

# British Dressage Team Southern Success

*At Senior Inter Regional Competition, Keysoe*

Words by Sharon Walker and photography by Kevin Sparrow



**Southern Team Trainer, Vicki Thomson-Winfield, pictured on Beltoni**



**Lauren Barber**

After a snowy, frozen start to the 2011 Team Southern made the fantastic announcement that Olympic competitor and trainer Vicki Thompson-Winfield of Oldencraig Equestrian Centre would be the Southern Team Trainer in 2011.

Once again riders and horses started to register interest in attending the selection days and the excitement started to build. As the onerous, but incredibly enjoyable task of selecting riders to represent the Southern Region commenced a number of new people came forward, which is always appreciated and welcomed.

After deliberating, discussing and debating we finally put together six teams consisting of Preliminary, Novice, Elementary and Medium riders and a team of three individuals that would take part in the Advanced Medium competition.

Then came the team names, there had always been a slightly 'tipsy' theme and 2011 was no exception. The team Captains were each charged with bringing the ingredients of their cocktails to share at the Friday evening get together at Keysoe. And the charming commentator at Keysoe thoroughly enjoyed talking about our Southern colourful names!

Finally the Friday arrived and it was time to start the drive to Bedfordshire. From lunchtime onwards the horses started to emerge in their beautiful team Southern rugs kindly sponsored by Elite Design and Print and supported by Premier Equine.

## Day one

Day one started incredibly well with the Warm-up Prelim test being won convincingly with more than 3.5 % more than the nearest competitor, by Lauren Barber and the elegant Cheque Mate.

In the Novice warm-up the newly named

NIN (Nina) Heywood finished in a very respectable eighth place.

The day continued with the team competition – hooves were polished to a mirror finish, white breeches dazzled Southern clothing adorned all and off we went!

Our Preliminary scores were solid with Jenny Moxham, Lauren Barber, Mary McKay and Jack Marshall all delivering very respectable results.

In the Novice class, Nina (NIN) Heywood blew the competition away with the magnificent Benjamin Van Orshof and scored a fantastic 73.10% to finish a very fine second. Lucy Wise on the cheeky boy Finnerty's Flight and Sue Griffin on the magnificent U2-K also produced solid scores for their teams.

## Hot competition

Every year the Elementary competition is the hottest and hardest fought with nearly 50 competitors battling it out! Gill Wise who stepped in at the last minute went out on the budding star (over 17hh) Sibaldi B, supported by Prue Weatherley and the usually chilled, but this time very fizzy Zinedin, Jo Jephart on the beautiful Dondolino, Debbie Roberts on the crowd stopping Oodles to Like (Nellie) Claire Leggat on the elegant in name and nature T's Sapphire and Lorna Davies on the prince of charm, Percival – all gave the tests we knew they could and then came our secret weapon – Devan Woodgate on Winchester

Dream who again broke the 70% mark for the second time in one day and convincingly won the Elementary!

What to say about medium – I think wait until day two's write-up to get the full allowance of smugness!

Our Advanced Medium team of individuals did incredibly well. It was the first time at this type of competition for Linda Hall on Santor and Jo Parkam on Carbone Z, but the more experienced and striking Ace of Base with Debbie Roberts had been before and performed beautifully for his admirers.

## Day two

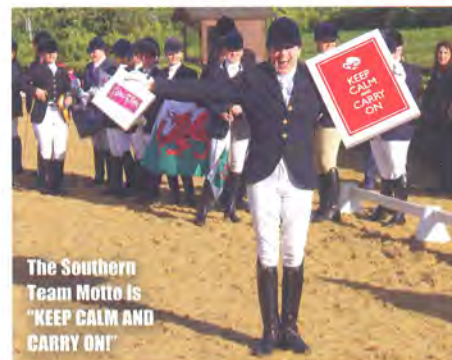
Day two of the inter-regionals dawned beautiful sunshine, accompanied by howling gales! All three arenas had flower pots and markers blowing across them and many horses threw in the towel before the bell rang – but the Southern Teams are made of stern stuff. Jo Parkam summed it up beautifully when she said "We braved the wind and came good! Flower pots hold no terror for us after that experience."

The weather got so fierce that the flower pots had to be stacked strategically at various points in the arenas and the marker boards had to be buried in the lovely new soft track to save them from tipping over!

