

EXMOOR PONY STAR

2013 NOMINATIONS

ACHDUART 21/89

By Samantha Watt

Achduart 21/89 owned by Moorland Mousie Trust on loan to myself, Samantha Watt and my family.

Achduart 21/89 aka Jack arrived on loan to my family and I from the MMT on Good Friday 2013. He settled in quickly turning into a real mummy's boy, however he was a little worried by my loud, over excitable 3 year old daughter Sophie! When summer arrived Sophie started coming up to the yard more and they got used to each other. Sophie would start sitting on Jack when he was tied up on the yard. By the end of the summer Sophie was walking round with him on the lead rein. Jack had also despite not really ever coming into contact with traffic had done his first walk in hand down the road without batting an eye at anything and was being ridden by a just turned 13 year old as well! A few weeks later Sophie had her first trot on Jack! She squealed in delight. "More mummy!"

Next weekend I took Jack to his first show. Jack loaded straight onto a massive lorry and was an absolute superstar. Despite coming 5th I was so proud I cried in the ring! He continued to not put a foot wrong at both at home and away. I started bare backing him to and from his field in a head collar. We did our first ride down the road on a windy bin day and again didn't look at anything. My YO looked at me afterwards and said, "Your smile is infectious, that pony means the world to you doesn't he?" Yes he does!

Jack brings smiles and love to whoever is around. An 11 year old girl took him to a local show because her loan pony doesn't load. They won 1st in the most handsome gelding! It could have been HOYS for her, she was so delighted with her red rosette. She took Jack in every one of the fun classes and had a great time. During this time Sophie was bored. "Mummy, I want to ride on Jack." Somehow, we ended up doing the gymkhana! Jack had never done anything like that in his life, (neither had I,) but as always he took it all in his stride. Sophie did every single race and was delighted with all her rosettes that she came home with.

I never thought I would be as lucky to have a pony who is as calm, genuine, loveable, forgiving and as fun as Jack has been to my family. My daughter has a pony that she will never grow out and loves more than anything and I have great fun riding too! He is doing a fabulous job being a true turn his hoof to anything family pony. We will forever be in the debt of the MMT for letting us have him. They do such a fabulous job with all their ponies and Jack is a real testament to their time and commitment to these wonderful ponies. Jack truly is our superstar! :-)

CELEBRINDAL 337/3

By Amanda Clunie

Kenzie started riding at 3, after visiting the stables twice a week for 18 months we weren't getting very far. I decided she would learn more with her own pony (my excuse)! The hunt was on! I had looked for about 6 months, welshies, Shetlands but nothing fitted the bill, my friend Fiona heard about an Exmoor.....eh too big! too much pony! no way...

I sorted livery for when we found this elusive pony at Scholland with Ed & Debbie Maas and told Ed I was looking for a dope on a rope! He rang a week later he had found a pony that he thought sounded ideal.....another Exmoor! It was local so we went for a look, the Orkneys were standing in the field with their pony all tacked up a very fat, very woolly pony with a huge crack in her hoof and this huge neck. We led Kenz round the field a couple of times, this pony might be unfit but Lord it was strong! Kenzie helped untack her and the pony just stood next to her with her head against her. We had just bought Posh.

Two hours in the snow it took to load her, the Orkneys had got her when she was 4 and for 11 years had loved the bones of her but she hadn't done anything. I spent the next week with Posh grooming, talking and walking. Kenz rode her the following Sunday after twenty minutes can we go back now? I had taken my tottie wee granddaughter from a skinny 10 hand pony to a 12 hand coffee table, it was going to take time.

In that first few weeks this pony had a lot of firsts, vet visit, shoes, Alex Moulder the dentist, bath and best of all at the age of 15 her first show. A riding club show and she was 2nd in the M&M in hand class and 3rd in the veteran. A couple of weeks later at Fife County Show she was placed 1st in the M&M which was a qualifier for Ponys UK! No one could believe this was the same pony.

More importantly, she was developing this wonderful bond with Kenzie, in no time Kenz was off the lead rein on the estate and in the school, they were doing Pony Club and amassing rosettes, though the most special times were just watching their interaction Kenz has mild ADHD but Posh didn't have any expectations from Kenz just that she was loved.

We couldn't wait for the Scottish Exmoor Show we had made so many friends through FB, Kenz and Posh got a 1st in the LR and after watching the Working Hunter she said when is it our turn, I told her maybe next year.

Two days later we lost our beloved pony to EGS, we are all devastated especially Kenzie, she lost her spark even stopped eating. There is no better ambassador for the breed, loads of people now know the name Posh, this pair had a huge following watching their progress. Posh is a star, if you give these special ponies your heart time & understanding, they give it right back, oh and having Ed Maas on hand is a big plus too!

