

## EXMOOR PONY STAR 2012

Winner – Annasach Bugatti



### **ANNASACH BUGATTI 419/2**

By Tasha Anderson

I first met Bugatti, aka Bug, when he was about 4 hours old. He marched across the field with his mum and begun to chew on me. From that moment I knew he was going to be a character - for better or for worse!

The first thing you need to know about Bug is that he is not scared of anything. As a foal he was a dream - I could take him anywhere, and do anything with him, alone or in company. After that we had 3 years of teenager strops! He had so much energy but nothing to do with it - shows resulted in bucking round the ring, standing still was near-impossible and any opportunity to bite you he was there!

But all that changed when I backed him in summer 2011. Finally he had a way to express himself without being naughty! Within a couple of months of backing him we were out riding the roads alone, with no fear of anything we might meet. We did a few pleasure rides to end the year and he enjoyed them so much I started to think that maybe he might make a good wee endurance pony, following in his uncle, Heathpool Zeno's, hoofprints. Little did I know what 2012 would bring!

What Bug has accomplished this year has far exceeded anything I could have hoped for. By May he had completed his Bronze Shamrock (2 x 20 mile CTRs and 1 x 30 mile CTR). He was selected to ride for Ireland on the Home International/Celtic Challenge team - and successfully completed his 25 mile CTR, as part of the winning Irish Celtic Challenge team! He was so fit and enjoying endurance so much we tried for our Silver Shamrock at the end of the year (2 x 40mile CTRs). He flew round them

on his way to becoming the smallest ever pony to achieve this award in Northern Ireland! To top off the year he completed his first ever 2 day ride - a 2 day 50 mile CTR at the Red Dragon Festival of Endurance in Wales. This was his first trip competing overseas but he didn't bat an eyelid with all the extra pressure, passing on both days. The reaction we got throughout the weekend from other riders, vets and marshals was incredible - my wee 12hh Exmoor pony definitely stood out from all the Arabs and Sport Horses and gained quite a few followers! I have to admit I shed a little tear as he passed the final vetting - I can't actually describe how proud of my Bugman I am!

At the end of the year he won a total of 6 trophies, including Top Horse in Ulster and Top Pony in Ireland. Not bad for his first year at this endurance lark!  
So that is why I think Bug deserves to be Exmoor Pony Star 2012.

What Tasha said...

"Thank you so much to everyone who voted for Bug – I honestly never thought we stood a chance against all the other amazing ponies entered – such great stories from everyone. This award really shows off the versatility of the Exmoor pony with ponies from multiple disciplines all achieving great things in 2012.

Bug's 2012 season was more than I could ever have dreamed of – and I am really hoping that along the way we have promoted Exmoor ponies as a fabulous wee endurance pony. I am coming down to Exmoor next weekend for the Golden Horseshoe to crew to check it out before next year when, all being well, Bug and I am it enter the 50 mile ride, and take up the challenge set by the ride organisers to become the first Exmoor pony to do so! Watch this space, there is plenty more to come from the Bugman!

There is one person who I want to thank more than anyone and that is Rose Macdiarmid for letting me have this amazing wee pony. He is truly one in a million and I love him to bits and can't imagine not having his cheeky face in the middle of my wee herd! Thank you!

What Rosie said ...

When I promised Bug to Tash when he was still in the womb I was pretty sure they would make a great team. What Tasha hasn't really mentioned is that she also has a great relationship with Bugs' mum Zepherine, so it seemed only right that Bug became hers. He was a delightful foal, but a hideous teenager and I did think at one point he might be packed on the ferry home. Ridden work seemed to be his turning point though and he's never looked back. He's a pony who makes me smile when I watch him, because everything he does is done with joy, determination and humour! I am so proud of Bug today, and grateful to Tasha for giving him the best home anyone could hope for and letting me share in all his success.

## Runner-Up – Dunkery Tawny Owl



### **DUNKERY TAWNY OWL 78/142**

By Jenna Payne

8 year old Stallion (Liqueur x Dunkery Corn Bunting)

Owly Payne was runner up in the 2011 awards and I never thought that I would be sat here writing another entry, but in 2012 this pony amazed and delighted every member of our family more than we could ever imagine. The year began with a selection trial for a riding club quadrille team and he impressed the panel to secure a place on the team, the first time Cornwall has ever been represented by a team at the Dressage to Music Championships. Training was intense and so it left little time for much else, but on the few outings we had together in the show ring he was no less than reserve champion locally and 2nd at Devon County under a new young jockey - her first time riding at county level. Days after Devon County I broke my arm and so Owly's only riders were my two children. They adore Owly, my 2 year old daughter, Lowenna, not only loved to ride but often just spends time with him, brushing and sitting on him in the stable. My son, Harry, has learnt to trot and loves hacking adventures in the woods and valleys. As I was unable drive, on wet days I was even known to take them to school on Owly!

I'd entered Owly in the HOYS qualifier at Exford and with only a short few weeks from coming out of cast to prepare him I thought our chances were slim. However, he certainly delivered on the day with a performance that not only secured him a trip to HOYS but the greatest honour for any Exmoor Pony; Supreme at the Breed Show. For the rest of the summer holiday we prepared Owly for HOYS, continued his quadrille training and taught the children and their school friends to ride. Owly is very easy going and I hoped the atmosphere at HOYS would buzz him up, but he put a big smile on my face when he entered the ring and simply glanced at the audience before quietly carrying on. He put in a tremendous a performance that brought a tear to my eye. We went straight from HOYS to Aintree for the quadrille finals, he was the smallest pony performing at the whole of the championships and dressed as 'Baby Bear' in the Teddy Bears Picnic he got rather a large number of young admirers. He even got to have a gallop on the famous racecourse!

The highlight of my year is our first Le TREC event where Harry had his first competition. Owly didn't falter and they completed every obstacle to finish 6th overall and Harry was simply over the moon with his rosette. Harry even enjoyed his first time off the leading rein in the warm up arena! Owly Payne is now training for a new career in harness, in particular ploughing with a very keen young Harry! He truly is one in a million and will be a member of our family forever.

What Jenna said ....

Thank you to everybody that has voted for our special boy. Owly has had a tremendous 2012 not only in competition but also as an important part of our family. To have this recognised as runner-up in the Exmoor Pony Star awards for the second year running is a real honour. Thank you to Jackie for organising the awards and special congratulations to Annasach Bugatti – a well-deserved win.