

# CONTESSA NEWSLETTER

# AUTUMN/WINTER 2009 ISSUE NO 16

IN THIS ISSUE	
Contessa Update	1
Horse Profile — Puro	2
End of an Era Goodbye to Sarah Ganney	2
Horse and County Website	2
Vaulting at Contessa	3
Wear it Pink	3
Forthcoming Events	3
News from Moonie's Stable	4

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Welcome to our latest newsletter!

The summer has been and gone, although weather wise it was not the hottest in history!! But from the horses' point of view this was not a bad thing as it made their work easier.

The time has gone quickly since the last newsletter and so much has happened. We hope we have managed to cram everything in.

Our NVQ courses are now up and running. If you would like to get practical experience then please let us know in the office.

We would also like to ask you to help us support the Breast Cancer Campaign. We will be running a "Wear it Pink" week from 26 October to 31 October 2009, finishing in activities from 5pm on the Saturday. Pay £2.00 and come wearing something pink. Please give what you can to this worthwhile cause.

We have lots of events coming up in the next couple of months leading up to Christmas. Keep an eye on the forward planner. See page 3 for a taster of the events coming up. Just to let you know that following client feedback, we have changed the winter day courses to make them slightly shorter and therefore a little cheaper for those who are not so keen on the cold!

Also, don't forget that if you have horse mad friends and relatives to get Christmas presents for we can help! We offer vouchers which can be used against lessons or day courses, as well as a range of clothing! See staff for details.

Please can we also respectfully remind you about the requirement for new clients to become members of the Equine Club. This offers you benefits including personal accident and public liability cover under ABRS insurance policies. It also gives you access to online forums, information on finding equestrian business, discounts on products and services and much more!

If anyone is able to do any photocopying, especially in colour, please let Tina know - thank you!

**THE CONTESSA TEAM**



## CONTESSA TEAM UPDATE

A warm welcome must go to the new students that have joined the Contessa team. Welcome – Sam, Elly, Elizabeth, Madeleine and Charlotte. Josef has also begun working with us to help Paul with the never ending task of maintaining the Centre.

Liz Sains and Helen Taylor have finished their training, which is a great achievement. Liz has not left us completely, but is still teaching on a Saturday.

Congratulations to Amy and Jade for passing their ABRS TC Exam!!! Well done both of you! Well done also to Liz for passing her ABRS ITA Exam. Sarah Jackson has also passed her BHS Stage 3 Care, which is brilliant. A very successful time for those taking exams and shows the hard work put in.

On the four-legged side, we welcome Harry to the horses at Contessa. We are sad that Seren returned home to her owner and that Catalina is going to be leaving. We appreciate all the work they have done and the countless people they have helped with their riding.

The team at Contessa would like to wish Sharon Rowe and her family congratulations on the acquisition of Charly the horse.

We will also be saying a very sad goodbye to Sarah Ganney. Turn to page 2 to hear about Sarah's time at Contessa.

# Horse Profile: Puro

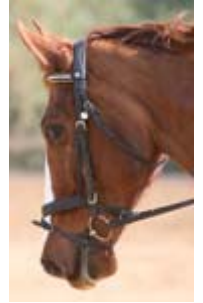
**Born:** 1997      **Age:** 12 years      **Height:** 16.3 hh  
**Sex:** Gelding      **Colour:** Chestnut      **Breeding:** Dutch warmblood



Thanks to Susan Young Photography for the photographs on this page.

We went on a trip to Holland to look for breeding mares, but saw Puro. He was nine months old and looked too good to let go! He moved very well and had a nice temperament. We imported him and I started to train and work with him. Sarah Ganney has had the opportunity to ride him for the last couple of years and has done a great job with him. Puro is a very talented horse, but is not easy. He is now performing a new role as a vaulting horse. We are really pleased with him as he has taken to this very well. Being a vaulting horse is quite a lot for the horse to cope and deal with as you can imagine.

By Tina Layton



## The End of an Era! Goodbye Sarah Ganney

After 13 years first training and then working at Contessa, we will be sad to be saying goodbye to Sarah who has been a very loyal member of staff. Sarah's final day at Contessa will be 31 October 2009, with a presentation being made at the end of the "Wear it Pink" activities from 5pm. She will be greatly missed by staff, past and present, and clients alike. Below Sarah gives some anecdotes of her time here.

"There are many memorable experiences from my time working at Contessa. I remember.....

- Jumping Duke who was almost as fast as my own horse Rocky.
- My first sit on an advanced horse was William.
- My first sit on Deskant and not being able to stop in trot.
- The first horse I ever rode at Contessa was Benisa when I was 14.
- Bare back jumping on Katie with no hands.
- Galloping up new field on Paigle and piaffing back.
- Having to lie down in the car park after three sessions with John Bowen.
- Getting a phone call to say that Benisa had had her foal, Xavi and then helping him find the milk bar.
- Taking Regitse out to competitions, even though she was rather cheeky!

There are far more memories and stories that I'm not about to divulge. If you want to know ask Dawn!"

