

EPSOM RDA NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020

Corona Virus/COVID 19 and Epsom RDA

Remember:

- Minimum number of volunteers on site to check the ponies
- Watch your distance -keep at least 2 meters apart
- No socialising in the coffee room
- More details on our website www.epsomrda.org.uk
- For help and guidance on Corona Virus/ COVID 19 go to the [NHS Corona Virus website](https://www.nhs.uk)

It was with sadness that the Trustees took the decision on Tuesday 17 March to suspend our riding sessions until further notice in response to the national Corona Virus/ COVID 19 crisis.

Suspending our riding sessions is tough for our volunteers and riders. Both hugely value being part of our happy community, take comfort from the certainty of a weekly routine, and enjoy that special feeling of a bond with our superstar ponies.

There has been a terrific response from our volunteers with small teams from each Session coming into the yard daily to look after the ponies.

They all follow strict social distancing protocols and maintain high levels of hygiene.

Volunteers are also thinking of ideas of how we can keep our riders, and those volunteers unable to be at the yard, in contact with their favourite ponies and the activity at the yard using our social media channels.

The Trustees will continue to review the situation with a view of returning to riding as soon as it is advisable to do.

Our income will be much reduced this year. Ride fees income is interrupted and our fundraising events cancelled. Fortunately we enough reserves to meet our immediate costs. However, we cannot afford to be complacent. We will review our fundraising options regularly bearing in mind the financial challenges many people will be

facing now and in the near future.

However, there is much to look forward too. Just before our closure the Harold Newton dressage event took place on Saturday 14 March with some tremendous performances from our riders and ponies. A testament to our Group Coaches who work so hard with our riders to develop their riding skills and their confidence in their abilities. More on the inside pages.

In February we were proud to host the Regional Training Day on our Sensory Track. On Monday 16 March the evening session held the last riding session before the suspension of services on the track. It is a facility that continues to develop and will provide a fun and stimulating environment for our riders when we return to normal service.

Thank you to everyone for your support of Epsom RDA in these exceptionally challenging circumstances.

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Harold Newton

Our in-house dressage competition, the Harold Newton, took place on Saturday 14 March with an impressive standard of riding from all the riders with everyone scoring 60% or more. Our equine team also rose to the occasion

with a special mention for Romeo, who proved he could canter, much to the delight of everyone watching!

Sadly our riders and ponies will not have the chance to show off their skills on the

Regional or National stages this year, but all should be proud of their achievements. Their Group Coaches look forward to continuing the good work when we return to riding.

Rider	Horse	Session	Class	Test	Score %	Place
Jenny	Romeo	Tuesday	1	Walk only-Escorted – TVI/PVI Championship 2020	64.2	4th
Aaron	Silver	Saturday AM	1	Walk only-Escorted-I/D Championship 2019	67.5	2nd
Dermot	Dazz	Sunday 2	1	Walk only-Escorted-I/D Championship 2019	71.4	1 st *
Elisa	Narla	Saturday PM	1	Walk only-Escorted-I/D Championship 2019	65.3	3 rd
Robert	Guinness	Saturday AM	1	Walk only-Escorted-I/D Championship 2019	60.6	5 th
Laval	Taffy	Saturday AM	2	Walk only – Unled – TVI/PVI Championship 2020	69.5	6 th
Emily	Moss	Sunday 2	2	Walk only – Unled – ID Championship 2019	68.6	9 th
Rhiannon	Taffy	Wednesday AM	2	Walk only – Unled – ID Championship 2019	77.5	2 nd
Layla	Ria	Sunday 1	2	Walk only – Unled – ID Championship 2019	68.9	7 th
Erin	Moss	Sunday 1	2	Walk only – Unled – ID Championship 2019	77.8	1 st
Simone	Romeo	Monday AM	2	Walk only – Unled – ID Championship 2019	67.5	5 th
Collette	Guinness	Wednesday Eve	2	Walk only – Unled – ID Championship 2019	64.2	10 th
Foad	Dazz	Wednesday Eve	2	Walk only – Unled – ID Championship 2019	69.7	5 th
Amelie	Taffy	Monday AM	2	Walk only – Unled – ID Championship 2019	76.1	3 rd
Stephen	Moss	Saturday PM/ Wednesday Eve	2	Walk only – Unled – ID Championship 2019	71.4	4 th
Adam	Romeo	Saturday PM	3	Walk & Trot -Unled – ID Championship 2020	71.3	3 rd
Susie	Marigold	Sunday 1	3	Walk & Trot -Unled – ID Championship 2020	77.8	1 st *
Jay	Dazz	Saturday AM	3	Walk & Trot -Unled – ID Championship 2020	66.3	4 th
Grace	Guinness	Saturday PM	3	Walk & Trot -Unled – ID Championship 2020	72.0	2 nd
Jon	Romeo	Saturday AM	4	Walk, Trot & Canter Unled – ID Championship 2020	72.3	1st

