

Hickstead – 4th & 5th August 2009

The journey to Hickstead is always eventful; a slight detour to Shepton Mallet for a new wiper blade and we were on our way, nothing could stop us, not even a vehicle fire on the A303.

As usual the weather did not let us down, glorious sunshine as soon as we arrived. We set up base camp in our usual spot under the trees and Jo had the kettle boiling straight away whilst Chris, Charlotte and Ash all went to sort the stables out. The minibus arrived shortly afterwards closely followed by Richard Robinson with the horses he was transporting, then parents with pupils and more horses. The general form is a team talk from Danny followed by any questions then we get on to the serious job of the barbecue, relaxing, chatting, eating and generally having fun.



The competition started at 8.30am with our first team into the arena at 8.55am, the second team went through at 9.31 am, the third team at 10.01 and fourth team at 10.28am. It soon became apparent that fence 6 was the bogey with horses sliding into it and refusing it frequently. Clear rounds were hard to come by this year with only 6 teams out of 67 teams achieving a triple clear. As the rules state 10 teams will go into the main ring, a jump off was required to determine the last 4 teams to go through to the final. As our team of Steffi Dampney, Christina Drew and Becky Steljes only had 4 faults, it was decided that Steffi and Cloud would jump off for the team. They both put in a sterling performance, taking us straight into the main arena.

Things move very quickly at Hickstead and we all raced over to the main ring to watch the final. Again, clear rounds were not prevalent, with many competitors finding the course hard going. In the end, after lots oohing and ahhhhing, Millfield finished a very respectable 8th.

We would like to thank all the parents and pupils, without you, none of this would be possible. A huge thank you of course to all the staff who work so tremendously hard over the 2 days. Well done everyone, same time next year?