

## Equestrian Interschools Final Report 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> April 2015

A packed weekend of show jumping took place for the final of the Equestrian Interschools Ireland league hosted by Coilog Equestrian Centre last weekend. League sponsors Equestrian World Maynooth and Jumpinaction were on hand to record the event and hand out the prizes at the league final. The final attracted teams from all over the country with some staying overnight in the venue to take part in both days of the competition.

The weekend's activities were spread over all arenas in Coilog and commenced on Saturday in the Hornbeam arena with the Open teams, where the last chance to gain points before the league final were on offer. Of the 11 teams to compete, 4 teams finished on a qualifying score of 0 to make it in to a hotly contested jump off. 3 of the 4 teams ended on a combined total of 0 so it was down to the fastest time. Colaiste Bhríde Carnew took the spoils in 74.09. The team was made up of Julie Mullins, Aoife Kavanagh, Frankie Kavanagh and Emer Kavanagh. Second place went to Wesley College finishing 2 seconds behind the winners on 76.65. Third place went to Grey Community College (78.48) and fourth place was awarded to Good Counsel New Ross (4 faults, 68.43). The 4 teams in the jump off were all ranked in the top 10 of the league heading into the competition so points were valuable. There was also a jump off of the 4 faulters to decide placings for fifth and sixth position. 4 teams contested for these placings resulting in Wesley College taking fifth and sixth being rewarded to Newbridge College. The line-up made little change the league placings, meaning that there would be all to play for among the schools heading into the final on the following day.

In the Novice Teams Event, local team from Kildare Town Community School won from a start of 4 teams. Representing Kildare Town Community School were Lauren Page, Katie Kelly, Lee Page and Lara Turner. Second went to Loreto Secondary School Wexford, followed by Piper's Hill Naas in third and Ballymena Academy in fourth.

In our Open individual competition, 15 competitors took part in the competition to try and gain important points for the final. Of the 15, 9 made it through to the jump off with 7 finishing on 0 penalties so it came down to the fastest time. Taking the win by finishing on a clear round in a fast time of 31.88 was Kirsti Connole riding Beech Hall from St. Gerard's Bray. Closely finishing in second place was Kirsti's teammate Mark Finnerty (Too Posh) who finished less than .2 of a second behind her on 32.00. Daniel Fitzgerald (Gucci) came in third position on 35.64. Caoimhe Sweeney, Poppy Connelly Carew and Shona Callan were awarded fourth, fifth and sixth position respectively. Saturday also held the last of the qualifying rounds for the HSI sponsored Premier 1.10m class where individuals fought to gain a place in the final. Taking both first and second position was Mikey Pender (Derrymore Chips and Riverview Annie). Mikey previously qualified another pony (Lily) and under the rules of the competition, he must choose just 2 of his 3 mounts to ride in the final on Sunday. Third went to Abigail Boland (Little Miss Burberry), fourth Clodagh Jackman (Imperial Imp), fifth Daniel Fitzgerald (Gotche Lady), and sixth Sam Micklem (Hi Heaven).

Sunday's action commenced with the Open Team event which incorporated the Equestrian Interschools League Final. The league, sponsored by Jump in Action and Equestrian World

Maynooth, has been hotly contested all season and among the starters were the schools that were all in contention to win the league. Of the 23 teams to take on the testing track, 11 made it through to the jump off on double clears. 4 of these teams ended on scratch and fastest time on the day was St. Mary's Knockbeg, in 66.84, who were represented by Seamus Dermody, Shea Byrne, Shane Ryan and Michael Pender. Finishing on double clear in 67.21 was Newbridge College White which was good enough for second place. Third place went to Colaiste Bhride Yellow, clear in 74.35 and fourth went to Kilkenny College, clear in 76.09. Fifth place went to our league leaders heading into the final and the fastest of our four faulters in the jump off, Good Counsel New Ross White team in a time of 67.44. Sixth went St. Gerard's Black. Double points were awarded in the final for the league and second place was good enough for Newbridge College to steal the spoils from Good Counsel New Ross. Newbridge ended on a league score of 58, 5 points clear of Good Counsel who finished the league on 53. Third place went to the winners on the day, St. Mary's Knockbeg, who's win on the day proved important in the league table as the skyrocketed up from ninth position, finishing on a league score of 49. Fourth went to Borris Vocational (46), fifth went to St. Gerard's Bray (45.5) and sixth went to Colaiste Bhride Carnew (45).

Three individual competitions took place on the Sunday for the Secondary school competitors. The open individual took place after the team competition and similarly saw competitors fight for important league points. First place went to Mark Finnerty (Too Posh) from St. Gerard's Bray. Second went to Kiera Malcomson, third Jack Ross, fourth Daniel Fitzgerald, fifth Grace Evans and sixth Abby Durham. Third place on the day was enough for league leader Jack Ross, from Newbridge College, to hold onto his title and claim victory, ending on a league score of 55. Second went to Ross' teammate Daniel Fitzgerald (50). The win on the day proved important as Mark Finnerty jumped from sixth place up to third ending on a league score of 47. Fourth place went to Poppy Connelly Carew (38), fifth went to Caoimhe Sweeney (36) and sixth went to Jack Sargent (34). After the league competitions, the open action action concluded with individuals jumping for victory in the final of the HSI sponsored Premier 1.10m class. After a competitive first round, 10 qualified for the jump off and an important clear in the fastest time went to member of the winning open team from St. Mary's Knockbeg, Mikey Pender riding Derrymore Chips. In our Novice Individual Championships, spoils went to member of Saturday's winning novice team from Kildare Town, Lee Page riding Jacko.

Two more leagues that were run in conjunction with the 5 score league throughout the year were for school attendance and turn out. Both of these leagues were also won by the 5 score league winners Newbridge College.

Sunday also played host to the stars of the future in Primary Schools Championship show jumping where we had 8 schools compete in the competition. The winners on the day were from Kildangan National School. The team was made up of Ellen Kelly (Splash), Joshua Halford (Khan), Caleb Schofield (Lassie) and Tommy Halford (Filco). Second place went to a combined team from St. Patrick's NS Newbridge and Two Mile House National School. Joint third was shared between Scoil Mhuire Drumphua and a mixed school from Borris. In the Primary Individual Championship, competitors had to complete the track closest to the optimum time.

Winner of the class was Mia Daly riding Midnight. Second went to Christine Warrell (Tina) and third was Ruth Schofield (Lassy)

Although the league is over for this school year action continues. The All Ireland Interschools Showjumping Championships take place in Enniscorthy on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May followed by Interschools for open novice and primary schools at the Newbridge College Horse Show.