



The Dodson & Horrell Bolesworth International Horse Show

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Horses galore and more at Bolesworth



The annual *Dodson & Horrell Bolesworth International Horse Show* offers five days of elite equestrian sport on the beautiful Bolesworth estate in Cheshire.

The amphitheatre style main arena, with the Barbour's historic castle as the backdrop, is one of the most attractive anywhere and offers excellent all round viewing.

This and the second Castle arena offer a full and continuous programme highlighting the best in international and up and coming showjumping.

There is the always popular Puissance and other equestrian competitions for top, local and junior riders.

Bolesworth also enjoys a real village show atmosphere, with a great choice of refreshments available along with a range of retailers.

This is a day out in the Cheshire countryside that all will enjoy.

www.bolesworthinternational.com

Ashley Gibbins
Commissioning Editor
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A personal view of Bolesworth



Bolesworth jumps with Joy

By Ann Mealor

After an enforced two year absence how great it was to be back at beautiful Bolesworth! Top class showjumping in the heart of the Cheshire countryside with a magnificent view of the majestic and historic Bolesworth Castle.

Sponsored by Dodson & Horrell, the well respected animal feed nutritionists, the five day show was a joy from start to finish.

Pulling out all the stops

Show promoter, Nina Barbour and her Bolesworth team really did pull out all the stops to make the 2021 event worth the wait. The grounds themselves and the two arenas looked fantastic. The programme, although not as diverse as previous years, still featured a range of classes that could be enjoyed by keen equestrians as well as those who appreciated watching thrilling sporting competition.

And of course, the horses, looking their best and displaying their strength, spirit, grace and power captivated and amazed their audience.

The arenas

The main International Arena and the adjoining Castle Arena both provided thrills, spills and excitement.

And there were plenty of places to sit and watch the action - whether it was ring side on one of the many picnic benches and tables, or from the roof top bar sipping prosecco in the sun.

It was inspiring to see many familiar names of old competing such as John Whitaker, Michael Whitaker and Geoff Billington.

There were, of course, yet more Whitakers competing than you could shake a riding stick at including; George, Robert, William, James, Joe, Jack and Joanne.



This shows the wealth of talent rising through the ranks from this famous showjumping family.

Olympic Team riders Ben Maher and Holly Smith also took part before heading off to the Tokyo Olympics.

Local riders also formed part of the line-up and proved they could hold their own among the world's best.



The Puissance



A favourite of class of mine and a real crowd thriller is the Puissance (meaning 'power' in French). This competition really does test horse and rider bravery and the synergy of their partnership.

To succeed, they must have absolute faith in each other.

My heart is always in my mouth when I watch this class.

There are just two fences, one of which is an enormous and forbidding red brick wall which increases in height each round. This year there were three joint winners as, in the final fifth round; all cleared the wall which stood at the incredible height of two metres and 16cms.

Horses and riders had jumped their hearts out.

The Grand Prix and Mini Major

On the last day of the show there are two very popular classes: the challenging Grand Prix show jumping class and the Mini Major.

In the Mini Major, a senior and junior pair up in fancy dress and race as fast as they can around a course of jumps. It's great fun to watch and a light interlude before the main event, the 1.50 metre Grand Prix.

The jumps are huge and the course is expertly put together by a top team of designers.

They did a great job, as there were a couple of very tricky fences that caught many riders out.

Jumps when broken were quickly replaced and the team worked efficiently to change the course for each jump off.

In the Grand Prix, only one horse and rider did a double clear to take the trophy and the bulk of the £50k prize money, and that was Ireland's David Simpson riding Foudre F.

Bentley Ride & Drive

Another class that is quirky and good fun is the Bentley Ride & Drive.

Riders tackle a challenging showjumping course with a time-trial twist before leaping out of the saddle and into a Bentley Bentayga V8 to weave their way through an obstacle course. A novel and very enjoyable ride/drive combination.

Family entertainment

As well as the arena action, there were other forms of entertainment to keep the family amused such as the Kids Zone with a giant inflatable obstacle course, trampoline bungee jumping and pony rides.

There was also plenty to eat and drink from the various food stands and bars and ample picnic areas with places to sit and enjoy lunch around both arenas.

A relaxing day out

The atmosphere at Bolesworth was very relaxed and visitors certainly appreciated the opportunity to get back out and enjoy everything a large event had to offer.

The good weather helped, and apart from a rather wet Wednesday, Bolesworth had plenty of sun this time around.

This show is a great place to meet up with friends and share a day out browsing, drinking, eating, watching and cheering! There was plenty of shopping for the horsey type and hopefully next year there will be a greater variety of stands as the event starts to grow again.

Strolling around

It is always a pleasure just walking around the beautiful grounds and watching the riders warm up in the practice areas.

Such a lot can be learned from observing the professionals with their horses before they enter the ring.

I'm already looking forward to next year, when hopefully top class dressage will also be on the agenda, with the likes of Carl Hester and Charlotte Dujardin returning once again to the show.

www.bolesworthinternational.com



Also at Bolesworth

The Bolesworth Young Horse Championships

For those keen to enjoy a second helping of showjumping, or who could not get to the Bolesworth International Horse Show earlier in the year, there is the Al Shira'aa Bolesworth Young Horse Championships in August.

The five-day event features 4, 5, 6 and 7 year old classes and includes qualifying for the World Breeding Jumping Championship.

As with the Bolesworth International itself the are two arenas of excellent competition along with equestrian trade stands and bar food outlets.

It is a very relaxed highly enjoyable day out.

www.bolesworthyounghorseshow.com

Christmas Light Trail

Aside from the world-class equestrian calendar, Bolesworth Estate also hosts a number of other events, including new for 2021, the Christmas Light Trail takes place from 26 November to 24 December 2021.

www.bolesworth.com

And in Liverpool

The Liverpool International Horse Show

Returning to the M&S Bank Arena, the Liverpool International Horse is back this year on 31st December 2021 - 3rd January 2022.

www.liverpoolhorseshow.com

A snapshot of the Bolesworth International



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