

PRESS RELEASE

The BSPS Heritage Mountain & Moorland Ridden Championship at Olympia 2011 *Generously Sponsored by The Hawkins Family and TAAS Ltd*

The BSPS announces today, its plans to bring one of the showing world's most renowned Mountain and Moorland Ridden Championships into the modern era. The new concept will have something for every competitor, be they a traditionalist, a futurist or a purist.

The new competition's objectives are not only to maintain and ensure that the best of breeds go to Olympia, but to also encourage a wider participation in the competition. The number of ponies qualifying for Olympia will increase to 40, of which all individual breeds will be represented.

Ten major shows around the country will hold a direct qualifying round consisting of six classes, Small breeds (Dartmoor, Exmoor and Shetland), Welsh A & B, Welsh C, Welsh D, Large Breeds (Dales Fell and Highland), Connemara and New Forest, where the champion pony will automatically qualify for Olympia. If the Champion has already qualified, the Reserve Champion will qualify or the first Reserve Champion.

Qualifying Shows

Berkshire	Royal Windsor Horse Show
Wales	BSPS Welsh Championships
Somerset	Royal Bath and West
Suffolk	Suffolk County
Lancashire	BSPS Lancashire Championships
Hampshire	New Forest and Hampshire Show
Yorkshire	NPS Area 4
Kent	Kent County
Scotland	BSPS Scottish Championship Show
Yorkshire	Great Yorkshire Country Side Live Show

To widen the field of participation, 21 additional shows will also run a first round qualifier where the first two ponies in each class will go forward to a semi final at the BSPS Heritage Championships, October 15th 2011. Entry to the Semi final will be free of charge.

Semi Final Qualifiers

Scotland	Ayr Show
Wales	Pembrokeshire County
Derbyshire	Bakewell Show
Cornwall	Royal Cornwall
Devon	Devon County
Northamptonshire	NPS Area 13 Show
Sussex	South of England Spring Show
Gloucestershire	BSPS Area 9B Show
Staffordshire	NCPA Open Show
Staffordshire	Staffordshire County Festival
Cheshire	Cheshire BSPS Area 2A Summer Show
Lincolnshire	BSPS Summer Championships
Northamptonshire	Blakesley Show
Essex	East Anglia Native Show
Berkshire	Newbury Show
Cumbria	Cumberland County
Berkshire	Ponies UK South

Lancashire	Garstang Show
Lancashire	Red Rose County Show
Yorkshire	BSPS Area3B
Northumberland	BSPS Area 1A

(Shows subject to confirmation)

To ensure that every Breed is represented each Breed Society will also be offered a qualifying round for the Semi Final. At the Semi final, the first three ponies from each of the six classes will go forward to Olympia.

Furthermore there will be 12 individual breed qualifiers held at the BSPS Heritage Championships on the following day, (16th October) and these will be judged by a BSPS Heritage Judge and a Breed Panel Judge. The winner of each class (or the highest not already qualified) will go forward to Olympia.

Each qualifier will be judged by two Judges using the 50/50 marks system.

50 marks for Performance, Manners and Way of Going for Breed Type

50 marks for Conformation and Breed type

If equal marks, conformation & breed type mark takes precedence.

If there is an equal tie, the Judge's decision will be final.

Judging the Final at Olympia will be:

Mr Robert Parker-Jones and Mrs Joanna McInnes Conformation,

Mrs Janet Bushell, and Mr David Puttock, Performance,

Marks will be awarded as follows:-

JUDGE 1 25 marks for Conformation and breed type

JUDGE 2 25 marks for Conformation and breed type

JUDGE 3 25 marks for Performance, Manners and Way of Going for Breed Type

JUDGE 4 25 marks for Performance, Manners and Way of Going for Breed Type

The 2 performance marks will be displayed during the preliminary judging.

Prize Money for the Final

Champion £1000.00

Reserve Champion £500.00

3rd £200

4th £100

5th £100

6th £100

7th £100

8th £100

9th £100

10th £100

Breeder of Champion £100.00

Best of Each Breed £50.00

The BSPS is delighted to be working with The London International Horse Show at Olympia and would like to thank The Hawkins Family and TAAS Ltd for sponsoring the very generous prize fund enabling competitors to be rewarded to tenth place, each Best of Breed winner will receive £50 and the Breeder of the Champion a prize of £100.

For further information regarding this Press Release please contact BSPS Council members Paul Cook (07771 974898) and Sharon Thomas (07801 302679)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

ON OLYMPIA LONDON INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW

Q) Why did the BSPS bid to run the Olympia Mountain and Moorland Supreme Final?

A) The BSPS were invited by the Olympia Show Committee to put a proposal forward to run the Olympia Mountain and Moorland Supreme Final and are delighted that our proposals were accepted.

Q) It has been said that the BSPS as a show pony society does not have sufficient expertise or knowledge to be running this prestigious Mountain and Moorland Championship, what are your views?

