



The Side Saddle Association[®]

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2025

Introducing The Association's New Chairman Miss Henrietta Barton

Henrietta Barton has been involved with horses and ponies since childhood much of it in side saddle classes with great success.

She has been a side saddle judge for many years and is also a judge on many other panels and when not showing her own home bred ponies is busy judging all over the country and abroad including at the RIHS and HOYS. She represents side saddle riders' interests on The Showing Council and is active in encouraging shows all over the country to include side saddle classes.

Having been an Association Area Chairman and a Vice Chairman, Henrietta is very aware of what Members want from the Association and is keen to create

more opportunities for Members to enjoy and encouraging equines of all types to take part. Her long involvement with side saddle enables Henrietta to give help, advice and encouragement. Her aim is to keep the SSA moving forward but without losing the grace and elegance of this special art of riding. By sharing her knowledge and experience, she will support the Association and its Members.

As the Association's new Chairman, she will undoubtedly use all her experience to spread the word of the joys and benefits of side saddle and to encourage new Members. The Association is in capable hands, but it is beholden on all Members to give the new Chairman support and to help bring new ideas to fruition.



Our new Chairman, Miss Henrietta Barton, expresses her thanks:

"I am deeply honoured to be the Chairman of the Side Saddle Association. I would like to thank you for all your votes and support.

I have been involved with side saddle most of my life. Riding ponies, hacks, hunters and competing in the SSA classes. I love everything to do with side saddle and I will do my very best to promote this elegant art of riding. We must all try and encourage more riders to have a go and become members.

I would like to thank all the officers and Area Chairmen who give up their valuable time for the Association. I hope to visit as many Areas as possible and I look forward to meeting you all. Please don't hesitate to be in touch with me.

Let's have a fabulous 2025; the Association offers members so many opportunities."

Henrietta Barton, April 2025

(Editor's note: Henrietta's contact details are in the Vice Chairmen section of the current Members' Handbook).



The departing Chairman, Ms Vanessa Hood's words as she hands the Chair of the Association to Miss Henrietta Barton:

"I have been privileged to lead our Association as National Chairman for two tenures - eight years in total. As I finish my second period we are in a strong position regarding Instructors, Judges and the wonderful array of classes and other opportunities on offer to our riders and supporters. However, we must recruit

and retain new members to help us stay financially viable. I wish Henrietta the very best as she takes over the position. I hope fervently that everyone unites and commits to keeping the Side Saddle Association thriving."

Vanessa Hood, April 2025



Vanessa Hood with Area 9's Zoe Macphail

The 50th Annual General Meeting of The Side Saddle Association

The 50th Annual General Meeting was held via Zoom on Sunday 23rd March at 11.30am. Ms Vanessa Hood (Chairman) began by welcoming our Patron Mrs Holderness-Roddam and all Members to the meeting before handing over to Mrs Jane Pryor (President) to open the meeting.

Ms Sally Lane (Hon. General Secretary) read out the 12 apologies received and Members were invited to give apologies for others totalling 15. There were 83 voting Members and 4 visitors.

The Minutes of the 49th Annual General Meeting held on 24th March 2024 were duly approved and signed by Ms Hood.

Ms Hood then presented the Annual Report on the Association's activities during the year which was informative, comprehensive and interesting. She received thanks from Mrs Pryor for an excellent report.

The Financial Report of the accounts of the SSA for the 12 months ended 31st December 2024 was presented by Mrs Emma Wright (Hon.Treasurer) and duly accepted and adopted. A loss was shown and we are all encouraged to recruit new Members and to assist in fundraising generally.

Ms Sally Lane was called upon to announce the results of the Election of Officers. The results of the voting is as follows:

President - Mrs Jane Pryor
Chairman - Miss Henrietta Barton
Vice Chairmen - Mrs Shirley Anderson, Mrs Penny Clarke and Miss Donna Clayton all being elected with majority votes.

Mrs Samantha Stephenson (National Show Organiser) was asked to present the 2024 National Show Report and the 2024 National Show Accounts. It was pleasing to see the accounts

showing a healthy balance, although more sponsors and donations will be needed to maintain the funds. Thanks were given to Mrs Stephenson for her continuing organisation of the Show and to Mr Steve Scott for maintaining the accounts.

Any Other Business was opened by Mrs Pryor thanking on behalf of Members Ms Hood the retiring Chairman, for her time spent as Chairman and for keeping the Association going forwards, as well as being a great source of advice, help and basic common sense. Mrs Pryor also wished our new Chairman Miss Henrietta Barton well in her new post and looked forward to working with her.

We were fortunate to have our Patron Mrs Jane Holderness-Roddam with us even though she was officiating at Barbury Horse Trials. She gave encouraging words about retaining our customs and the art of side saddle and wished the Association well in the forthcoming season. We are grateful to Mrs Holderness-Roddam for her continued support and patronage of the Side Saddle Association.

The Meeting closed at 12.35pm

After the formal meeting the announcement of awards including the 2024 Performance Points (*see separate entry*) took place. The winners included:

- The Billette Mackie Memorial Training Award – Kerry Davey, Area 12,
- The Ralph James Memorial Trophy – Ian Smart, Area 8
- The Skelton Fellowship – Ann Sadler, Area 8.

Presentations for all these awards will take place at the National Side Saddle Show at Addington Equestrian and more about the winners will be included in the Autumn newsletter.

Editorial

There are times in life when one wishes one had kept one's mouth shut! However, volunteering to take over the Editorship of the Side Saddle Association's newsletter was not one of them! I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of putting together the 50th Anniversary edition particularly as it put me back in touch with the Association and the many friends I have made over the years and I

was flattered to be asked to take over from Louise Graham. I'm sure you join me in thanking her as it is no easy task. In this edition I have tried to mix up Members' news and successes with articles and I thank all those who have contributed. My email address in the Members' Handbook is incorrect so if you have sent articles which haven't been reproduced PLEASE accept my

sincere apologies and resend them to juliet.leighton@outlook.com and I will endeavour to include them in the Autumn Newsletter. Please continue to send me your news and views. Finally enjoy your side saddle riding; you are keeping a wonderful equestrian 'art' alive.

Juliet Leighton, April 2025

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THANK YOU, VANESSA!

From our President Mrs Jane Pryor on behalf of all Members of the Association

Vanessa Hood has finally hung up her Chairman's Shoes after two terms of office as our National Chairman having served 2011-14 and again 2020-25. She has been an amazing rock to the Association, giving the benefit of her wisdom, not only of side saddle matters but also her knowledge of how things should be done. Vanessa steered the SSA through COVID lockdown, encouraging Members to come up with ways to help us when we were unable to go out and compete or socialise in general; some very innovative ideas came out of it too!

In this second term Vanessa has had to hold all meetings of Council via Zoom and where many meetings would have been in person Vanessa has kept things running along smoothly until we were able to meet freely. We owe a large debt of gratitude to Vanessa and I would like to thank her, most sincerely, for being such an able and adaptable Chairman, but not forgetting her husband Douglas who has always been there for her and deserves our thanks as well.

We welcome Henrietta Barton as our new Chairman but I know she will be able to rely on Vanessa for any advice she may need when she is beginning her new post.

In the meantime, it only remains for me to say 'Thank you, Vanessa!' and happy retirement but we will still look forward to seeing you out judging and instructing for many years to come.



Henrietta Barton presenting Vanessa Hood with an olive tree on behalf of the SSA to thank her for her tenure as Chairman

VANESSA HOOD

Side Saddle Association Chairman (2020 – 2025)

Mrs Maureen James pays tribute to the Association's retiring Chairman

In 2020 Vanessa began her second term as the Association's Chairman, having served three years from 2011-2014. This came after 8 years chairing the JET Committee.

The depth and breadth of Vanessa's commitment to the Association is also emphasised by her over 18 years as Chairman of Area 5, having served jointly with her late mother Lilian Grey for some years before then. Much in demand as an Instructor and Examiner, she was also one of the first to be appointed to the Judges Panel in the Association's early years.

It was probably about 48 years ago that I first met Vanessa. As a newcomer to the Association, and only having hunted and shown side saddle in Scotland, I was very impressed when I came to live in England by this elegant young lady on a very smart chestnut whom I saw at my first show, and was told that it was a dry run for her next appearance at Wembley!

Over the years Vanessa has owned many lovely horses, but to me the one that remains in my memory as the ideal side saddle horse is her grey mare *Whattamiss*, a dream of a lady's horse. I expect Vanessa wished that the Classical class had been in existence in the 1980s!

I think I can say that most Chairmen leave office having left some form of legacy for the Association in terms of improvements, but I think Vanessa is unique in the number of her ideas that



have been taken up by Council and are now in place and will serve the Association well in the future. These include Online Equitation and Seminars, the introduction of side saddle classes at BD Associated Championships, the Ambassador Awards and a Pony Club Badge for side saddle.

Any tribute to Vanessa must include her husband, Douglas, who has supported her through thick and thin over both her terms of office. Both he and Vanessa have also been very loyal and generous sponsors of the National Show over many years.

