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***Daytime Round Up Friday 6th October***

**Final rides and new beginnings on day three of Horse of the Year Show**

The stage was set once more for the working hunter ponies at Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) 2023, as the **National Pony Society/Mole Valley Farmers Working Hunter Pony of the Year Championship** got underway over David Cole’s course in the TopSpec Arena.

14-year-old Samuel Laity posted an emotional win on the grey gelding, Barney IX, in the **133cm section** and later went on to stand overall Champion in the Andrews Bowen International Arena. This incredible achievement was made even more special because this is the pair's last show together before he goes back to his owners after this week.

“It’s been a rollercoaster, said Sam’s mum, Marie. We’ve had three years with Barney and he has qualified every year for HOYS. We did two qualifiers this year and he won both of them.

“Sam does everything himself at home on our farm. He is completely obsessed with all of his ponies and loves them all.

A delighted Sam reflected on his performance earlier in the day: “He can be quite strong, so I was a bit nervous, but I couldn’t have asked more from him; he was an absolute gem. There were only two clears in the class; I asked him, he did it and he is one in a million.”

Another partnership coming to an end on a high today was Kelly Ward’s Woodfield Hazy who gave daughter Ruby a super ride round to win the **153cm section** and stand overall Reserve Champion in what is their last season together before the Connemara has a new rider.

Ruby said: “He felt amazing in there. It was a very technical course earlier; testing enough and definitely a HOYS worker course!”

Kelly added: “I’m delighted. We bought Woody as a four-year-old from Ireland. We then sold him and bought him back two years ago. He is super genuine and very chilled.”

Leyla Wheelwright rode her own seven-year-old Nae Limits to the top spot in the **Intermediate** section. Nae Limits was bred by Kirsty Aird, who is having a very successful HOYS with a team of hunters and M&Ms making their debuts. Leyla bought the bay gelding from Kirsty up in Scotland last summer. They came to HOYS as a novice in this class last year and had two unlucky poles.

Fast forward to this season and qualifying for the Royal International, as well as finishing second in the prestigious Desert Orchid, has culminated in the ultimate win at HOYS.

“I think the atmosphere perks him up,” said Leyla. “The course today allowed you to ride forward and the doubles were nice and long.”

Winner of the **143cm section** was Georgia Aungier’s striking skewbald Allandy Gold Spark ridden by Gracie Aungier. The gelding proved that age was no barrier to success; now 20 years of age he gave Gracie a super ride in both arenas.

Also in the arena today was the **SEIB Search for a Star Championship,** whichis the final of five classes across the first three days of HOYS, expertly judged by Katie Jerram-Hunnable, Hannah Horton and Chris Hunnable.

The winner of the Hacks was crowned overall Champion. Helen Church’s homebred Warmblood X, Bassingfield Dark Secret (Zeus), perfectly partnered daughter Jennifer in an effortless performance on both days.

Jennifer is an equine vet and has only started showing Zeus, who is 10, this year after having a baby. “We’ve always known he’s a nice looking chap, so we can carry on now!” smiled Jennifer.

“It feels like a real achievement to do this on a homebred and we also bred his mum, Bassingfield Cassandra.”

Judge Katie Jerram-Hunnable said of Zeus: “He was amazing and has done everything we have asked of him. He’s a true hack.”

Hayley Came-Boyce impressed the judges with her six-year-old Irish Sports Horse Killycloghan Masterson in the Show Hunter. Hayley bought him after very sadly losing a few horses. Just when she was about to give up, a friend found him for her as a just broken four-year-old and they have since done a bit of eventing and Showjumping. Hayley would like to do Workers with him, but will allow him to mature naturally first.

“He’s been an absolute dream”, said Hayley. “He’s not looked at anything. He’s just a complete gentleman and I adore him.”

Judge Hannah Horton said: “He is a true lightweight; he covers the ground and is very mannerly.”

The winner of the Traditional Cob was Billy Wilson, owned and ridden by Kelly Driver. Kelly entered the piebald gelding into some qualifiers this season and now they’ve truly rounded off their Search for a Star journey in style.

The Working Show Pony went to an ‘I Love You Melody’ Connemara, Lochan Beag Rogaire owned and ridden by Rebecca Giles. The 12-year-old gelding came over from Ireland as a three-year-old. The Horse section went to Harriet Johnson’s Mein Rebel.

Holly Gray’s Thoroughbred Symphony of Kings certainly lived up to his name to take the red rosette for the Riding Horses, while Lisa Hardy rode her five-year-old Cob, Cortina, to the Show Cob victory; his first full season in the show ring since she bought him as a two-year-old.

The final Championship of the daytime performance was the **Westown Stud Junior Mountain & Moorland Ridden Pony of the Year Championship** and what a cracking couple of days it has turned out to be for the Leeming family.

After a win for Diana Leeming's Welsh A Thistledown San-Siro  in the Colne & Sweet Dreams Show Confectioners Mountain & Moorland Mini Pony of the Year Championship on Wednesday, her daughter Lucinda claimed the Junior Mountain & Moorland Championship this afternoon. Both Lola Carabine who rode Thistledown San-Siro and Lucinda will be heading into the Supreme Products Supreme Pony of the Year on Sunday.

Lucinda was riding Susan Pool’s Connemara gelding, Eastlands Dunedin (Harry). The nine-year-old is produced by Lauren Beaumont, who won last year with him in the open Connemara class at HOYS. This is Lucinda’s first junior season on him and they won their first HOYS qualifier with a huge 52 entries in it. “They look an absolute picture together,” said Lauren.

Lauren has had Harry since he was four and she broke him in and brought him on. “He loves being in the ring; he just performs.”

Reserve Champion went to the winner of the Small Breeds class, Amanda Burchell-Small’s homebred Welsh Section A, Rowfantina Orlando Bloom, piloted by James Burchell. The pony is by Broekland Allessandro out of Rowfantina Old Times, bred by James’ grandmother and produced by his parents, Oliver and Jo.

11-year-old James said: “I’ve had him for most of my life. My nan bred him and he’s been such a dude today.”