

PRESS RELEASE
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PONIES UK BURGHLEY EVENT PONY CLASS SPONSORED BY SEIB

The long journey from Dumfries to Burghley proved worthwhile for Stuart Sloane, who rode Highgrove Valentino to take the Ponies UK Burghley Event Pony Championship, sponsored by South Essex Insurance Brokers. Burghley Horse Trials has hosted this class, organised by Ponies UK, in recent years and the competition atmosphere combined with the magnificent backdrop of Burghley House provided an ideal setting for the championship.

The Ponies UK Event Pony Classes have been very popular this year and the championship was inundated with entries in both the Small Event Pony Class (not exceeding 138cms) and the Large Event Pony Class (exceeding 138cms but not exceeding 153cms). South Essex Insurance Brokers, a leading specialist equestrian insurer, have sponsored these classes for the past three years, "We are delighted in the way in which these classes have developed. We now see some really good, genuine eventing ponies coming forward and the standard is excellent" says SEIB Marketing Manager, Nicolina Mackenzie,. The two classes were judged by Tracey Brooks for the dressage, David Bartram for the show jumping and Richard Ramsay who judged the conformation. "I found these classes very interesting and an absolute pleasure to judge. There were some superb ponies and the organisation of the classes was very slick. The PUK stewards did a wonderful job administering these classes", said Richard.

Competitors had to ride a challenging dressage test before going on to complete a round of jumps and finishing over some rustic cross country fences. The ponies coped well in muddy conditions but the ring held up well on day 4 of the event. First in the Event Ponies Class not exceeding 138 cms was 14 year old chestnut gelding, Sondanella Mondeo, owned by Helen Collard and ridden by fourteen year old Sienna Barbour. This season, Sienna has competed in hunter trials and team chases and in Open Working Hunter classes, being placed every time. Sienna is no stranger to success having

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taken the Reserve Supreme SEIB Search For A Star Championship in 2006. In the winter, they enjoy hunting with the Bicester and Whaddon Chase Hunt. Second in this class was the 8 year old bay mare, Arthen SWS, owned by Mrs C Kearns and ridden by Steph Kearns.

In the class for ponies exceeding 138cms but not exceeding 153cms, Stuart Sloane rode his mother, Helen Sloane's Highgrove Valentino into first place. Helen bought this pony to do working hunter classes and they plan to event next year. "We really enjoyed spending the weekend at Burghley and it is great to have the pony here with us!" Said Helen. Stuart has also qualified for HOYS as a Working Hunter. Eliza Stoddart came second in this class, riding her mother, Mrs G Stoddart's Doonagore Boy. Eliza, who is studying her GCSEs at Uppingham School, was part of this year's British Pony Eventing Silver Medal winning team at the European Pony Eventing Championships in Switzerland. Doonagore Boy is usually ridden by Eliza's brother, Joss, but as he could not get the time off school, Eliza got the ride at Burghley instead. This dun 5 year old gelding has been competing at intro level and has been placed every time out with Joss. They will continue to event and take part in pony club events next year.

After a thrilling competition, the first and second in each class came back before the judges. Highgrove Valentino made the trip from Dumfries worthwhile for the Sloane family by taking the championship while Reserve went to the deserving Doonagore Bay.

For more information about South Essex Insurance Brokers, call 01708 850000 or email enquiries@seib.co.uk

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