Maureen James

THE RISING STAR LADIES SHOW HORSE FINAL 2024

Held in December at the London International Horse Show

The British Show Horse Association (BSHA) Rising Star Supreme Finals at London International Horse Show (LIHS) gives new competitors into showing and existing BSHA amateur members, another major Championship route to follow during the showing season.

The 2024 Finals were held in December 2024 and **Penny Clarke**, who helped many of the riders and was present at the Show, gives us the results and background to the successful riders.

The London International Horse Show (LIHS) returned for the second year to the ExCel Centre. Riders had qualified across the UK for one of the sought after places in the Cavago Rising Stars Ladies Show Horse final and the class was a wonderful display of side saddle horses and their riders, with 22 competitors coming forward for judging in the buzzy atmosphere of this iconic Christmas Show. The Side Saddle Association was extremely well represented with 17 of those forward being members of the association and the top 6 places going to SSA members.



Laura Jones

Thrilled to be awarded the top accolade was Laura Jones from Area 6 and her lovely horse, *Fury* (above). Laura has a remarkable story behind her win. Having first tried side saddle in 2008, with the support of the late Hazel Rosser, she had one season competing before having to



Jill Robinson

retire her horse. Then, in 2018, Laura had a riding accident and broke her back and it took her a while to get over the mental and physical trauma of this accident.

Having found *Fury*, it wasn't all plain sailing as he could be quirky and sharp, but she persevered and with the help of Hazel's daughter, Rhianwen Rosser, their side saddle journey began together. Their season wasn't without its share of challenging moments but Laura says "on the day it mattered, he pulled it out of the bag" and "the horse I thought I was going to be fixing, actually fixed me".

Jill Robinson (above) from Area 19, looked the picture of elegance as she rode her very successful horse *Will I Am* into 2nd place. Jill has had a very successful season winning the Sir Lancelot Final at the Side Saddle National Show and being champion at the Royal Highland, Royal Cheshire and Notts County Shows. "*Will I Am* has been a hunter all his life, so side saddle was a new career for him after never doing much in the way of flatwork" says Jill though he seems to have taken to the showing incredibly well.

Slotting into 3rd place was Area 2's Frankie Bell (right) and the very attractive coloured cob, *Perllandu Lyrical Interlude*, otherwise known as *Minstrel*. Having stood 2nd the previous year, Frankie and *Minstrel* clearly relished a return trip (also taking 6th in the cob class later in the week). Frankie and *Minstrel* started their side saddle career together 5 years ago and qualified this year at the Cumberland County Show. Frankie was very enthusiastic about the opportunity of riding at LIHS again saying



Frankie Bell

"There is such a magical atmosphere when you ride in the arena at London. I felt excitement and butterflies competing alongside so many talented riders and their lovely horses".

Fourth place was occupied by another Area 6 member, Lucy Richards-Lowe (below) and the horse she bought for meat money as an unbroken 5 year old, *Toptime Spargo*. Lucy started riding side saddle in 2023 under the guidance of Helen Thomas and qualified for LIHS at the Bridgend County Show. She describes *Spargo* as “a horse of a lifetime, who has made all my dreams come true”.



Lucy Richards-Lowe



Renee Tuck

Area 14's Renee Tuck (above) on her Heavyweight Hunter, *Lackwelly Lady* (aka *Baggage*) gained an early qualification for LIHS at Wiltshire Show in March and pulled off a very creditable 5th place in the Ladies class as well as achieving 5th in the Heavyweight Hunter class. Their first love is hunting and they can regularly be seen out hunting side saddle with the Duke of Beaufort Hunt, having started riding side saddle in 2020 under the tutelage of Penny Clarke. Having really enjoyed the LIHS experience in 2023, Renee said she couldn't wait for a return visit, with the atmosphere of the show being so festive and fun. She says “it is a privilege as

an amateur to be given the opportunity to ride in such a prestigious arena - an experience to remember”.

There was a huge cheer around the arena for Paige l'Anson (Area 10) and her diminutive Cleveland Bay cross New Forest pony, *Deenivs Cuthbert* (below), the smallest horse in the class. Paige has owned *Cuthbert* for 4 years and since owning him has taken part in a full range of side saddle activities from hunting, jumping and displays to being Reserve Intermediate Rider of the Year at the 2024 SSA National Show.

A huge congratulation to all the riders taking part in this wonderful and popular finale, an experience that I'm sure they will all cherish and no doubt be looking to repeat again in 2025.

Penny Clarke



Paige l'Anson

THE RISING STAR LADIES SHOW HORSE FINAL

An Explanation and Information

The BSHA Rising Star Supreme Finals at London International Horse Show give new competitors into showing and existing BSHA amateur members, another major Championship route to follow during the showing season.

With the move of The London International Horse Show (LIHS) to a new venue at the London ExCel in 2021, the opportunity arose to form the 'London Arena' at this larger venue. HPower, organisers of LIHS, alongside its showing partners, the BSHA (British Show Horse Association), the BSPS (British Show Pony Society), and the ASAO (Association of Show and Agricultural Organisations), formed the 'London Committee' to oversee and legislate the new showing series' which were to be launched in the London Arena in 2023.

With these new series' and in supporting County and Agricultural Shows, the LIHS offered local equine competitors the

opportunity to compete at their local County show with a goal to aim for, whilst hoping to encourage new faces into showing.

These Rising Star classes were set up as 'type' sections, so those new to showing and unsure of 'type' could gain help in the ring, at clinics and be guided into the correct section for their horse. The aim was always to support and offer help and guidance to all competitors.

The Rising Stars series was to be kept very simply, amateur based. The inaugural Finals at the London International Horse Show in 2023 were a huge success, where 90% of the entrants were new to the sport.

The BSHA appointed volunteers from within the industry who were able to provide training clinics, were present during each class, and the Finals, to offer reassurance and assistance to competitors.

The Rising Star series now has its own rulebook, separate to the BSHA main

rulebook and all aspiring competitors are encouraged to read it and check on their eligibility to compete.

For more information contact the BSHA at risingstar@britishshowhorse.org.

The Ladies Show Horse class is sponsored by **Cavago**, the world-leading online equestrian booking platform, built by the horse world, for the horse world. It connects every rider and horse enthusiast from around the world by providing access to an entire ecosystem of equestrian opportunities using one easy-to-use platform. Whether you're looking to find your next riding lesson, enter a competition, book an unforgettable riding experience or embark on your dream holiday, Cavago has it all. Visit mycavago.com or download the app.

The Cavago Rising Star Ladies Show Horse 2024 was won by Laura Jones from Area 6 on *Fury*.

ALLISTER HOOD

1955 – 2024

The legendary Norfolk-based show producer and head of the Hood Show Team died peacefully at home surrounded by his family on 14th October, aged 69, following a long illness. Allister was a staunch supporter of the Side Saddle Association and it is fitting that the Celebration of his life should be reported here.

The Side Saddle Association was well represented at the Celebration of Allister's life, held at Tattersalls on 10th December, 2024. So appropriately, Nick Brooks-Ward was Master of Ceremonies and combined with beautiful readings, hymns and he took us through Allister's life with some amazing film footage from when he was a child to the time he retired. There were not many dry eyes as seven children quietly and efficiently appeared from all areas bearing Allister's Pink Tail Coat, Hunting



In one of his "Happy Places" out hunting, riding Our Cashel Blue

Tie, Gloves, Boots, Silk Hat, Hunting Whip and of course his famous red socks and dressed the dummy in the Sale Ring.

The Eulogies, told us some lovely stories and anecdotes and highlighting his numerous fantastic wins, the many Titles and Awards achieved, his outstanding horsemanship and of course the amazing relationships he developed with so many horses. His love of being in and tending his garden and commitment to his



Not missing a thing on the Ringside



With Anne passing through the "Guard of Honour" provided by fellow competitors when he retired from the show ring

family during a life which he filled to the brim, for the last 44 years totally supported by and working as a team, with his wife Anne.

To end the tribute, the Sale Room doors opened and we were joined by Sean Hutchinson, who "Blew him Away", and a couple from the Suffolk Foxhounds and Blue who decided having come to a party he did not wish to be loaded on the Horsebox to go home!

Our thoughts are with Anne, Louenna & Alice, Ollie & Amelia, Harry & Lilly and Ben & Charlotte.

AN UNSUNG HERO OF THE SIDE SADDLE ASSOCIATION

Catherine Hislam from Area 10 sings the praises of Darrol Scovell, a person anyone attending the National Show will recognise.

Darrol Scovell, from Area 10, began stewarding at the National Side Saddle Show in 1994 when it was held at Malvern, which is when Area 10 first met him! He has been stewarding at every National Show since and at many other shows including Area shows. His quiet and unflappable demeanour instils confidence in the most nervous of competitors. He has been a stalwart of the Association accompanying the riders to almost all the competitions in France, firstly at Le Lion d'Angers and then when they moved to Normandy, at Haras du Pin. Darrol was awarded the Ralph James Memorial Trophy for his services to the Association in 2012. He is one of the unsung members of the Association and we look forward to many more years of working with him.



