

Dressage

Laura at Burghley

BRITISH Olympic dressage contender Laura Bechtolsheimer will give a dressage display at the Land Rover Burghley Horse Trials (4-7 September) for the first time.

Laura will perform dressage to music at lunchtime and at the end of the day on Friday, 5 September. Her mount will be her retired British team horse Douglas Dorsey, with whom she won the national dressage championships in 2005.

The Burghley box office is now open, tel: 01458 250200 or www.burghley-horse.co.uk.

Farewell to...

Caspian pioneer

LOUISE FIROUZ, who rediscovered the long-forgotten horse breed the Caspian, died last month aged 74.

Louise moved to Iran with her husband in the 1960s and formed an equestrian centre using mainly Turkmen mares and stallions. But in 1965, determined to find something more suitable for her children to ride, she



Iranians now call the Caspian a national treasure

investigated rumours about a type of pony known in the isolated Mazanderan province.

She found the Caspian, a breed standing at 11.2hh, which archaeologists believe to be the forerunner to the Arab. The breed was thought to have been extinct for 1,000 years.

Emergency

Air Ambulance seeks support

WILTSHIRE Air Ambulance will be collecting petition signatures of support at Barbury International Horse Trials (4-6 July), near Marlborough, in an effort to save the service.

Last year as many as 20 per cent of the patients rescued by the air ambulance were injured riders, but its future is under threat unless five-year funding can be secured.

The air rescue service is operated jointly with the police, who provide three-quarters of its funding. But a quarter of the funding — £350,000 — has to be found from public donation every year.

But to enter into a rental agreement for the helicopter, police now need the service to secure funding for the next five years.

Welfare

RSPCA reports Appleby was mainly 'trouble free'

THIS year's Appleby Horse Fair (4-11 June) passed quietly with only a handful of relatively minor equine incidents, according to leading welfare agencies.

The good news is in marked contrast to last year's fair when a horse drowned while being washed in the River Eden.

The RSPCA had a 13-strong team of inspectors at the fair.

Chief inspector Rob Melloy said: "Most people behaved well and treated the animals as they were supposed to.

"The vast majority of those who [were not behaving well] accepted our advice and their animals benefited as a result."

In addition to the RSPCA, four vets were on-site during the fair, together with three World Horse Welfare (formerly ILPH) inspectors.

A man from Walsall was cautioned by police for failing to present a Welsh pony colt with



The flashing lane at Appleby is used to show off horses that are for sale

ulcerated eyes for treatment. RSPCA inspectors gave out about 40 verbal warnings, mainly for over-riding and over-whipping in the flashing lane.

Chief inspector Melloy said: "We were very pleased with how they responded to the warnings and it was encouraging to see how many people brought their animals

to us for treatment."

In another case, vets saved a horse that cut an artery on debris in the River Eden.

Chris Williamson, World Horse Welfare field officer for the north-west, told *H&H*: "There were a couple of minor incidents handled effectively by the RSPCA, World Horse Welfare and attending vets."

AND FINALLY...

Katie Price brings glamour to Hickstead

KATIE Price, aka Jordan, has often spoken of her love for horses, is a die-hard *H&H* reader and has her own range of pony books. Now she is stepping up her involvement further.

Last week the former glamour model competed at Hickstead and at the same time announced the imminent release of her own range of equestrian wear. This weekend she is set to play in a charity polo match at Cowdray.

Katie was placed a creditable sixth in her very first unaffiliated dressage competition — a prelim 17 — out of a class of 23. Her score of 63.7 per cent was commended by Dressage at Hickstead show director Dane Rawlins.

"She did a good job, everyone was quietly impressed," he said. "She was very pleasant and friendly and has set her sights on improving. She got the lines right and got to grips with it well."

But while Katie makes plain her love for horses, she said: "I've always found the clothes rather boring. So I thought I'd create my own."

Katie's new range — to be launched at Burghley in September under the name KP Equestrian — features lots of Jordan trademark pink, diamante and velour. It will be sold exclusively through equestrian retailer Derby House.

Katie is being trained by Andrew Gould, at his yard Priory Dressage, which is near her home.

Mr Gould watched her compete at Hickstead: "She began dressage in March, but is passionate about it and sometimes has two lessons a day.



Katie warms up at Hickstead — to watch her test in full visit www.horseandhound.co.uk/katieprice

Her two horses are based at our place."

Mr Rawlins added: "She's good news for the sport. Everyone loves a touch of glamour."

Katie will be playing in a charity polo match at Cowdray Park on Sunday (22 June) in aid of the Mark Davies Injured Riders Fund.