

The Material Change British Team Chasing National Championship 2013

The Championships were held at the new Heythrop Hunt venue on Sunday 21st April. This was delayed from 7th April due to the weather having forced the postponement of all the 2013 Spring Qualifiers, and enabled the Berks and Bucks, the Fernie and the Worcestershire to hold Open competitions on the preceding three weekends. This meant more teams were able to qualify, as well as practise before tackling the new challenging course.

The Heythrop built their course three years ago with the intention of holding the Championships there once everything was ready. There were a few hiccups in the first two years, but these were all sorted out to provide a really good course with some big fences and plenty of questions. It was a test of fitness and stamina as the course is quite hilly, and there is some ridge and furrow which really tests the horses' ability to cross any type of hunting country.

There were nine qualified teams for this year's competition. Unfortunately the first team A&E Lycetts: A Class Act were unable to finish, and the second team to run of the Cunning Stunts made it to the last hedge before their third member had a fall. However Dr Cooks Quit the Bit with their bright pink bridles managed a finishing time, and eventually came in seventh place.

The Wishful Thinkers were the next team to go, and they put in a great round to go into the lead on 4 min 56 sec. They were followed by Relentless the reigning National Champions who stormed around with all four members finishing on 4 mins 11 sec.

Next were the Boring Gorings with a time of 5 mins 1 sec, followed by The Monster Team. They had won all three Open classes this season, but with Will Fox Grant taking a tumble at the gate they ended just 5 seconds slower than Relentless.

The Art Hotel Chasers put in a really competitive round, and again all four members finished on a time of 4 mins 28 secs. Team Ride-Away concluded the competition going into 6th place overall.

There was a Gate Jumping Competiton following the Championships and any Hunt holding an affiliated Team Chase was invited to take part. The cheque for £500 which was awarded to the Worcestershire Hunt was won by Caroline Webley, who took the same horse in the Point-to-Point the day before, and in the following Intermediate Class in the afternoon!

The Junior Prize for the best Under 23 in the Open was won by Dougie Gittins, and the RoR (retraining of racehorses) kindly donated very generous cheques to the owners of Corleaton Dane ridden by Rowan Cope, Alfie ridden by Simon Coady and Haxton with Yvonne Goss. These were all registered ex-racehorses.

Results:

1 st Relentless	4min 11sec
2 nd The Monster Team	4min 16sec
3 rd Art Hotel Chasers	4min 38sec
4 th Wishful Thinkers	4min 56sec
5 th Boring Gorings	5min 1sec
6 th Team Ride-Away	5min 21 sec
7 th Doctor Cooks Quit the Bit	5min 43sec

Link to photos of day: www.xcphotos.co.uk