

## British Young Drivers Championships 2007

The Championships had record entries this year, despite the sad withdrawal of the Irish due to the Foot and Mouth threat. Wales came joined the fray and their team spirit and enthusiasm really added to the terrific atmosphere of the weekend. The weather was very kind to us despite severe winds during the previous week when the obstacles were being built. Putting the sides on the tunnel of the railway obstacle whilst balanced on the top of a transit van, will be remembered for some time!

Escrick Park was again the venue for these Championships and a very sincere thanks must go to the North East Driving Club for allowing us to use their facilities and some of the equipment, as well as a host of stewards without whom the smooth running of the event would not be possible.

The standard of driving over the 4 years of the Championship has significantly improved with many youngsters far better than some of the adults at national level! In the 10-12 year old group, the veteran 29 year old spotty stallion, Dark Aura, won the dressage with Megan Noble, from Dumfriesshire. Katie and Mark Bell, from England are in a league of their own when it comes to dressage with superb scores, both winning their classes, and Mark taking the best overall dressage result. Ollie Dernie also from Scotland won the dressage in the 18 - 25 year old class with her Welsh Cob Prince. In Class 5, young drivers who have already driven at national level, drove the advanced test extremely well and Robin Hyde Chambers taking 1<sup>st</sup> place. It was also lovely to see Peter Shannon driving a team in this class, the first time a young driver has brought a team to this event.

The cones course produced a fair result through all the classes with the overall event winner being Megan Carruthers driving Amanda Saville's stunt pony Tom Tom. Considering his day job with the display team - this is quite an achievement!

The marathon was 3 sections over a distance of 13.5k. Thankfully every driver came home safely and most with a smile on their faces! Two of the permanent obstacles on the site were used with the first being decked out as the Teddy Bears' Picnic, including fresh sandwiches and champagne! The other wacky themes designed by Amanda and her team were Clapham Junction (including tunnel!), Old Macdonald's Farm, Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory and Halloween Horror. The best overall marathon was Rosanna Walters-Symons with her lovely black cob. The overall winner of Class 1 was Fleur Snow from Wales, Class 2 was

Tamara Hughes from Wales, Class 3 was Mark Bell from England, Class 4 was Ollie Dernie from Scotland, and Class 5 was Robin Hyde Chambers from England.

The team from England won the team challenge, with Scotland second and Wales third. It was a fabulous weekend with a wonderful feel to it and we really look forward to next year.