Keeping our Ponies Fit and Healthy

Although our riding sessions are suspended and our schooling and hacking programme currently curtailed we are still doing what we can to keep our ponies fit and healthy.

Every session is working with our ponies to ensure each pony is checked and groomed daily. Where possible ponies are lunged or long reined regularly.

As keeping our horses supple and flexible is important to their overall health we will re-introduce the schooling programme and the hacks to Horton Countryside Park as soon as we can to ensure the ponies are prepared for the return of our riders. Horse & Pony Trustee, Jo Lee, explains more about the schooling programme and the plans for the future below

Have you ever tried yoga?

If you have you'll know it's hard at first – but it gets easier as you practice because your muscles get used to moving in certain ways. Well it's the same for our horses. In order to keep them supple they need to be worked in a correct outline and get used to bending their bodies the right way – this

is what the schooling team work on so that can fulfil their jobs of helping every rider to achieve their potential.

The team usually meet weekly to school and exercise the ponies under the supervision of our external instructor, Phyl Cambridge, and you might also see members of the team exercising the ponies at other times because we all need to practice to improve (this means the

suppleness with horses who are perhaps struggling a bit with a rider on board. It's a bit like if you had to run with a rucksack on and then someone took it off – you would find it a lot easier!

As soon as circumstances allow we plan to start a series of monthly evening schooling sessions with Sarah Patience who is an International Grand Prix rider and coach and a great friend of Epsom RDA. She



“The focus is always on building the horses’ suppleness and ability to move forward freely.”

riders and the horses!). The focus is always on building the horses’ suppleness and ability to move forward freely. Sometimes we ride and sometimes we might lunge or long rein the horses without a rider on board. This work can be particularly helpful in building strength and

will focus on helping us to get the best out of our horses. These sessions will be a great learning experience for everyone and anyone will be welcome to come and watch. Keep an eye out for updates once we return to normal operations.

Epsom Riding for the Disabled Association

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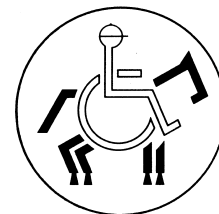
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Shop on line - support Epsom RDA

When you are shopping on-line register with Easy Fundraising and/or Smile Amazon and choose Epsom Riding for the Disabled as your charity to support.

We will receive a donation when you shop at **no extra cost to you**. Click on the logos below to get started or visit

www.easyfundraising.org.uk

www.smileamazon.co.uk

Our income will be much reduced this year while our ride money is stopped and our fundraising events cancelled.

The costs for looking after horses, maintaining our buildings and the grounds continue to come in. Currently at £3,000 every month

Your support by registering with Easy Fundraising and Smile Amazon will help us meet these costs.



Keeping Connected 365

Some of you may have already received emails from Trustees ending in @epsomrda.org.uk. This is part of the project to modernise our systems and our use of IT to improve our communications and better share information using Office 365 for Business. Microsoft provides this software free of charge to registered charities.

It's already proven invaluable with Trustees being able to hold their first meeting since the lockdown virtually using MS Teams.

We are currently working on setting up a SharePoint portal so that there is a secure central library for documents and other data.

The next stage will be to roll

out dedicated epsomrda.org.uk email accounts for Session Leaders, and the teams supporting Volunteer Management and Rider Waiting List management.

If you would like to know more contact gill.mcpherson@epsomrda.org.uk or emma.morris@epsomrda.org.uk