SIDE SADDLE GOES TO THE SHIRE HORSE SOCIETY NATIONAL SHOW

Morgan Nicholson from Area 11 describes the evening

The Side Saddle Association were invited to present a demonstration, as part of the evening gala performance, at The Shire Horse Society National Show at Bingley Hall, Stafford on 8th March. Three riders and their horses from SSA Area 11, Morgan Nicholson and *Duke*, Jess Lewis and *Kinchie* and Samie Griffiths and *Elsie* were delighted to represent both the Association and their Area at this prestigious event.

Geography, and a short time-scale, meant that the riders couldn't actually meet to practice their display, so their routine was planned via Facebook chats! Meanwhile, Morgan's Mum, Lyndsay, prepared the commentary.

The 3 horses – an Irish Draft-Appaloosa cross (*Duke*), a Highland Pony (*Kinchie*) and a Shire (*Elsie*) clearly demonstrated

to the audience that, potentially, any horse, with the correct training and saddlery, can be ridden side saddle. Each rider gave their own individual show whilst the commentator introduced them and their horses to the sizeable audience. The second part of their display saw the riders “doing their own thing”, including a demonstration of jumping from Morgan and *Duke*.

During this part of the display the commentator presented a history of side saddle riding and the Association to the enthralled audience. As the riders ended their display with a lap of honour they left the arena to huge applause and cheers.

Well done Side Saddle Association Area 11 (photographs purchased from *Real Time Imaging*).



Morgan Nicholson on *Duke*, Jess Lewis on *Kinchie* and Samie Griffiths on *Elsie*



HOW TO KEEP YOUR OLDER HORSE SOUND AND ACTIVE

Part 1: JOINT SUPPLEMENTS

Researched and compiled by Dr Juliet Leighton PhD

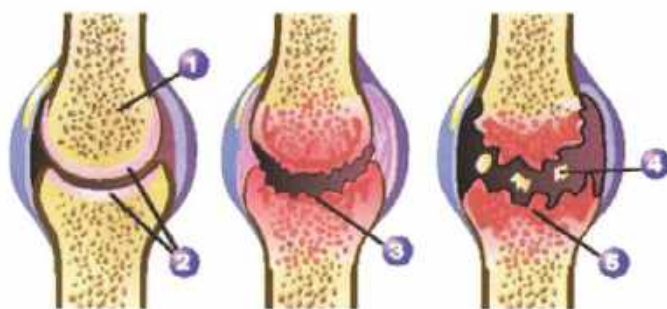
One of the joys of side saddle is that it can be another career for an older horse who is perhaps struggling to compete without veterinary and drug intervention. Horses and ponies with Cushings, whose laminitis is kept under control with Prascend (Pergolide) or the arthritic equine who needs a little help from anti inflammatories such as Bute or Danilon (Phenylbutazone and Suxibuzone respectively) to remain comfortable are not allowed to compete under BD, BE or BS rules and many Show Societies. However, there are no such restrictions imposed by the Side Saddle Association and long may that last.

As a retired Research Chemist I have an interest in the science behind drugs and spend hours researching the efficacy of the constituents of proprietorial joint supplements and looking into the latest veterinary interventions so better to understand what may be best for my horse. I thought members might be interested in my findings and my own experience of the products I have used on my own horses over many years so that they can continue to help their equine partners enjoy their twilight years.

It has been demonstrated that osteoarthritis is responsible for 60% of lameness in performance and pleasure horses. While exercise can strengthen a horse's bones, muscles and tendons, it also puts the joints under tremendous strain. With every fence, ditch, or increased year of age, the cartilage and synovial fluid that cushions the joint is broken down.

Inflammation in the joint, sometimes as a result of injury, releases chemicals that break down the cartilage. Osteoarthritis, or Degenerative Joint Disease, occurs when the normal rebuilding of these materials in the joint is exceeded by cartilage degradation. This leads to friction between the bones, stimulating the growth of new bone. The end result is a painful, stiff, swollen joint but this is the culmination of a slow, degenerative process that can be diagnosed before severe damage occurs. There are symptoms that you can spot, so that you are able to seek veterinary help and begin a suitable treatment. Most of us are only too aware of the signs; stiffness particularly first thing, a reliable jumper starting to refuse, the onset of nappiness and subtle lameness perhaps only felt on a circle on one rein.

EVOLUTION OF OSTEOARTHRITIS



1. Bone
2. Cartilage
3. Thinning of cartilage

4. Cartilage remnants
5. Destruction of cartilage

The most vulnerable joints are the knee, fetlock, coffin, pastern and hock. The spine and neck are less likely to be affected by osteoarthritis [1]

Stage 1: Cartilage (2) & Synovial fluid reduces leading to friction between the bones (1) of the joint

Stage 2: The joint becomes inflamed, further breaking down the cartilage (3)

Stage 3: Joint is painful, hot & stiff as a result of friction & joint spurs (4 & 5)

JOINT SUPPLEMENTS

Active Ingredients:

The healthy horse joint contains enough cartilage and synovial fluid to form an almost frictionless joint.

Glycosaminoglycan, *proteoglycan* and *chondrocytes* are involved in cartilage formation, whilst *sodium hyaluronate* increases the viscosity of the synovial fluid to improve the quality of lubrication between the two bones. It is worth noting at this point that, once osteoarthritis has begun, there is no medication that can reverse the breakdown of the cartilage and synovial fluid. However, there are substances which can slow down the degenerative process.

Glucosamine – an amino sugar. Since glucosamine is a precursor for *glycosaminoglycans*, which are a major component of joint cartilage, it is used in many horse joint supplements. However, it comes in two forms and a manufacturer will use one in preference to the other. *Glucosamine HCl* is supported by research and has greater purity and stability properties compared to *Glucosamine sulphate 2KCl*.

The former provides over 20% more *Glucosamine* on a weight for weight basis. *Glucosamine HCl* is typically 83% actual *Glucosamine* compared to 60% in *Glucosamine sulphate*. Therefore, a supplement providing 12g *Glucosamine HCl* per serve actually provides 10.3g *Glucosamine*, whereas a supplement stating 12g *Glucosamine sulphate* per serve only provides 7.2g actual *Glucosamine*. [2] **Buyer beware!**

Chondroitin Sulphate is naturally present in healthy cartilage. This chain of alternating sugars is usually found attached to proteins as part of a *proteoglycan* (a component of joint cartilage). Loss of *chondroitin sulphate* from the cartilage is a major cause of osteoarthritis.

Other substances to consider are *Cetyl Myristoleate*, *Vitamin C*, *Manganese*, *Omega 3 Fatty Acids*, *Hydrolysed Collagen*, *Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM)*, many or all of which are present in some joint supplements.

Optimal constituents and the recommended daily dose:

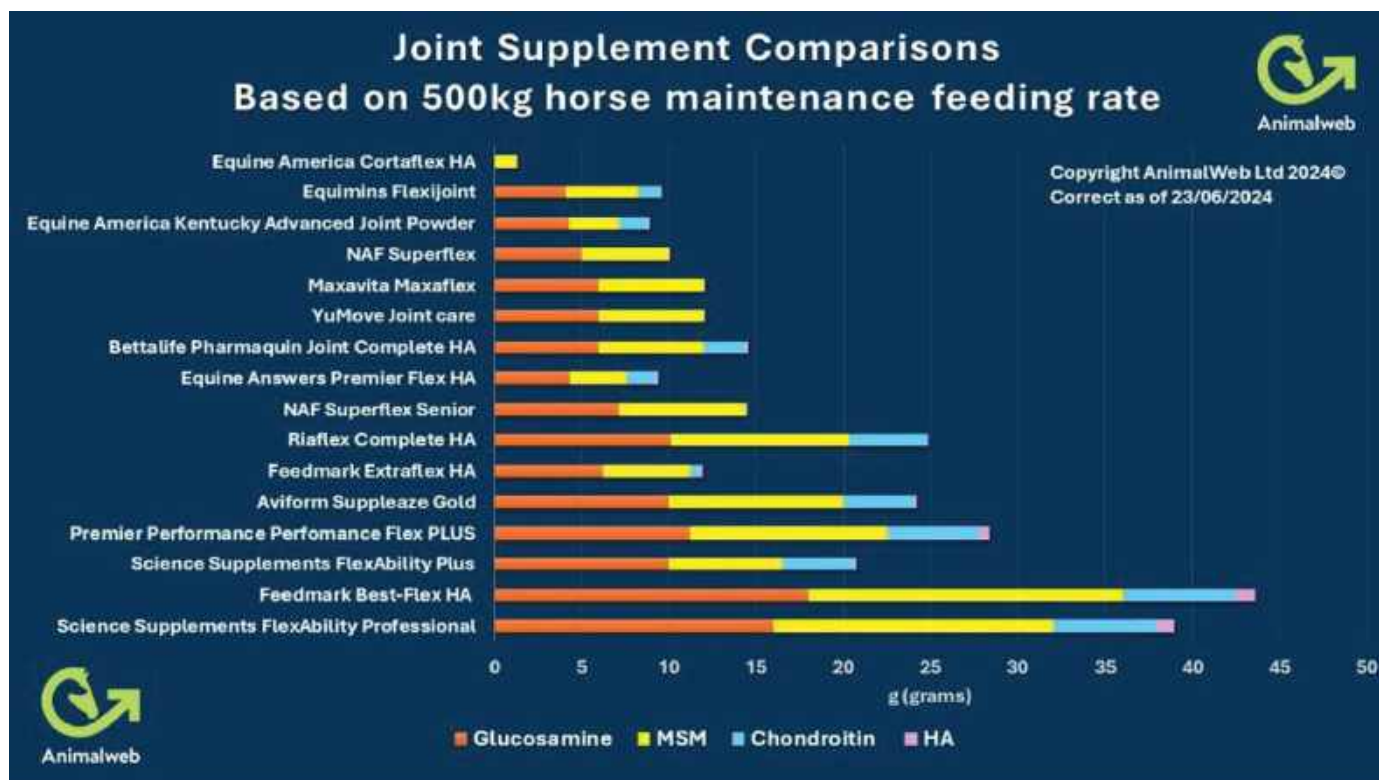
With the above information in mind scrutinise the multiple joint supplements on the market to find the one giving the optimal amount of each constituent. Your horse is only able to utilize roughly 20% of any joint supplement given orally. Therefore, the amount of active ingredient in the supplement is of utmost importance.

