



MIDLANDS CARRIAGEDRIVING

PRESS RELEASE

Showers fail to dampen spirits at Thoresby Hall

Showers throughout dressage and cones failed to dampen competitors' spirits at Midlands Carriagedriving's first event of 2021 at Thoresby Hall (15 and 16 May). It was just good to be out, and everyone was rewarded with a warm sunny day on the Sunday. Much of the pleasure was down to this historic venue, with its beautiful parkland, fabulous going and the Hall, an 18th century country house, creating an imposing backdrop.

With few competitions taking place since 2019, some competitors were showing a bit of rust, with eliminations for missing part of the cones course, missing compulsory flags and not correcting errors of course in the obstacles. Only one person, Rachel Kay (Novice Horse), managed a double clear in cones but then sadly missed a flag on the marathon course. Megan Wheeldon, who had the advantage having already been out twice this year, was the only survivor of a strong Open Pony class. Now driving the previously Julie Tomasik-owned Red, Megan had the second-best cones score (one ball down inside the time) and cleared up with some swift obstacle times.

It was good to see Geoff Kirby's lovely mare, Peggy, back in action after two years off. Driven by Geoff's daughter Nicola Corby, Peggy was back to her old self, leading all three phases of the Open Horse class with ease. She finished over 50 penalties ahead of the next three who all had very close overall scores: Mike Hodgson (183.12), Susan Henry (184.33) and Graham Clements (187.20). A corrected error of course for Chris Patrick blew his chances of narrowly overtaking Wendy Mason in the Intermediate Horse while Jeff Ormerod saw off Helen Cruickshank in the Tandem Pony despite throwing his backstepper off in Obstacle 4 when his leader had an argument with a blue water barrel, which the pony won.

MC club chairman David Wheeldon and Angie Smith were in classes of their own – Pony Pair and Pony Four respectively – as was Karen Bassett whose Horse Four team are gelling well. In Novice Pony Lyn Chorlton's enthusiastic cob mare put up a lovely performance with a solid dressage test, good cones score and obstacle times that were quicker than many achieved in the Intermediate and Open classes – one to watch for the future. Another one to watch is Joanne Gadsby's new horse, out for the first time in the Short Format class. Tactfully driven, he obviously enjoyed the experience and took it all in his stride.

The next event in the MC diary is Locko Park on 5 – 6 June followed by the Regional and Club 2DE at Onley Grounds (31 July - August) and on 4 – 5 September 2DE including Club Championships, also at Onley Grounds. The season closes with a 2DE at Oasby on 18 – 19 September.

ENDS

Images: As captioned

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