## Horse and Country Website



You can also keep up to date with what is going on at Contessa through our blog on [www.horseandcountry.tv](http://www.horseandcountry.tv). Each week the blog is updated with what has been happening at Contessa. There is also a possibility to ask questions in the "Ask the expert questions" section. Questions which are submitted and they go to the Ask the Expert Panel. Our very own Tina Layton is a member of that panel so has input into the answers. So anything you would like to ask, send them in. Have a look on the Horse and County Website to see find out more and read our blog. Follow these links - <http://horseandcountry.tv/celebrity/tina-layton-elliott-bhsi> and <http://horseandcountry.tv/celebrity/tina-layton-elliott-bhsi/introducing-contessa-riding-centre>

# Vaulting at Contessa!!!



Vaulting has gone from strength to strength at Contessa over the summer. The attached photo shows how far the vaulters have progressed. Question is going to be – how many people can we get on Charmer by the next news letter?!!

Vaulting at Contessa has continued on a weekly basis and is run on a Saturday from 12.30 to 2.00. The cost is £15.00 and it is run in line with the British Equestrian Vaulting Association, with participants then needing to become a member to continue after they have tried the sport.

As this new discipline has taken off at Contessa we will also be offering Advanced Training clinics with Sarah Gemmell, who has been a member of the English Vaulting team. The first one of these will be held on 14 November 2009. See the notice board for further details.

## English Vaulting Championships



Following the launch of Contessa Vaulting Group on 31st January 2009 they have been training on a weekly basis.

On August 15th three group members took part in their first competition at the English Championships in Hampshire.

Although relatively new to the sport they all did exceptionally well. Meghan Clarke (11) and Lily Spackman (9) took part in the Walk Individual Freestyle Class, for which they each had to choreograph a routine to music. Both scored very good marks

with Meghan placed third and Lily fourth.

Zak Layton-Elliott (8), partnered with an experienced vaulter, entered the Walk Pairs Freestyle Class, again achieved a very good result finishing third.

Vaulting is gymnastics on horseback and on this occasion they performed on William who stands 18.2hh and their lunge was Julie Newell of the English Vaulting Squad.



## WEAR IT PINK

Monday 26 October  
to  
Saturday 31 October 2009

*Help us raise funds for the Breast Cancer Campaign, by paying £2.00 to wear something pink.*

*At the end of the week we will be holding a day of activities on the Saturday.*

### SATURDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER

*Pay £2.00 and come and have a go at Vaulting*

*At the end of the day, from 5pm, we will be holding a  
**Human / pet agility competition.**  
Lots of prizes to be won!  
£2 per entry*

### KIDS

**WEAR YOUR TRICK-OR-TREAT OUTFIT**  
*And win a prize for the best outfit  
(must include something pink)*

### TOMBOLA & RAFFLE

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- Side Saddle Day course
  - Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November
- John Adams Show Jumping Clinic
  - Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November
- Open Unaffiliated Dressage Competition
  - Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November
- Classical Dressage Day Course
  - Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> November
- John Bowen Dressage Clinic
  - Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November
- Christmas Social Evening
  - Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December
- John Adams Show Jumping Clinic
  - Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December
- Video Day Course
  - Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December
- Christmas Pony Days
  - Throughout the holidays

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Hi everyone –

It's my turn to host this back page of the newsletter!! The summer is over and we are now getting our fluffy winter coats. Perfect for keeping us warm. Luckily we have Amy who has got the rugs all clean and ready for us to wear when the weather gets really cold or wet. The problem with our thick winter fluff is that we get too warm when having fun on lessons. Thankfully we have the staff to give us a clip to stop us over heating and then have our rugs to keep us warm when we're relaxing.

I hope you have all enjoyed your riding into the Autumn and look forward to seeing you at your lessons leading up to Christmas and at the Christmas party!

**MOONIE xx**



### *Halloween Pony Days*

*Come for a spooky pony day or week. Have fun with the ponies and get all spooky and scary with the Contessa team. There will be games on the pony and a spooky hunt with dressing up your pony for Halloween with much much more!!! This is for the half term week. See staff to book. Don't miss out and be prepared for a spooky time - we'll be waiting!*

## **DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!!**

### **Contessa Children's Christmas Party**

**The Contessa Children's Christmas Party will be on  
Saturday 12 December 2009 from 1.30pm to 4.00pm**

### **Pony Club – Missed Badges Rally**

On 4 October 2009, we ran the Missed Badges Rally. It was a chance to take the Grooming and Handling badge, plaiting badge and points of the horse badge. Well done to all those who took the tests and passed.

#### **Grooming and Handling**

Niamh Whitcher, Jodie Fanger and Phoebe Hunt,

#### **Plaiting**

Niamh Whitcher and Jodie Fanger

#### **Points of the Horses**

Niamh Whitcher, Jodie Fanger and Lydia Schwind

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

Keep an eye on the forward planner for all that is coming up! The Riding and Road Safety Rally is on Sunday 15 November. As mentioned in the Vaulting section there is an Advanced Vaulting Clinic with Sarah Gemmell on Saturday 14 November 2009. See the notice board to sign up! At the end of November, on the 29<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Combined Training Competition. See a member of staff for an entry form.

With Christmas coming we have lots of opportunities for you to spend time with the ponies. Don't forget when writing your Christmas lists that we offer riding vouchers. In December we have the Christmas Party on Saturday 12 December – see above for more details. There will also be Christmas Pony days on Monday 21, Tuesday 22 and Wednesday 23 December. On Christmas Eve we are holding a special festive pony day! So lot for you to be doing as Autumn leads to Christmas.

Remember to wear your pony club uniform to events!



**Please don't forget to renew your Pony Club membership in order to continue benefiting from the savings open to members!!**