

Kate Attlee Rider Diary



Photo by Kevin Sparrow

I knew this moment would come.....the time to write about my competing results – success or failure?!!

I had a great season last year and in the back of my mind (not that I'm superstitious or anything!) I pretty much decided that because I was doing this write-up my competing would go horrendously and totally out of the window and I would have to grovel and try and be optimistic about the whole experience when writing about it.

So all I can say is THANK THE LORD!! Having competed at two Regional Championships split between Stein, my own, at Elementry level, Julie Daley's Limiro at Medium level and Sarah Outwin's Lochness at Medium and Advanced Medium level, we have qualified for the Winter Championships with all the horses at the right levels! Great, I thought to myself, at least I don't have to explain why I came bottom in each class!

They all behaved themselves impeccably with Stein coming 2nd with 70%. Limiro gained 68% and Lochness a consistent 66% in both tests. Lochness did really well because one test was in bad weather outdoors. I was very proud of them all because they all realised the importance of the competition. I'm grateful the hours schooling in the cold and wet paid off!

However, it's not over yet! The Winter Championships are in April and yes....I do have my doubts so a word of caution readers, should the following write-ups not be about competing in any way, shape or form, you'll know that for certain that either:-

- a) I got lost on the way to the competition
- b) I went wrong in my test
- c) I got eliminated
- d) I fell off
- e) All of the above

"Preparation is the Key to Everything" and yup, I'm preparing

to panic! In the past it has been very easy to build up the pressure on my horses up to the date of the competition, but is this always the best way?

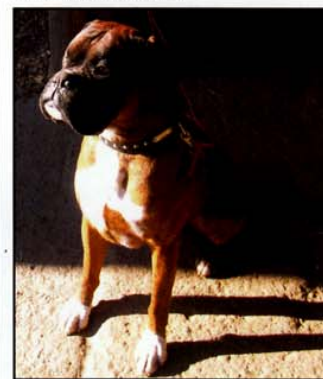
This time, my horses are under pressure now. They are being schooled quite intensely and my plan is to then take the pressure off a week before the competition to let them down mentally but to keep their peak physical fitness.

I've made time to have some lessons of my own and my trainers are great at improving my horse's way of going, improving my technique, giving me confidence and sharpening me up mentally.

In the build-up for an important competition we also focus on the specific movements in the test so both the horse and myself know exactly what is required of us. I have also booked a local competition as a warm up test (aka sit up and wake up test!)

I have tried really hard to cut down on my teaching before the competition so I'm not totally shattered once I go down that centre-line, but like every test – it all depends on the day!

Over and out! Kate



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