

Rhegan White DRESSAGE NEWS



Once again the dressage nation has been swept by “Regional Championship Fever” and from Scotland to the Southwest, regional qualifiers for the Winter National Championships, took place throughout the month of February. Congratulations to those who took home the coveted places into the Winter Championships being held April 8th - 12th at Hartpury College in Gloucestershire. However this article is about giving congratulations to those who didn't qualify for the “Winters” but rode their way to a place into the Regionals. That is a big achievement! For non-professional riders who work, raise families and do a host of other things alongside their great passion of dressage...it's a huge achievement!

I know how hard it is for some of my pupils to keep focused and dedicated enough just to get out to a local affiliated competition. . Riding in the dark after a long day at the office or a long commute or snatching 2 hours between the part time job and the school run are the terms which many amateur dressage riders accept in order to compete. With months of riding on cold winter days when the wind is howling and the rain is pounding, the sacrifices involved in training for competition can be very challenging.

Then there is the expense! Training, maintaining and competing even just one horse is costly and requires a steady stream of “readies” to keep things moving forward. To buy the right saddle, bridle, boots, britches, hats and jackets requires a large outlay of cash never mind finding funds for a good vet, farrier and trainer. The cost of buying the right horse...? Don't get me started!

Yet all these tribulations fade into the distance as you ride down centre line at the Regional Championships. There are a multitude of competitors in countless qualifier classes around your region who would all have liked this chance and you have done it! So I would like to say to all those who competed at the Regional Championships, winners, placers and competitors, you are all to be congratulated for the enormous amount of effort and sacrifice you have made to get that spot in your open or restricted section.

You all help to make the Regional Championships fun to watch; you help us all to get swept up in Regional Fever! ■