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DEAGOL 337/4

By Jade Pirie

I have been lucky enough to ride three amazing ponies this showing season, with two of them being Exmoor's but my definite pony star has to be Deagol! He's had a much more chilled year than normal this year as he has been ran alongside Dunkery Reed Bunting as a novice. But this all changed in October when Deagol made mine and my mum's dream come true. Throughout the year he's had numerous wins and championships and some very close HOYS and RIHS tickets. We attended the Heritage Championships in October with Deagol and my Novice section C, Popsters Lottery with no intentions to be returning home with an Olympia ticket. Whilst at the heritage champs Deagol won all his ridden classes, including the restricted ridden, the pretty Polly ridden and also the Exmoor Olympia breed qualifier. He also had a go at the training stakes worker which he loved!

I never expected to ever qualify for Olympia but always enter the breed class at the BSPS Heritage Champs. We've been in the top three in the class for the past 3 years but never thought we'd be standing in that first place position. As we stood in the line waiting for the numbers to be called out I didn't expect a high place with nearly every pony in the class being in the line up at HOYS this year. As the numbers were called in reverse I thought they'd made a mistake, as my number still hadn't been called out. As they got down to the final two I was thrilled to of thought to been placed second in such a strong class but as I wasn't called forward for second place! I burst into tears and our whole team began screaming and crying. This is when I knew we had qualified. This is the day we have always dreamed of!

We did the four hour drive to London on the 21st December and competed on the 22nd. This was the best experience I have ever had and am so grateful to Deagol for making my dream come true. Although we were not placed Deagol behaved beautifully for his first time there and loved doing the lap of hour with his Best of Breed Sash on! This is a day we will never forget. He's my one in a million pony and I would love him to be Exmoor Pony Star 2013!

DUNKERY TAWNY OWL 78/142

By Jenna Payne

9 year old stallion.

We owe this pony everything. Owly's given so much to our family and he's touched and inspired so many people that have met him. He's taught children and adults to ride, he's competed in top level showing; Royal Cornwall in-hand champion 2011, Exmoor Pony Breed Show Supreme Champion 2012, he's competed at HOYS, he's won at Three Counties in working hunter pony in 2013. He's competed in gymkhana, showjumping, working hunter pony, cross country and been successful at them all, he's even had a gallop on Aintree Racecourse! Owly has hunted with the Western and the Fourburrow, has taken a 9-year-old girl to a child's meet and enjoyed many pleasure rides with children and adults alike. He takes my children to Kids Club, where he stands amongst the other ponies and children with most Mothers oblivious the stallion in their midst; he's so quiet and easy going! Owly's also enjoyed Le TREC, both with me in the open classes and in the novice classes with the children. Owly has given my 5-year-old son, Harry, his first visit to the show ring on the leading rein, he's been dressed up as a 'Princess' to satisfy the whims of my 3-year-old daughter, Lowenna and given pony rides to hundreds of children that have come visiting – he's even got a basket saddle to give rides to the tiny tots!

Owly's also competed extensively in the dressage arena up to novice level and also competed at the BRC Quadrille Championships as the smallest of a team of four to represent Cornwall. He finished his career with a win at pas-de-deux dressage, performing side-by-side with his own brother, Dunkery Shrike and ridden by my husband, Jonathan, and I scoring 91.6%.

This year, he completed our final wish: to plough. He was paired with a very experienced 22-year-old pony, Baloo who initially taught him in front of a chain harrow. Owly took to it like a duck to water and has now attended his first ploughing match where young Harry walked up and down the furrows alongside him for the whole day. I think he might be the most versatile Exmoor pony, possibly in history?! There isn't anything this pony wouldn't turn his hoof to; a true ambassador for the breed.

Sadly, mid-November, after journey home from the most wonderful dressage lesson we've ever had, he suffered a dislocation of his fetlock and will never be ridden again. He's been in a fibreglass cast for the past six weeks, with many more months of box rest ahead of him on the slow road to recovery. We shall now be doing everything we can to give him the happy, sound retirement he so deserves and maybe, if he's lucky and the damage heals well, he'll get to sire a foal or two to pass on his glorious temperament. Owly is our star; our true, shining star.

EARL HAROLD 23/307

By Jessica Rayner

Well, I wasn't to know this at first but as of October 2012 my life was to change. Yes he arrived... Billy Milton (Earl Harold) came to our yard and I was given the ride. He had been broken over the summer after having ran out on conservation grazing with the Moorland Mousie Trust. We schooled him and started to teach him to jump over the winter. We were both to start our showing career together and our first show was at Richmond E.C. We were in the novice-working pony and ridden classes; our first class was the working pony and we only got so far into the ring and Billy absolutely froze and wouldn't move. The judge very kindly allowed me to be lead round and once we got across the arena we were away, scared, but going at least. I know I was disqualified, but we both learnt a lot that day. We continued to show him and we had one other incident where he froze up again, but I think we turned the corner after attending a training week at Somerford Park, with Susie Gibson and Andrew Hefferman (cant wait till next year). It was the most fantastic week and Billy loved it, especially jumping in and out of the water! Gosh, aren't we getting brave.

