



THE GRANTHAM CUP

At Belton Park, Lincolnshire

11 – 13 April 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

18 April 2008

BUMPER BELTON HOSTS RIDERS, HORSES, DOGS, GOLFERS AND CARS

Over 675 horse and rider combinations from some twelve nations competed across three action-packed days at this year's Belton International Horse Trials near Grantham, April 11 – 13. Add to these 45 Pony Clubbers, two horseball teams, 190 classic cars and motorcycles, 30 dogs, 160 golfers and around 10,000 spectators and you get a great mix of sporting action for six Grantham Cup titles at the National Trust venue.

The weekend's premier competition was The Grantham Cup CIC*** for the eventers. Riders from all over the World headed to Lincolnshire for this important competition – some looking for Olympic qualification. It was a close fought battle with the leader board changing throughout. Australian Clayton Fredericks who held the advantage after the first two phases, Dressage and Show Jumping, as he was both first and second with Ben Along Time and Nullabor respectively. However, Clayton elected to save the horses for other competitions which opened up the field. This handed the lead to Gloucestershire's Julie Tew and Sir Roselier going into the cross country. Cross-country course designer Sue Benson set the riders a strong test – perfect for this time of year with many horses having a final run before Badminton Horse Trials next month. Julie and the striking grey put up a great performance to add just 17.6 time penalties which retained the lead until Australian Olympic-long listed combination Paul Tapner and Inonothing stormed round the course for just 12.4 time penalties – taking the lead by a single penalty. Britain's Mary King came closest to stealing the lead with Imperial Cavalier but just wasn't fast enough – letting victory slip by only 0.3 of a penalty – less than a second. Last year's winner, Vittoria Panizzon from Italy was fourth.

The other Advanced sections provided some top-notch entertainment for the assembled crowds with some of the best in the country competing. Land Rover section M saw a runaway victory by over eight penalties for Matthew Wright and Cermont while the Bishop Burton College section N for riders under 25 was claimed by Emily Galbraith and Crown Alliance, reigning British Under 25 Champions and winners of team gold and individual bronze at last year's Young Rider European Championships. It was a win for Ruth Edge and Mr Dumbledore in Advanced section O and William Fox-Pitt came out on top in the Graham Porter Plumbing-sponsored Advanced section P with his double CCI*** winner Macchiato. The most competitive section of the day, Savills Section Q, grouped together horses with the most points and witnessed a storming victory by Oliver Townend and new ride, Coup de Coeur with the day's fastest cross country round and the final section went to Lucy Wiegiersma and Beckli, making up for an otherwise disappointing weekend for the rider from Devon.

There was a further six sections of Novice level on Friday and on Berryman Saturday six sections of Intermediate to complete a busy competition programme. Full results from www.granthamcup.co.uk.

Continued...

One of the highlights on Sunday was the new Belton Masters competition sponsored by Shearwater Insurance and Taittinger. Some of the sport's best known legends bravely competed, with a few laughs along the way, in a dressage test before setting off on a show jumping course mixed with some cross country fences. Belton's course designer Sue Benson had the honour of riding Shear H20, one of Britain's iconic event horses having won medals at Olympic, World and European Championships while team stalwart of the 1990's Karen Dixon brought her equine partner Too Smart out of retirement and he certainly enjoyed himself to finish third. Top honours went to Anne Marie Taylor when she showed a few years out of the limelight hadn't taken the edge off her competitive nature while 1997 European Team gold medallist Chris Bartle was second.

Organiser Stuart Buntine commented; "We've had a magnificent weekend. There were lots of happy faces around the event – even the rain and hail storms couldn't dampen spirits! There has been some really top class competition from the best riders around here over the three days and I couldn't be happier. Our new additions this year have worked exceptionally well and we are already planning for 2009. I hope all of the spectators had a great time and will plan a visit next year – mark the date in your diary 3 - 5 April!"

2008 Grantham Cup Winners:

CIC*** (Eventing)	Paul Tapner (AUS) riding Inonothing (Owner: Jenny Waaler & Rider)
Golf	J, McClelland, V. Hamer, C. Burns & N. Harris (competition held at neighbouring Belton Park Golf Course)
Dog Agility	Emma Wadd and Harvey
Pony Club Mounted Games	Banwell Branch of the Pony Club from Somerset
Classic Car Rally	Jim Ferguson with his 1973 Triumph Stag
Horseball	Arkenfield Stables

- ends -

Press Contact: Winnie Murphy 01858 880476 or 07967 186556 or email winsome22@talktalk.net

Photography Contact: Horse Power Photography – 01933 665000 or 07966 282801 or info@horsepower-photography.com