred Price, Alan Rabson and Rod Smith; drawn mixed triples: Colin Owen, Sheila Cotton and Helen Waters, Graham Harris, Mike Harwood and Sylvia Payne; mixed pairs: Rita Best and Terry Metcalf, Julia Rogans and Colin Owen; women’s singles: Rita Best, Karen Moon; men’s singles: Steve Dann, Terry Metcalf.

The Royals’ winter season is now underway and already the men have played two Kent League matches.

The first three matches, all away, started with an eight-rinker at Maidstone, followed by a seven-rinker encounter at Folkestone Maidstone’s Mote Park club are very tough nuts to break at home. This year was no different and, despite valour from the visitors, Mote ran out winners on six of the rinks for an eight-point total.

Folkestone have just as good a record, and defend it equally doggedly. Unsurprisingly, the Royals men struggled on the tricky playing surface in pocketing three points.

An early start to national competition saw a first-round draw against Horsham in the Senior Double Rink take Roger Wilmshurst’s team travelling, while Bob Holmwood and his men welcomed the visitors under Peter Dawes.

At home, shots were regularly exchanged and at 11 ends the score was 11 apiece. In the next five ends, home advantage told and the Royals total increased to 16 without reply.

The visitors then narrowed the gap to 17-15 before Royals again restored their five-shot lead. A careless four dropped on the last end rather flattered the visitors, who were more beaten than the 20-19 score line