



XXXX MOOR FUN – Winter 2007

Welcome to the first newsletter from the SEPRC. Thank you for joining and we hope you have fun and enjoy your Exmoors this year. We plan to send out a newsletter to members at least 4 times through the year, keeping you informed about what is going on in your area and around Scotland.

As well as the newsletter, any there will be mailshots for current information as well as the information being posted on the SEPRC pages of the scottishexmoors.co.uk website.

CALLING ALL BUDDING ENDURANCE/DRESSAGE RIDERS!!!

The Scottish Endurance Riding Club (SERC) are running a competition at the end of April for riding clubs in the Lothians area. They are calling for teams from local riding clubs as well as individual competitors. The competition will consist of a dressage test (walk/trot, easy prelim, harder prelim, novice) followed by an endurance ride of approximately 5 – 8 miles. SEPRC would like to put a team forward, if you are interested in being a member of the team or would like to ride as an individual please contact seprc@scottishexmoors.co.uk. We plan to hold a talk in February/March outlining what to expect and tips to get your pony fit for the short endurance ride.



Colin and Lesley Enjoy the Autumn Sunshine at Cardrona (SERC 24km, October '06)

Cardrona – first ride for us since Pentland Hills in July and the last ride of 2006. Colin has a new pony on loan and was keen to get a ride in before the end of the season so we put an entry in for Cardrona. Bit long for a first ride I thought, but with Struan being a tad unfit we planned to take it easy.

Booked the farrier for the Thurs before the ride since Ux had lost his front shoes and had planned to put fronts on Struan too. Farrier arrived 30 minutes early (a first) and, Lisa (being 38 weeks pregnant) had water coming into her wellies due to the depth of the puddle Struan was standing in! Struan was a 'pig' and refused to be caught for her and the farrier left before Colin got there from school. So off we went to Cardrona with Struan still barefoot and the warning that the going would be hard underfoot in bits.

Quite exciting though! Uxie's first endurance ride!! Just a baby really at 6 but we had hacked out several times and now he was 100% in traffic so we knew crossing from the lorry parking to the venue wouldn't pose a problem. Didn't fancy walking back after being vetted before the ride to get tacked up (nor after it!) so we tacked up, put sweat rugs over their rumps and headed over to the venue. Ux wasn't too keen about the rug flapping so Colin took it off and draped it over the saddle.

Crossed the road and up on the pavement..... Colin dropped his rug, oopsy! Thanks to the road marshall who retrieved it! Into the venue, oopsy, forgotten the map.... Colin ran back to the lorry to get it (well he's younger and



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fitter than I am I'm SURE it was his fault!) Map case recovered, we vetted..... both fine. Time for the off!

Decided to let Struan make the pace dependent on the going underfoot. Set off down the field at a steady trot, round into the second field and nearly lost Colin..... as he zoomed passed me at gallop, Ux bucking!!! Mmmm, didn't like that yellow flag (why? He'd passed several like it already!). Had an 'Oh no what are we doing feeling' but Colin assured me he was OK, and he had only come up off the saddle once, but, as he regained his stirrups 'Can we just walk' was his first question.

Now Struan not being the fastest at the best of times and having been banking on Uxie encouraging him to follow, this was not exactly going as planned. But early days yet! Walked the next bit then went up the banking and onto the old railway track. Aha, ideal trotting surface, I was off, Colin following and no complaints from him, Got to the scary bridge – Colin got off to lead Ux over (he's not got as much trouble getting back on again!) and Struan followed. The road section was great and we made up time, then into the forest. We crossed the burn with no problems and both ponies had a wee drink, then it was up the stony section, making our way carefully. Uphill, phew, took our time. By the time we got to A and we were a bit behind time I was a bit worried. The going was better by now and we went on at a steady trot.

Out into the open – really enjoying the route now. Didn't need the map as the marking was good and the talk round made perfect sense. The gate in the hollow then left up the side of the fence, loving this bit! Struan was striding out (still at trot) ears pricked...must have

realised he was heading home. Took a breather down the downhill stretch and let a couple of riders by. Reached B and almost missed it since some kids were sitting on it. Struan in his element and Colin and Ux cantering to keep up (or so they said!). The going was good and we'd made up time. Out onto the road again and a steady trot again, only slowing down for 2 cars and a motorbike (not to mention the policecar that came flying up the road towards us!). Round into the village and back over the scary bridge (straight across this time). Trotted along by the golf course and checked the stopwatch. 20mins to get back in the maximum 3 hours. Time to walk.

Got to the banking – oh my god! Aimed straight down and told Colin to lean a bit back. Then amended it to 'lean right back'. The muscles in my b-u-m went into spasm as we went down! And that bank must've seemed like the Hickstead Derby bank to an Exmoor!!!!

Steady trot to the finish.... well that was the plan but my riding partner just HAD to canter over the finish line!! 'Na na na na na I beat you!' Uxie's first endurance completed comfortably within time!! A great day all round (I beat him on heart rate though!)

Lesley Bell

NEXT SEPRC EVENT

Sunday February 4th 2007 - GAMES DAY (postponed from 3rd December)
Langfaulds indoor school, nr Dunfermline.
Details on SEPRC pages of website www.scottishexmoors.co.uk . Entry £6 per person.

Ridden games for grown ups and inhand games for babies. Rosettes for all. Mulled wine and mince pies provided. Festive dress welcome!!