Chondroitin Sulphate forms the building blocks for cartilage and synovial fluid. It helps to slow the breakdown of joint cartilage. Look for supplements providing 1g/day.

Glucosamine is a natural component of cartilage. It helps to heal and regenerate joint cartilage. When picking a supplement, look for one that provides 10grams/day.

Hyaluronic Acid (HA) is the main component of joint fluid. The joint fluid is what lubricates and cushions the joint. Given orally, aim for 100mg/day.

MSM (methylsulfonylmethane) provides joint mobility and flexibility. It also has anti-inflammatory properties. Aim for 10-20grams/day.



DATA used to construct this graph were taken directly from manufacturer's own websites and/or product labels and are those stated as being for maintenance for an ~500kg horse and are correct as of 23/06/2024. [3]

A note of caution: I recently had my fit and lean 15.1 Connemara weighed pre surgery and to my surprise he weighed 550kg compared to the Weight Tape 'estimate' of 480kg. Horses weigh more than you think!

Joint Supplements don't 'cure' a problem but they can 'help' make a problem more comfortable. This is a synopsis of what to look out for. I'll be covering Veterinary options in Part II. In summary it is good news that there are so many options to help our older horses to enjoy life and to continue competing at every

level. When I struggle to get out of bed in the morning it seems to me that the veterinary profession is way ahead of the human equivalent in giving our equine companions options to combat the aches and pains associated with aging. Oh to be a horse!

References:

- [1] Jonathan Inglis Viovet 'A guide to Horse Joint Supplements' October 2019
- [2] Equine America 'Comparing the different Glucosamines' February 2024
- [3] Dr David Marlin Ask Animal Web 'Joint Supplement Comparison charts'. June 2024



The Show Commentator's Plea

Some Schedules and Classes will say
(They add to class interest on the day)
"Please provide some competitor notes"
Those who do, get the Commentators' vote

Oh, for competitors to do so when asked
Surely some brief notes are a simple task
Numbers should be placed on the page, top right
Makes it easier finding you when time is tight

A few things about yourself and your horse
If wearing a costume, a description of course

All written clearly making them easy to read
Bullet point comments is just what we need

If you do not submit notes, then be in no doubt
You run the risk of your name being left out
Commentators will "ad lib" to fill in a slot
But like to be accurate, not ramble a lot

Spectators are fascinated by side saddle riding
And this is your way to be better promoting
So PLEASE give the Commentators something to say
And pass on some interesting facts on the way

By an Anonymous Commentator



VALE WENDY TIDBOLD

1943 – 2024

Saddler, Instructor, Judge, Competitor & Side Saddle Promoter



Wendy Tidbold on Sirocco



Kirsty Byrne

UK Certified Side Saddle Instructor as well as being an Overseas Area Representative for the Association.

Through great determination and courage she was able to complete her last customer order for a "new Side Saddle" only weeks before her passing. The customer, Kirsty Byrne (*left*), was riding in this Side Saddle on 17th November 2024 at the major Equitana Horse show held in Melbourne. The Champion Rider award was named in Wendy Tidbold's memory and Kristy donated a beautiful embroidered rug that read "Champion Side Saddle Rider - A Wendy Tidbold Legacy" (*above*) (*Editor's Note: see article by Stacey Rusic on page 12*).

Her boutique "Side Saddle" Museum (*below*) on her property contains a collection of 22 Side Saddles, some dating back over 100 years, together with a collection of "period costumes". It is the intention of some of her "passionate" Side Saddle friends and the family to continue to loan these out for the encouragement of Side Saddle riding in Australia.

Some facts about Wendy:-

- **Judged Side Saddle** events Adelaide, Melbourne & New Zealand.
- Exhibited / promoted **Side Saddle** at the **Royal Queensland Show (Brisbane)** for 13 years. Competed & sponsored Side Saddle classes at the show for many years.
- **Rode in period costume & Side Saddle** to open the annual **Ladies Oaks Day** at Eagle Farm Racecourse 3 years in a row.
- **Media appearances** including *Totally Wild*, *Discovery Channel* & *Queensland Country Life*
- Started **her saddlery business in the 1960s** in her home in Brisbane and was the only female saddler for many years.
- **Specialised in making Side Saddles** for customers all over Australia.
- Member – **Saddlers & Harness Makers Association of Australia** – Wendy was somewhat unique in that she was both horse rider / competitor and saddler.



Wendy had a favourite saying....

You Don't Stop Riding When You Get Old – You Get Old When You Stop Riding!!!

When Wendy Tidbold was diagnosed with Leukemia in August 2023, she was of course shocked because she said she had so much still to do in promoting Side Saddle in pony clubs, shows, private lessons, etc as well as wanting to continue to improve her saddlery workmanship, always striving to move to a higher level. At age 81, she was still riding her horse at her home.

Her 'Celebration of Life Service' held on 19th October 2024 was attended by approximately 300 people from family, friends, and in particular friends from the "Horsey World." Her Service was watched on-line by friends around Australia and overseas. She also received over 100 Facebook Posts mainly from Australia, but also the USA & UK.

She always enjoyed her visits to the UK Annual Side Saddle Show and with Roger Philpot's help rode in one event. Roger held a Side Saddle Clinic out in Australia at her property in 2008. She valued being a



Roger Philpot with Wendy in her workshop



RENAISSANCE IN AREA 9

By Area 9 Chairman Stephen McGill

Side saddle in South and Central Scotland has been going from strength to strength over the past 2 years under the stewardship of Area Chairman, Steve McGill and the Area 9 Committee. Membership has increased by over 100% and shows, clinics and the new annual Camp North have become sell out events.

The cornerstone of all these successes has been Area 9's Winter Series Clinics with Penny Clarke. The clinics started purely as "Give it a Go" events but have developed into valuable coaching opportunities for members and newcomers alike. Penny has been a keen supporter and drives to Scotland for two clinics a month between September and March. The fact that these clinics are regular has created a client base, keen to attend every month to keep advancing on their side saddle journeys. Non SSA members pay an extra £5 for a clinic slot, therefore it makes some sense to join the SSA to benefit from a cost reduction. The format of the clinics also helps make them attractive, with free tea, coffee and cake. There are always at least a few Area 9 members in attendance for the duration to assist Penny and provide advice and support for participants. Most clinic goers stay back after their lesson for tea and chat, which creates a friendly, supportive and inclusive environment.

The clinic experience is further enhanced by the inclusion of Right Shoulder Back tests and SSA Online Equitation tests which allow participants to put their new found skills to use. Master Saddler, Rob Jenkins



Area 9 members sporting the club badge at a clinic with Penny Clarke and Master Saddler, Rob Jenkins

has attended to discuss the evolution of the side saddle and in the final clinic, Penny judges an Equitation class while presenting to an audience to promote and introduce new riders to side saddle showing. Virtually all of Area 9's new members have come through the clinics, with many going on to compete successfully and attend the National Show.

Social Media has played a huge part also with Facebook and Instagram followership tripling during the period. Area 9 try to keep it light with funny images and stories, while promoting events and celebrating member achievements. The Area 9 training WhatsApp group was set up to manage bookings for clinics but has developed into the beating heart

of the Area, where show dates, training opportunities, ideas and laughs are shared between clinic going members and non-members alike. Many users are more inclined to enter into discussions on WhatsApp rather than on open social media platforms and many have gone on to join as SSA Members.

Members have also been encouraged to buy Area 9 branded clothing with orders being placed 3 times a year. A small markup is placed on some items, but the priority is to see as many members as possible wearing the club badge with pride at clinics and events. This has helped create an exclusive club atmosphere and promotes the aspiration to wear the club badge. Members tend to wear their merchandise at other equestrian events, which always generates conversation and interest in side saddle.

