

EXMOOR PONY STAR 2008

WINNER



TAWBITTS MYSTIC MAGGIE H17/30

Maggie is our nomination for Pony Star 2008.

In 1998, Maggie was born to Golden Mystery, and ran, for a year as part of the Tawbitts Herd .Then purchased by Mrs Jan Price, joined her group of Exmoor's in East Devon. Maggie had a filly foal, Woodmans Sheena, in the summer of 2001. And in 2002 she arrived at our home for backing as she was proving a little difficult! She was a very nervy and strong willed character and Jan's parting words to me were "Please don't get hurt, if we can't ride her it doesn't matter".

I fell in love with this little mare at first sight.

Maggie is adorable and complicated, she is unpredictable but she has star quality!

I have always ridden her myself at home but as much as I love the homework I don't enjoy the spotlight so Alice Saunders became her "ring jockey" and they got on very well, a love affair that continues to this day. It was obvious that Maggie was a bit special. She began her first proper showing year in 2003, was 2nd in the HOYS class at Royal Cornwall and dabbled her toes as a working hunter pony. She went to Peterborough and was well placed in all her classes and was top Exmoor in the Summer Heritage Championship.

In 2004 Maggie won at Devon County Show, Supreme Ridden Pony at Honiton Show, was Champion Ridden at the Breed Show, Exford.

In 2005 Maggie came out in the spring, to contest not only the flat classes but the WHP too! She loves to jump and once we had sorted out the brakes (!!!!) she began indoors and progressed through the season culminating at the BSPS Summer

Champs with a win and a 2nd place in open M & M WHP Classes. In April she qualified for RIHS and finished 4th in the final at Hickstead. We were so thrilled! She qualified for HOYS at Moreton in Marsh and went well at the final - getting there was enough for me!!

IN 2006 Maggie won the Performance Award the Cinderella Trophy.

2006 would be a worker year, with just a few flat classes along the way workers are She qualified at Winter Shows and went to the BSPS Winter Champs where she amazed us yet again and not only did she win the Novice Heritage WHP class but then went Heritage WHP Champion! Tears of joy were shed as she soaked up her moment in the spotlight, as cool as a cucumber, with crowd cheering and clapping our hairy little Exmoor.

Her year got better and better, gaining a RIHS Small Breeds ticket in April, a HOYS Small Breeds ticket at Royal Cornwall and a RIHS WHP ticket 2 days later! She made us all proud going beautifully at HOYS AND RIHS, jumping a lovely round and showing just how Exmoor's deal with spooky water splashes, they just gallop through them!

In 2007 Maggie was due to time out and perhaps have a foal until my daughter

Jessica was big enough to ride her, however all the best laid plans and all that. Her prospective husband decided to have time off too and then Jess surprised us by picking up the reins and bringing her out at the end of the summer. They won the Olympia class at Royal Berks and took the 2008 qualifier for RIHS Top Spec WHP. she completed her short season with the Res Champion Open Heritage at BSPS Heritage Champs.

Well, on with 2008, what a year it was to be. Sadly it began with Jess having a fall and badly breaking her femur. After 4 months on crutches she managed to get Maggie out for a couple of Olympia classes and a few flat classes before the Royal International. It was a very nerve wracking but exhilarating day on the 25th of July when the very best of the countries WHP gathered at Hickstead. Maggie showed her worth and jumped a marvellous clear round to enable her to win the small breeds final and ultimately take the supreme championship. The year continued with Maggie winning 3 Olympia classes, qualifying for HOYS as an Open Ridden and a WHP. We were proud to finish 5th in the Ridden. We have all enjoyed our journey so far with Maggie. We struggle to believe, that our little pony, who was afraid of her own shadow, has grown into such a star.

Maggie is a pony of a lifetime;

RUNNER UP

APHIDE A/295 (Mounsey) - A Very Wise Old Pony

As I look out of my window there is a little brown hairy creature all covered in mud sunning herself in her favourite morning spot in the corner of her field. She will be 25 this year and I have owned her since she was 4.

When many would be well into retirement, Mounsey is still going strong and passing on her “mealie” wisdom to all those she carries. She is currently teaching Imogen, aged 8, my daughter Kizzy aged 4 and her cousin Matthew aged 5. I still ride her occasionally myself.

Imogen says this about her:

“ I think she should be pony of the year because she is wonderful, sweet and once saved me. I was cantering on the lunge and she tripped then she put her head up to prevent me from falling over her neck. She is the nicest pony ever, she may be cheeky now and then but she is loved a lot by school.

Every year she dresses up as a reindeer and she doesn't like it that much but she does it and all the children love it. She is good at shows and is very good at helping people to ride. Sometimes she teaches a three year old girl and is always trying her hardest to be good, she is just the best”

2008 saw Mounsey return to the show ring after several years absence, proving she can still come home with a good quota of rosettes and do the breed proud. She had two visits to our local school, one as a reindeer accompanying Santa to the children's Christmas party and once on more formal business to talk to the children about endangered species. In early September she visited our local pub entirely on her own having been spooked by something in our field and jumped out!

Throughout her life Mounsey has touched the hearts of many, many people; converted several into Exmoor owners themselves, taught countless children and adults to ride and taken part in most equestrian disciplines, her favourite being hunting and her nemesis being gymkhana games!

She has a wisdom about her that is indefinable and a kindness of spirit that is truly special. She is an absolute SUPER star!!