Our next show was at The Linnels; we had the most fabulous day. One of the judges was the lady who had judged us at Richmond and she could not believe he was the same pony. We won the ridden; we were second in the in-hand and then went on to be champion. In the afternoon we won our working pony and took reserve champion. We then went into our first ever supreme championship. Though we didn't come anywhere in that I couldn't have asked Billy to go any better than he had all day; he was AMAZING.

We then qualified and competed in the David Broome, Show Jumping Championships of Great Britain where we were 8th in one of the classes. We have also competed and won O.D.E. and had lessons with Richard Telford, Susie Gibson, Blythe Tait, Mary King and Anthony Perkins. All who say what a little super star he is. Billy has fans wherever he goes, but I am his number one fan and he is my very best friend.

We finished the season off on a real high by qualifying for the Picton Finals for next summer, in both the novice ridden and novice-working pony.

Billy and I have learnt so much together this past year, this would not have been possible without Juliet and the Moorland Mousie Trust, allowing him to come to Black Row Farm. At the moment he is having a well-deserved rest and we are looking forward to the 2014 season.

HEATHPOOL CLARISSA 93/46

By Miriam Geraghty

Clarissa is the sweetest, toughest pony; full of Exmoor charm and character - a true star! Her life so far has been a series of accidents and incidents, with extreme highs and lows. Clarissa arrived as a surprise on a sunny late September day - sporting a good winter coat, ready to charm hearts. At a couple of weeks old she became quite poorly, requiring daily medication. This is when she first won me over - juggling fourth year of vet school with the daily drive out to Peebles to pony wrestle was completely worth it. She soon regained full health and a sturdy constitution, enjoying running as a true wild Exmoor on the Scottish high ground - thriving on digging through snow and pinching polos.

This continued until February 2012, when Rosie MacDiarmid bought Heathpool Quickthorn and her daughter Carlina and asked for some Heathpool helpers to load them to travel. To Rosie's surprise Quickthorn and CLARISSA walked off the trailer in Wales! This turned in to a very happy accident, as Rosie tamed the wild hill pony she realized her sweet, charming potential. Clarissa continued to win over Welsh hearts at Ty Mawr country park, always first to canter over to greet approaching push-chairs.

In September 2013 Rosie kindly agreed that I could loan Clarissa. She loaded perfectly, travelled down to Cornwall like a pro and instantly settled in, greeting her two sisters enthusiastically and flirting outrageously with gelding Elbrus. Only a week after she arrived Clarissa was tacked and backed! To say she took it all in her stride is an understatement - she is the most obliging, sweet, laid-back pony.

In November disaster struck. After a stormy night Clarissa decided to forgo the green grass fields for newly fallen sycamore leaves. She became progressively painful and wobbly, with a permanently lowered head. I diagnosed her with the rare condition atypical myopathy, and it became apparent that she couldn't be treated at home. This horrible disease has only a 25% survival rate. As I admitted her to hospital with a hugely swollen head, unable to open her eyes, raspy breathing, and staggering gait I was warned that it would be "nothing short of a miracle" if she survived. After a week of tears, hard work, and overwhelming good wishes from the Exmoor pony community, Clarissa beat all the odds and fought off the grim reaper! Rosie and I are over the moon that she has made it and so grateful to everyone who has shown support and kindness.

She is now home from hospital, staying at a Veterinary Nurse friend's house where she will be lavished with love and attention - especially from two very excited children. Clarissa has endured so much at only 5 years old, all with a blissful sweetness that can melt any heart. Please join us in wishing her a continued recovery, and fingers crossed she will soon fulfil her potential as a dream lead rein pony with her new biggest fans!

OLYMPUS EROS 381/4

by Johanna Nyqvist Bjorling

I will nominate my dearest stallion Olympus Eros, who is no longer with us. Eros has since he was four years old taught many children to ride in my little riding school and he was many children's favourite. This year he taught one special child not to be afraid of ponies. The child was very nervous around the ponies, but when I let her meet Eros it all changed. He was as calm as only he could be, both when she gave him a brush and also when she rode him in the menage.

Many where surprised when I told them that Eros was a stallion because he was so gentle with the children!

In August 2013 Eros was sadly found dead in the summer field. Many children, as myself, is missing him a lot.

Eros will always be in our hearts!