As part of the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the SSA in 2024, Area 9 hosted Camp North for a weekend in May. Camp was a huge success, with 19 campers taking part in a fun side saddle weekend, with instruction from some of the top instructors from across the UK. On the back of this it was decided to go again in 2025 and bookings currently stand at 28 riders with some campers coming from as far afield as Area 1, 2, 19 and 21 to join the party.

In 2024, to thank Members for their continued support and to promote the unique SSA National Show, the Area 9 committee agreed a funding package, whereby qualifying members can receive a £50 cash grant for attending and competing at the Big Show. This initiative helped in doubling National Show entries from Area 9 and has been continued for 2025

The entire ethos behind the new look Area 9 has been to create a friendly and welcoming club environment, which is desirable for anyone to join. 2025 promises to be another great year.



Area 9 ladies, Karrie, Libby, Lucy and Nicky showing off their sashes & rosettes won at the National Show, Addington, 2024

INTERESTING FACT FROM 1950

In April 1950 Pat Smythe purchased a failed racehorse named *Fourtowns* who had run in the Kim Muir Steeplechase at the Cheltenham March Meeting. *Fourtowns* was renamed *Prince Hal*, after Laurence Olivier's great performance as the English king in the film of Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

Prince Hal was not easy, and Pat spent a lot of time and patience trying to get

Hal to conform to becoming a show jumper. He was not ready and would not be competing at the 1950 White City as a show jumper but did attend with Pat Smythe's mother riding him Side Saddle. A cavalcade of famous riding personalities throughout the ages had been organised; Pat's mother was dressed as the Marchioness of Salisbury of the

late eighteenth century. They looked a dashing pair with *Hal* prancing about due to the long skirt tickling his side. *Prince Hal* became one of the greats in the showjumping world. He became a puissance champion setting the Ladies' High Jump record for Europe at 7'4½".

SIDE SADDLE SUCCEEDS IN AUSTRALIA

by Stacey Rusic of Same Side Equestrian.

From the early hours of the morning on Sunday the 17th of November 2024 eager side saddle riders who had been waiting over a year for this moment descended on the Melbourne Showgrounds in Victoria, Australia. Travelling from far and wide across three different states, with one rider having travelled 1,800kms (1,118 miles), this was set to be the biggest side saddle event Australia had seen in decades.

Equitana is the largest equine expo in Australia, held across four days every two years. Just to give you an idea of the scale of this event this year you could shop over 300 brands; there was 67 hours of competition by 34 different disciplines and 160 education sessions delivered by 80 different educators from all over Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the US.

I was originally approached by Equitana about a side saddle competition prior to the event in 2022. At the time I didn't think it would be possible due to the lack of riders and available gear so I had said to the organisers "give me two more years and I'll make it happen." However I was invited to be an educator on side saddle at that year's Equitana which was

an incredible experience. I gave two 45 minute education sessions covering the history of side saddle and taking someone through their first side saddle lesson. These sessions helped to bump up the awareness and interest in the discipline and the feedback was fantastic.

Once Equitana 2022 was over the planning for 2024 began. The competitions at Equitana are normally hosted by associations or organisations for the discipline that's being showcased. Equitana provides the arena space and the ribbons (rosettes) but the rest is up to the association to organise. Everything from taking entries, securing judges, stewards, sponsors, etc. One little problem with this... there is no national body or association for side saddle in Australia. When I was approached about having a side saddle competition at the event I knew it was going to be a matter of 'if I didn't do it, who would'? I knew the discipline needed this opportunity if it was going to survive and thrive in Australia. The stubborn determination in me saw that through, organising the entire competition by myself and thus the first ever side saddle competition at Equitana was held.



Stacey Rusic

I had pulled together the most wonderful line up of twenty side saddle riders from all over Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. Six of the twenty riders were using side saddles borrowed from myself and others in borrowed habits and other bits and bobs. Our youngest rider was only 8 years old and we had an incredibly diverse range of breeds on show from Thoroughbreds to Stock Horses, Clydesdales, Arabians, and their crosses, a Connemara and a Cleveland Bay, PRES and every pony breed in between. This really showcased that this is not only a sport for all ages but all breeds also.

I flew Samantha Watson from New South Wales in to judge the event. Samantha had not only competed side saddle but had judged at the Horse of The Year Show in New Zealand previously. She did an incredible job judging the many varieties of rider and mount in trying conditions, as we had only been allocated a time slot just shy of three hours and a 40m x 50m sized arena. The crowd was fantastic with a less



Felicity Grant on Bimbadeen Bachelor Boy

than ideal 9am start time for the event and every competitor had a really enjoyable time. We showcased Rider and Mount classes and a Working Hunter class but The Champagne Challenge was the absolute highlight for all and a great laugh. It was the best way to close out the competition. Outside of planning the entire event I was of course crazy enough to also compete myself.

Some result highlights are Vanessa Wells from Victoria on purebred Clydesdale *Larvistryn Hunter* as Champion Rider and Kristy Byrne from Queensland on purebred Spanish Andalusian *Majestic DeOra* for Reserve. The Champion Rider award was sponsored by H&K Equestrian and they donated a lovely embroidered rug in memory of the legacy of recently passed Wendy Tidbold. The Tidbold Family also sponsored many of the class awards. (Editor's note: see the article on Wendy Tidbold on page 10). The Champion Mount was Kristy Byrne on *Majestic DeOra* and the Reserve was Sienna Finemore from New South Wales on purebred Stock Horse *Stoneridge Trinity*. The Working Hunter was taken by Victorian Felicity Grant on *Bimbadeen Bachelor Boy*. In a turn of events, the top four placings in the Working Hunter were all junior riders!! They certainly gave us adults a run for our money. The Champagne Challenge was won by Liberty Deaman of New South Wales on *Dragonfly*. A full list of results can be found on the Same Side Equestrian website (www.samesideequestrian.com.au).

After the competition had concluded I took a horse and rider who had never ridden side saddle before through their first lesson and in just 45 minutes we covered all paces on both reins, a jump and some lateral work. The crowd was 5 rows deep, an attendance I'm sure would not have happened without the competition that morning. I am hopeful that the event will help us see the discipline grow and that we are invited back in 2026 for an even bigger and better event. I am of course very grateful to all the riders whose participation made the side saddle classes the success they were.



Vanessa Wells on *Larvistryn Hunter* with judge Samantha Watson

DENIS LAWER who died January 2025

Many SSA Members will remember the huge support Denis gave to the National Side Saddle Show over many years, assisting his wife Christine with the huge task of the rosettes, a role she first took on in 1986 when asked for help by her long-standing friend Joanna Gillespie.

Denis was also always happy to do anything asked. In 1986, they included babysitting duties for "baby" Giles Gillespie" and in the future, when not seen

moving rosette boxes from A to B, was regularly spotted putting up and taking down signage, helping in the scoring office, working out the points awards, checking results, chauffeuring judges ... the list goes on. He was always there and if you needed something fetching, delivering or a cup of coffee or a snack, he sorted it and was known to enjoy a well earned G&T at the end of the day with Mother Barham, joining the party sitting on her horsebox ramp.

When their daughters Rachel and Rose were born, they took a brief break from the Show but returned to help again in their normal manner as members of the Team and "the two R's", as they were affectionately known, were soon co-opted to assist.

We are sad to relay the news of his passing despite fighting illness for several years and our thoughts are with Christine, Rachel, Rose and his extended family.



Denis with Christine in happier times



Denis & Christine with Rachel on the left and Rose on the right

JUMPING SIDE SADDLE

*The Association's Vice President, previous Chairman, Judge and Instructor
Mrs Anthea Derby gives her insight into the 'art' of Jumping Side Saddle*

I felt very honoured to have been invited to write this article as I have always loved jumping side saddle. Then I started to feel slightly nervous as although I can write computer scoring software with no trouble, writing something using actual words was altogether different.

Back in 1980/81, I had a lovely Irish Draught/Thoroughbred horse called *Chieftain* and I acquired a side saddle. It was 'beginners' luck; I found a Champion & Wilton saddle that not only fitted me but also fitted *Chieftain*. I discovered that Mr Godden who, as a young man, was apprenticed to Champion & Wilton, lived nearby and ensured that all was well with the saddle and horse.

I started riding side saddle and as I was a hunting and jumping sort of rider, I wanted to jump side saddle. Anyone who has attempted jumping side saddle, with no knowledge and no instruction will know what a perilous exercise it is. *Chieftain* at that time was jumping working hunters and show jumping so popping over 50cms, I thought would be easy but no way, it was very scary. It then dawned on me that despite being brave astride, I was a complete beginner when it came to jumping side saddle, that realisation made me feel much better.

So, *Chieftain* and I, together with a friend who wanted to practice her dressage, hired the riding club indoor school and gave myself a beginner's jumping lesson. *Chieftain* thought I was crazy, trotting repeatedly over a pole that was barely off the ground. It was at a height that caused him to hop over but not actually jump. I did it off both reins as it was many years later that I discovered that jumping on the left rein was supposed to be difficult.