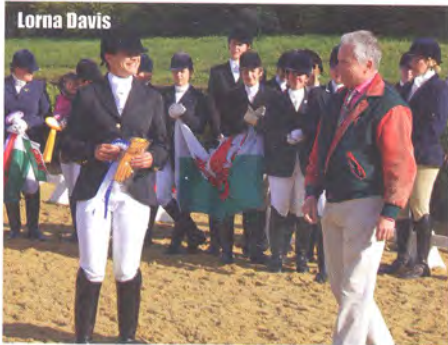
But we all persevered and after another eight hours of competition it was time for the final prize giving and placing. We did extremely well in both the Prelim and Novice classes. Emma Hall and the imposing Dark Destroyer gave us a great score to come in eighth overall, Jack Marshall and the very promising Oldencraig Winston was fifth overall.

In the Elementary Gill Wise was seventh, Prue Weatherley 12th and Claire Leggat 15th. And taking the top two places were overall winner Devan Woodgate, and second placed Lorna Davis.

Devan was also the only rider to score over 70% in all three of her tests! (We are very proud of her!)



**The Southern Team Motto is "KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON!"**



## Magical Medium

And if you thought we did well in the Elementary – we did even better in the Medium! Natalie Brown was 15th, Victoria Strutton finished ninth, Sonia Mayne was sixth, Fiona Gair finished fifth, Toni Terry on the sparkling and graceful Diamond Fritz was fourth, Jane Stevens on the electric Wall Street V was second and an incredibly well deserved first place went to Jane Lavington on the graceful and poised Idlecumbe Georgia.

We knew that our teams had done fabulously well, but we had what seemed like an endless wait while the scores were totaled. Little did we know how close the scores were and that there was double checking and re-counts happening!

**11th place – Southern Margarita**  
Fiona Gair (Cap), Claire Leggat (Ele), Sue Griffin (Nov), Mary MacKay (Prelim)

**10th Place – Southern Team Mai Tai**  
Victoria Strutton (cap), Prue Weatherley (Ele), Lucy Wise (Nov), Jack Marshall (Prelim)

**4th Place – Southern Team Manhattan**  
Toni Terry (Cap), Sonia Mayne (Med), Devan Woodgate (Ele), Jack Marshall (Prelim)

Second place and runners-up by just one point the fantastic team Southern Cosmopolitan. Southern Cosmopolitan: Jane Lavington (Cap), Lorna Davis (Ele), Lauren Barber (Prelim), Emma Hall (Prelim)



Finally here is a shot of those Southern unsung heroes – shattered after three full on days – here are the partners, grooms, daughters, friends and helpers without whom everyone's competition would have been a lot harder and a lot less fun!

### SOUTHERN MANHATTAN

Cap Toni Terry	Medium .....	Diamond Fritz
Sonia Mayne	Medium .....	Rivaldi
Devan Woodgate	Elementary.....	Winchester Dream
Jack Marshall	Preliminary .....	Oldencraig Bjorn Borg

### SOUTHERN MOJITO

Cap Natalie Brown	Medium .....	BFF Mounts Granville
Debbie Roberts	Elementary.....	Oodles To Like
Nina Heywood	Novice.....	Benjamin Van Orshof
Litta Sohi	Preliminary.....	Oldencraig Zwota

### SOUTHERN COSMOPOLITAN

Cap Jane Lavington	Medium .....	Idlecumbe Georgia
Lorna Davies	Elementary.....	Percival
Emma Hall	Preliminary.....	Dark Destroyer
Lauren Barber	Preliminary.....	Cheque Mate

### SOUTHERN MAI TAI

Cap Victoria Strutton	Medium .....	Sound Barrier
Prue Weatherley	Elementary.....	Zinedin
Lucy Wise	Novice.....	Finnerty's Flight
Jack Marshall	Preliminary.....	Oldencraig Winston

### SOUTHERN MARGARITA

Cap Fiona Gair	Medium .....	Chrissies Lad
Claire Leggat	Elementary.....	T's Sapphire
Sue Griffin	Novice.....	Oldencraig UK-2
Mary MacKay	Preliminary.....	Costa Dallas

### SOUTHERN SEA BREEZE

Cap Jane Stevens	Medium .....	Wall Street V
Gill Wise	Elementary.....	Sibaldi B
Jo Jephart	Elementary.....	Dondolino
Jenny Moxham	Preliminary.....	Harry Hotspot

### INDIVIDUALS - GLACE CHERRIES

Linda Hall	Adv Med.....	Santor
Debbie Roberts	Adv Med.....	Ace of Base
Jo Parkman	Adv Med.....	Carbone Z



Devan Woodgate on the show stopping and magnificent Winchester Dream



The proud and well deserved winner (and newly appointed list 3a judge) Jane Lavington



Overall the Southern region again triumphed with a magnificent haul of rosettes