I remembered the advice given by two hunting ladies who came to support the side saddle classes at our local shows. This was to 'sit as far forward behind the pommels that you could manage' and the other was 'to curl up your body when the horse took off'. I also at the time was having jumping lessons with the late Pat Burgess who came regularly to the Riding Club. She was a legend at teaching jumping, and many famous event riders have acknowledged her help with their horses. She had many mantras on jumping that she instilled into her pupils, and they all worked, and I was hoping that they would work for side saddle as well.

So, with Pat, metaphorically sitting on my shoulder, I set off to conquer this jumping. Pat always said to have your weight over your stirrups, this coincided with the advice from one of the hunting ladies'. She also said to fold when the horse took off, this coincided with the other lady. Gradually, the hopping over the pole became easier, together with holding the mane, which kept your weight forward onto

to your right knee and looking over the offside ear which kept your body straight.

Suddenly, just like learning to ride a bicycle, everything clicked, jumping was easy. The pole got raised higher and higher and we were jumping effortlessly in canter from either rein. The knack was in the position in the saddle, I was so fortunate that my Champion & Wilton saddle had the pommels set in a way that allowed me to get forward and that *Chieftain* had smooth paces.

The key points were to sit forward with your weight over your stirrup, your stirrup length short enough that you could easily reach the grip with the leaping head (but not so short that your leg was jammed), have your weight towards your right knee and shorten your reins so that you could rest your hands on your horse's shoulder when in a slow canter. Whilst taking off for the jump, turn your head so that you looked at 'ten past twelve' by your horse's ears. On landing from the jump, often the reins would have slipped through your fingers so you had to gather them up again, but you would have been in balance

with your horse and not left behind. This was then a pleasant experience for both you and your horse.

The other thing to remember, when riding on the flat between fences, is not to adopt the 'flat Equitation' seat, this will guarantee to put you behind the movement at the next fence. Keep your weight towards your right knee, and sit up when necessary, as this will balance your horse but keep your position behind the pommels. Many of today's successful riders have 2 saddles, one for each discipline. I had 2 saddles when I had *Buster* as the standard of flat Equitation had become so high. I needed all the help I could get from my Whippy saddle for the Equitation and my beloved Champion & Wilton for jumping. In the early eighties, John Langston sponsored a series of Working Hunter classes, with the final being held at the National Show. Each Area held a qualifying round where the jumps were not to exceed 90cms, (they were always much smaller), and the top 4 places qualified for the Final.

In 1983 the late Bob Wilmer had built



Nell and Just J at SSA Nationals at Newark 1988



Anthea Derby on Chieftain at Malvern in 1982

an up to height working hunter track at the final suitable for an astride RIHS qualifier. It was big! Fortunately, *Chieftain* pricked his ears and jumped a lovely clear round, it felt amazing. Interestingly, it was jumped on grass in a big ring so it was easier to get a good rhythm and flow round the course. Today's jumping classes are in a smaller area and are not so easy.

After that, I taught my daughter, Nell, to jump side saddle on her pony *Just J'* and they gained many side saddle jumping successes. She also, in 1990,

won the Adult Open Equitation jumping on *Chieftain*. I then started getting involved with Side Saddle clinics and was able to help many riders gain confidence and the ability to jump side saddle. The greatest satisfaction, over the years, was obtained by watching the riders whose jumping I had helped, win the various Equitation jumping classes at the National Show. Sometimes a rider became Rider of the Year or was placed in the top 3 of the combined Equitation and Equitation jumping classes, and their smiles as

they left the Equitation jumping ring were enormous. One of my biggest challenges was to help a partially sighted rider (Laura Paul) to win her Equitation Jumping class; that win filled me with pride.

Remember, that with the right saddle, jumping side saddle is great fun provided you can sit in the correct place. Many riders today have found that they can show jump, working hunter, hunt, event, inter hunt relays and really enjoy themselves. I was so lucky that I was able to find that out for myself so many years ago.

PERFORMANCE AWARDS RESULTS

1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024

Kindly Sponsored by:



Juniors			
Place/Points	Horse	Rider	Area
1st – 405	Treacle	Henrietta Wilkins	Area 10
2nd – 345	Cwmsyflog High Light	Beatrice Wilkins	Area 10
3rd – 305	Moon Solitaire	Lily Williams-Musitano	Area 10
4th – 215	Merri Lea May	Lola Evans	Area 19
5th – 195	Mardenway Bow-Peep	Elsie Anderson	Area 19

Adults			
Place/Points	Horse	Rider	Area
1st - 5500	Back Seat Driver	Morgan Nicholson	Area 11
2nd – 3405	Moreton Hall Storming Norman	Gillian Greenwood & Glynis Hughs	Area 19
3rd – 3065	Zonda	Gail Brown	Area 2
4th – 2635	Trailtrow Glenkinchie	Jessica Lewis	Area 11
5th – 2555	Mystical Masie	Belinda Wilkins	Area 8
6th – 2290	MIH Dunbeggan Freckles	Harriet Mitchell	Area 8
7th – 2225	Castle Paige	Alexandra Snook	Area 10
8th – 1780	Eager Heart III	Clare King	Area 8
9th – 1730	Memphis Belle	Kaitlyn Kernek	Area 12
10th – 985	Marshall Meadows Indiana	Lucy Higgins	Area 9
11th – 555	Pablo	Laura Stuart	Area 8

SUPREME CHAMPION (The S.S.A. Salver):
Back Seat Driver

ADULT CHAMPION (The 'Winning Ways' Shield):
Back Seat Driver

JUNIOR CHAMPION (The 'Chancery' Trophy):
Treacle

CROSS-COUNTRY CHAMPION (The 'Cheri' Side Saddle Cross Country Challenge Trophy):
Memphis Belle

SHOW JUMPING CHAMPION (The 'Solidarity' Trophy):
Memphis Belle

DRESSAGE CHAMPION (The 'Le Noir' Trophy):
Zonda

SHOWING CHAMPION (The 'Broadhill Otago' Trophy):
Back Seat Driver

VERSATILITY CHAMPION (S.S.A. Trophy):
Back Seat Driver

GELDING CHAMPION (The 'Harcomb Abby' Trophy):
MIH Dunbeggan Freckles

PURE-BRED MOUNTAIN OR MOORLAND CHAMPION
(The Frances Killick Trophy):
Trailtrow Glenkinchie

PART-BRED MOUNTAIN OR MOORLAND CHAMPION
(The McIntyre Shield):
Moon Solitaire

MATURE RIDER AWARD (The 'Age Aside' Trophy):
Glynis Hughs & Gillian Greenwood riding Moreton Hall Storming Norman

VETERAN CHAMPION (The 'Whitecroft Eastern Promise Trophy):
Moreton Hall Storming Norman

ADULT HUNTING CHAMPION (The Adult Hunting Trophy):
Castle Paige

ADULT NEWCOMER CHAMPION (The Caroline Fernside memorial Trophy):
Trailtrow Glenkinchie ridden by Jessica Lewis

JUNIOR NEWCOMER CHAMPION (Keepsake Trophy):
Treacle ridden by Henrietta Wilkins

MARE CHAMPION (The 'Penny Preserve' Trophy):
Mystical Masie

HOW TO GAIN MARKS IN DRESSAGE & EQUITATION CLASSES

Sarah Buttenshaw, BD dressage judge and previous S.S.A. member gives riders some valuable tips for competing at the National Side Saddle Championships and elsewhere

Every rider strives to gain marks from the judges whether it is in showing classes, dressage or equitation. Here are a few tips to help you achieve your personal best score.

1. **Presentation:** you must attempt to impress the judge when they first look at you. Most side saddle riders have turnout of a high standard. When wearing a number on the bridle or on the numnah make sure that it is visible to the judge and not obscured. (Some bridle numbers are now so small that the judge/writer needs binoculars to see the numbers in their holders). BD rules now insist that two numbers are worn unless it is a back number. If wearing a number on the back get someone to make sure that it is in the middle of your back and straight otherwise an impression of crookedness is created. Once the bell has been rung the rider should not lose time in entering the arena (you have 45 seconds to enter at A). You must remember to sit tall and proud, with a smile on your face, as you enter the arena at A. The judge will get the impression that here is a competent rider with a well-schooled horse.
2. **Halt and Salute:** riders must remember to put their reins, with their whip, in one hand whilst saluting with the other. All too often judges see riders waving the whip as they salute with it in that hand. Not only is this incorrect and unsightly but there is the potential for the horse to be upset by seeing a whip out of the corner of their eye and, consequently, moving in the halt and losing marks. Any halt must be of at least 3 seconds duration.



Incorrect salute



Correct salute

3. **Circles:** all riders should know how many steps their horse takes to complete an accurate 20 metre, 15 metre and 10 metre circle in medium walk, working trot, and working canter. By counting the strides each time that they ride one of these movements they will ensure an accurate circle ridden in a consistent rhythm.
4. **Corners and Turns:** judges see many riders cutting the corners of the arena and allowing their horses to fall in on turns. It is important that riders use the corners to help set the horse up for the next movement. The horse should remain bent, with slight flexion of the horse's head, to the inside without falling onto their inside shoulder. Leaning in on corners and turns, as if riding a motorcycle is a frequent fault and will lose marks. Marks are also lost when the horse is bent incorrectly to the outside.
5. **The Quarters:** riders should think of the horse's shape as resembling a carrot! Their quarters (the fat end of the carrot) are wider than their shoulders (the opposite of Charles Atlas!). Therefore the rider must remember to keep the horse's shoulders in front of the quarters so that the horse remains straight. This can be especially noticeable when cantering down the long side of the arena or up the centre line. A common comment on a sheet is "quarters in" and marks will be lost.
6. **A Few Medium Strides (or Lengthening):** this is often a requirement in Novice dressage tests in both trot and canter and is found in some of the Equitation tests. The rider will gain marks if they ride these movements sensibly and not ask for too much. A well ridden movement is when a rider uses the corner to balance their horse, gets straight on the long side or diagonal, half halts, asks for some lengthening of the frame with the hind legs stepping under more for a few strides, half halts again to rebalance the horse and then return to the working pace. The rider who can show a difference within the paces and also maintain balance and rhythm will gain high marks. Too many riders mistake speed for impulsion and their horses go faster, become unbalanced and fall onto their forehands. Also there is no need to ask the horse to sustain the medium pace for more than a few strides, therein lies disaster with a novice horse.
7. **Free Walk on a Long Rein:** in this movement the judge wants to see the horse seeking the rein and stretching his head and neck forwards and down. The rider will gain marks if the horse walks with purpose in a straight line and shows a regular 4-time beat. The hind legs should come under the horse and cover the ground. All riders can improve this movement by insisting that their horse always walks out, with a strong rhythm, even when out hacking. All too often one passes riders allowing their horses to amble along whilst they chat with their friends... this will lead to a walk that loses marks in a test.
8. **Change of Canter lead through Trot:** this movement is harder to perform correctly than many riders realise. It is a movement that all SSA members do regularly whether it is in dressage or equitation classes or when showing. Firstly plan ahead, especially in a showing class. Decide where you are going to do your first transition from canter to trot and prepare well in advance. Riders must remember to balance their horse with a half halt before asking for trot. Whilst in trot, which should be approximately 2 strides, the rider must prepare the horse for the new canter lead by changing the bend and slightly shifting their weight. It is important to rebalance the horse with another half halt before asking for the new canter lead. If the horse is still bent to the outside then it will either run or, worse, strike off on the wrong leg. The whole movement should flow and be both a pleasure to ride and to judge. This is another movement that is often needed when riding a show jumping round and if done badly will result in an unbalanced horse knocking poles down at the next fence.
9. **Finally** riders need to remember that all these movements, when properly ridden, will lead to a well balanced, obedient horse who will give judges a pleasant ride in showing classes; be capable of a smooth, fluent jumping round and be a joy to ride on a daily basis. The rider ought to enjoy being able to produce a well-trained horse and a dressage or equitation test can be used as a measure of their success with this training.

SUSTAINABLE FASHION at CHELTENHAM!

Cordelia Chugg from Area 14 tells us how she dressed to win at the Cheltenham Festival of Racing!

What was known as “ladies day” on the Wednesday of the Cheltenham festival is now known as “the Slow Fashion Awards” promoting sustainable fashion where Racegoers are encouraged to celebrate vintage and borrowed pieces as well as investment pieces that can be worn again and again whilst showing a unique personal style. The competition to find the “best dressed” was sponsored by Boodles, Debenhams, Ellenborough Park and Holland Cooper.

I've always been a huge vintage fan.... Maybe side saddle plays a hand in that. But mostly I love racing. It's an incredible sport to be a part of and you shouldn't have to feel like you need to spend a fortune on the right brand of coat to fit in. The suit I was wearing I've worn to Cheltenham 3 times and cost £30 from a vintage shop and the hat was £5 from eBay. It was snowing that morning so I had my ski thermals on underneath! Comfort is key!

My racing wardrobe is full of similar

bargains and I tend to get phone calls in the lead up to the Festival from friends asking me to lend an outfit or asking me to source them one for a steal - that's the challenge I love! Racing is a great day out, Cheltenham even more so, and anyone can come along and enjoy it. Come racing!

The competition was judged by the model Rosie Tapner, Royal correspondent Katie Nicholl and racing presenter Frankie Foster and photos were taken in the morning whilst detailing the stories behind the outfits. I received a phone call telling me I'd been short listed and to come back to the 'Slow Fashion' stage after the Queen Mother Champion Chase. I was relieved it wasn't during the race as I wanted to watch it!

I'm not sure which was more of a shock finding out that I'd won or that I was now the proud owner of a Boodles Diamond Necklace.

Not bad for a £35 outfit!

Cordelia Chugg



THE SSA LADIES RIDE JUDGES

Ginny Oakley-Pope, rider, judge, exhibitor, Instructor and Chairman of Area 5 sings the praises of Ladies Ride Judges

Being a major attendee at County Shows, either judging, stewarding or assisting friends, the Ladies Show Class, formally the Ladies Hunter Class, has always been of great interest to me. Since the recent proposal of allowing knowledgeable lady ride judges only, onto the panel, there has been a distinct improvement in the ride judging that I have seen.

Standing either in the ring or at the ropes, it is a pleasure to see that many of these competent, tidy and beautifully attired ladies have grown up through the Side Saddle Association. My

heart swells with pride when I hear remarks on how pleased competitors feel having seen their horse ridden by such accomplished people.

Many shows, including Royal Windsor, do not mind that our Ladies are not involved with any other panel and offer no other judging during their day at a show, but are keen to provide the expert ride that exhibitors wish to have for their horses. I salute you, SSA Ladies Ride Judges. You are a credit to our wonderful Association.

TURNOUT TIPS FOR THE SIDE SADDLE RIDER

One's turnout must be impeccable when riding side saddle in whatever situation or type of class. Whether in a bowler or a silk hat the veil should have the surplus tucked in around the rim; a thick line that cuts the neck in half is not becoming.

The shirt with a well-fitting collar is important. The tie should be neatly tied and not of a garish colour or loud pattern. The jacket needs to be a good fit with no creases in the lower back. This is not always easy if one has a short back where the jacket tends to ride up, which it also does if the waistcoat worn underneath, or the jacket, is too tight. The bottom of the jacket should just brush the seat of the saddle. The sleeves should be of the correct length so that when the elbow is bent there is no expanse of flesh showing

between the gloves and the jacket sleeve.

The hang of the apron is crucial and can make or break the look of a rider's position. It should cover the right toe by approximately two inches, with no hanging hem visible under the front of the apron, hang horizontal to the ground and have a vertical drop to the rear.

The waistcoat should be of a complementary colour, e.g. canary yellow or cream looks good, red is to be avoided. Whether or not the bottom button is fastened is optional. (Leaving it undone became fashionable in the days of Edward VII whose rotund frame didn't allow the bottom button to be done up. The public at the time felt it polite to follow suit!).

Boots should be highly polished and well fitting. Garter straps are optional but if worn should have the buckle on the

centre of the knee secured with a button or loop. A spur is compulsory for adults and on a sharp or sensitive horse can be a spur band; both should be worn on the counter (ankle seam) of the boot. Spur straps should be leather; synthetic ones will not break if hooked up. Garter and spur straps should fit neatly and be the correct length.

Most important of all – ensure your number is sitting straight in the centre of your back, SMILE and look as though you are enjoying yourself!

Editor's Note: Nothing needs to be "brand new" but should be safe, clean and well presented. More details and helpful tips about correct turnout, can be found in the current Members' Handbook and on the SSA Website Members' pages: www.sidesaddleassociation.co.uk

GREETINGS from GERMANY

The German Side Saddle Association or RiD - Reiten Im Damensattel E.V.

2024 was a whirlwind of wonderful side saddle events! Spring kicked off with a special moment: German TV channel ZDF featured men riding side saddle in its morning show "Volle Kanne". It was an eye-catching and unusual sight for many viewers!

Throughout the year, RiD members proudly presented the elegance of side saddle riding at a wide range of events: from leisure riding days and parades like the traditional "Leonhardi-Ritt" to booked presentations, WBO competitions, and the prestigious "Hund & Pferd" (Dog & Horse) expo. We also held inspiring clinics with Ginny Oakley Pope and Dr. Bettina Grahner. On the international stage, RiD riders built bridges by attending a clinic in Málaga and visiting the National Show in Addington.

But the absolute highlight of the year? Our RiD Side Saddle Championship, held 21 - 23 June in the castle of Wickrath! Organizers Alexandra Loeffelsender and Dr. Bettina Grahner had a clear vision: a competition by RiD, for RiD, a celebration of our passion, open to all. A dedicated working group designed an inclusive and versatile programme to welcome as many RiD members as possible. And what a success it was! A breathtaking weekend full of harmony, variety, and unforgettable moments. Riders and members from seven German states, Denmark, and Luxembourg gathered. Ages ranged from 7 to 60+, from bright-eyed beginners to seasoned competitors. The horses were just as diverse: from Shetland ponies to Tinkers, PREs, Lusitanos, Warmbloods, KWPNs, Friesians, and even a majestic Moritzburg heavy warmblood.

The competition itself was a true feast for the eyes: classical dressage and jumping, artistic individual and pas de deux freestyles, fun challenges like

the Champagne Challenge and the Precision Course, a side saddle mounting competition, and the ever-elegant Elegance Class. A special tribute was paid to our beloved trainer, the late Roger Philpot with the emotional "Remembering Roger" show competition. And for the youngest side saddle stars, there was a dedicated lead-rein class. A real honour and joy for us: the judging panel included two esteemed German judges, and none other than Dale Atkinson from the UK! Having her with us added a truly international flair and was a privilege for all involved.

Beyond the competition, the weekend was about more than just ribbons. It was about shared passion, learning, and community. A professional saddle check by master saddler Saskia von Ehrenkrook ensured both safety and horse welfare.

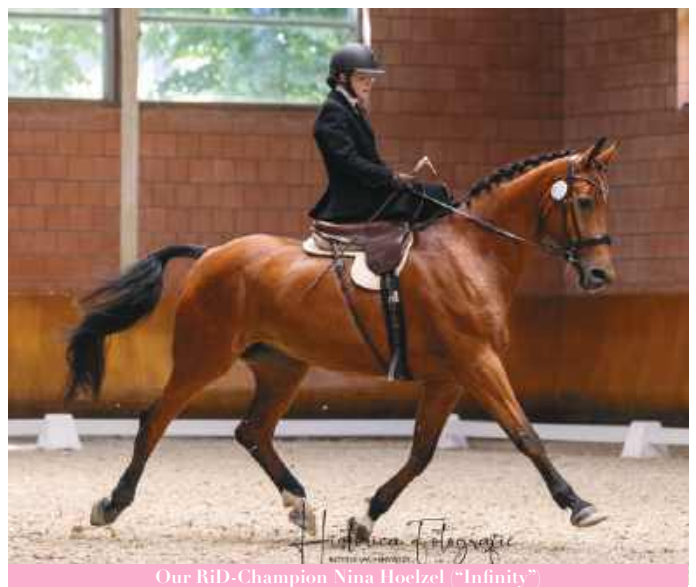
And as a special gift, riders had the chance to take part in a fairytale-like photo shoot with Bettina Lachenmayer against the stunning backdrop of Wickrath Castle. On Saturday evening, we celebrated our joyful Coming Together event with sparkling decorations, delicious food, and the highlight of the night: The award ceremony! And the title of RiD Champion 2024 went to: NINA HOELZEL! With her mare *Infinity*, she impressed the judges in the Test of Choice (Dressage Rider A) and an A-level freestyle, scoring the highest marks of the entire event, by a clear margin! A huge congratulations to Nina, and a heartfelt thank you to all participants, helpers, and supporters who made this event unforgettable!

Dr. Bettina Grahner

Chairwoman RiD with Photos by Bettina Lachenmayer



Evelyn Schmitz (Moritzburger "Lars") and her riding pupil Lea Steinbrecher (Shetland Pony "Jack") at Wickrath Castle



Our RiD-Champion Nina Hoelzel ("Infinity")

(For more photos and videos, visit www.damensatteldeutschland.de/aktuell/ and click "weiterlesen" at the bottom of each post.)



The Side Saddle Association®

AMBASSADOR CERTIFICATE



The SSA Ambassador Certificate is awarded by the SSA Chairman to a Member/ Affiliate who has positively supported the SSA through their actions, for example by:

- helping to raise awareness
- promoting the Association
- fund raising
- giving inspiration to others

Ambassador Certificate and Rosette has recently been given to:

Alison Melhuish, Claire Lewis, Rachel Lambert, Sally Langley, Sarah Hislam & Paige l'Anson

in recognition of their support in promoting the SSA during the filming of side saddle riding for the "Love Your Weekend" television programme

Ian Smart

in recognition of his immense support manning the SSA 50th Anniversary Exhibition at the National Show

Sue Thorne

in recognition of her long and devoted service to the Side Saddle Association as a Judge, Sponsor, Supporter and Custodian of the For Sale & Wanted Service

Clare Barnett & Laura Dempsey

in recognition of their support to the SSA presenting a seminar and for their attention to horse welfare and dedication in ensuring the availability of side saddles through both making and maintenance to help preserve the art of side saddle riding

Rob Jenkins

in recognition of his support to the SSA presenting a seminar and for his attention to horse welfare and dedication to innovation and in ensuring the availability of a range of new side saddles to help preserve the art of side saddle riding

Gill Greenwood

in recognition of her promotion of side saddle riding through the FEI/Longines video

Lydia Robinson

in recognition of her promotion of side saddle riding through her prowess in the hunting field riding hirelings.

Morgan Nicholson

in recognition of her promotion of side saddle riding through her organisation and running of the Side Saddle Display at the National Shire Horse show 2025

GRADE TEST & EXAM RESULTS AUTUMN 2024 / SPRING 2025

Congratulations to the following on their successes in the recent Instructor Exams and Grade Tests organised by HQ/Area 5, Area 8 and Area 12

INSTRUCTOR A

Rhianwen Rosser (Area 6)

INSTRUCTOR B

Caroline de Freyne-Shrubsole (Area 5) & Olivia Connolly White (Area 21)

INSTRUCTOR C

Alessandra Tatti (Area 20)

GRADE 1 SIDE SADDLE KNOWLEDGE & HORSE CARE

Jacqueline Sutherland (Area 12), April Steele-Edwards (Area 12), Caroline McWilliam-Tailby (Area 12), Olivia Connolly White (Area 21), Heather Hughes (Area 11), Alexandra Molesworth St Aubyn (Area 12) & Shauna Davies (Area 2).

GRADE 2 RIDING & SIDE SADDLE KNOWLEDGE & HORSE CARE

Jacqueline Sutherland (Area 12), Caroline McWilliam-Tailby (Area 12), Heather Hughes (Area 11) & Shauna Davies (Area 2).

GRADE 2 RIDING, JUMPING & SIDE SADDLE KNOWLEDGE & HORSE CARE

Renee Tuck (Area 14), April Steele-Edwards (Area 12), Olivia Connolly White (Area 21) & Alexandra Molesworth St Aubyn (Area 12)

GRADE 3 RIDING, JUMPING & SIDE SADDLE KNOWLEDGE & HORSE CARE

Moya Payne (Area 8), Olivia Connolly White (Area 21) & Renee Tuck (Area 14)

GRADE 4 HORSE CARE

Angela Wells (Area 8)

GRADE 4 RIDING & SIDE SADDLE KNOWLEDGE & HORSE CARE

Rhianwen Rosser (Area 6).

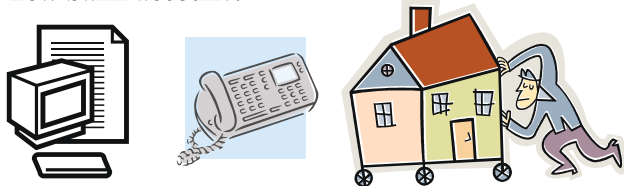
GRADE 4 RIDING, JUMPING & SIDE SADDLE KNOWLEDGE & HORSE CARE

Emily Saunders (Area 8) & Renee Tuck (Area 14)

**IMPORTANT NOTICES FROM THE ASSOCIATION'S HARD-WORKING
HON. GENERAL SECRETARY – *PLEASE READ***

PLEASE HELP US KEEP YOUR CONTACT DETAILS UP TO DATE

Have you got married or divorced, changed your telephone number or email address, moved house or got a new bank account?



Please inform the Hon. General Secretary of any changes so that we can keep our records fully up to date and to keep in contact with you so you can get the most from your membership.

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SIGNING OF POINTS CARDS

To assist the Judge in managing classes in a timely manner please have your Membership/Points Card filled in with the date and Show name in advance of the class.

Other Societies cards can be signed off by Show Secretaries thus saving the Judge time in the ring

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
BY DIRECT DEBIT**

**THE SIDE SADDLE ASSOCIATION
APPRECIATES MEMBERSHIP
RENEWALS BY DIRECT DEBIT AS THE
PREFERRED METHOD OF PAYMENT**

- A safe method of payment
 - A convenient method to pay
 - Payment is made automatically
 - Renewal not forgotten, misplaced or lost in the post
- Payment is collected at the beginning of January each year.
- A new Direct Debit needs to be set up by 30th November latest.

A Direct Debit Instruction Form can be requested from the Hon. General Secretary or downloaded from the SSA website – Membership Page

REPLACEMENT DOCUMENTS

To assist with the management of administration costs a charge will be made for replacement documents when they have been mislaid, or Members have moved house without notifying etc.

The replacement costs are as follows:

- Membership/Points card £3.50
 - Handbook £5.00
 - Certificates £5.00

Other mail-out documents will be charged accordingly

A charge of £5.00 will be levied for any change of membership status throughout the year

MEMBERSHIP GIFT VOUCHERS

Are you looking for a gift with a difference, need inspiration for a Birthday, Christmas or a thank you?



Why not give a one year subscription to the Side Saddle Association?

Please contact the Hon. General Secretary for more information.