A) For many years the BSPS has run the largest summer championship show for ponies in the country, as well as administering all the qualifying classes for ponies for the Royal International Horse Show and have some of the most experienced administrators in the country running their shows and on their council. Therefore, we are well positioned to carry out the administration of these classes. In addition, the BSPS successfully introduced Lead Rein, First Ridden and Open Ridden Mountain and Moorland classes at the Royal International Horse Show, these have proved extremely popular and the standard of ponies forward at Hickstead has been exceptional. In fact many of the exhibits also qualify for Olympia and a number have won Olympia in the past. The BSPS heritage judges have done a fabulous job in selecting ponies to go forward to the RIHS. The BSPS Winter, Summer and Heritage Championships are extremely popular with Mountain and Moorland exhibitors and have been instrumental in promoting the Mountain and Moorland pony through their Winter Novice Series.

Q) How do the BSPS intend to run this competition without moving away from its traditional values?

A) A) The BSPS has no wish to move away from traditional values of ensuring that the final showcases our best Mountain and Moorland Ponies from each of the native breeds. What was evident, however, was that numbers in some of the qualifying rounds were diminishing and that some members felt it was difficult to qualify certain breeds when only the champion qualifies.

Q) How will the new competition work that will enable you to meet the objectives of a more equitable split of ponies qualifying and will more ponies be able to qualify?

A) The BSPS are delighted that Olympia have agreed to an increase of 4 ponies going to the finals taking the numbers from 36 to 40. There will be three routes to qualify, there will be 10 major shows geographically split around the country which will run six classes, for small breeds (Dartmoors, Exmoors and Shetlands) ,, Welsh A and Welsh B, Welsh C and Welsh D, Large breeds (Dales, Fells and Highlands) and Connemara and New Forest. The champion will qualify unless it has already qualified when the qualification will move down to the reserve or first reserve.

A further 20+ shows will hold qualifiers for a semi final which will be held at the BSPS Heritage Show in October, the first two ponies in each of the six classes will qualify for the semi final and at the semi final the top three ponies will qualify for Olympia from each of the six classes. This will, for example, ensure that there will be a more equitable split of ponies from each of the breeds having the opportunity to qualify, for example, in addition to the 10 qualifiers, this system will guarantee that six small breeds will qualify for the final (3 from

the semi final class and a Dartmoor, Exmoor and Shetland from each breed class). In addition there will be 12 individual breed classes held on the second day of The Heritage Show, where the highest pony not already qualified will qualify.

Q) How will these classes be judged?

A) All qualifying rounds (including qualifiers for the semi final) will be judged on a 50/50 mark system by two judges. 50 marks will be allocated for performance to the breed type (including manners) and 50 marks for conformation and breed type. All marks will be published for both the qualifying rounds and the semi final, in the event of a tie breed type and conformation take precedence.

Q) A number of people have suggested that the BSPPS will increase costs for people wishing to compete in those classes as they will not only have to be members of the BSPPS, but the ponies will also have to be registered?

A) Many M&M competitors are already members of the BSPPS as they wish to qualify for the Royal International Horse Show and the BSPPS Winter, Summer and Heritage Championships so there will be no increase in costs for them and being a member of the BSPPS also enables them to compete in Horse of the Year Show qualifiers. The BSPPS and Olympia are not requiring any levies to be paid on entry fees nor will there be the requirement for members to buy Olympia qualifying cards and entry to the semi final will be free. Holding the semi final the day before the breed classes, which will be held at the Heritage Championship Show at Arena UK will also reduce travel costs for members. We believe the whole package provides real value for money for M&M exhibitors.

Q) If you are holding the breed qualifiers at your own Heritage Championship Show, does this mean there is no place for the breed societies to run Olympia qualifiers?

A) No, all the breed societies are being asked to run or either nominate a show to hold a semi final qualifier and we would be delighted if they did so. We are obviously conscious that the Horse of the Year Show will not allow Olympia qualifiers to be run at the same show that is holding their Ridden Mountain and Moorland qualifiers and we therefore want to offer the breed societies maximum flexibility in determining what to do. However, there will be 12 breed qualifiers at The Heritage Show so that each breed will be guaranteed representation in the final.

Q) Who will judge the semi final and the breed classes, will a small number of judges be sending a significant number of ponies through to the final?

A) No, the semi final classes will be judged by a different combination of judges and in the breed classes conformation and breed type will be judged by a judge from a breed panel.

Q) Will ponies need to be measured to compete in the Olympia qualifying rounds?

A) No, as with our Heritage classes, we will not require ponies to be measured to compete, but as a member of the JMB have the right to call any pony to be measured at any time.

Q) There has been some criticism that the BSPS Heritage Judges do not have the same level of experience to judge these classes as the NPS Judges, how do you respond to this accusation?

A) We are confident that all our Heritage Star Judges have been through a thorough assessment and have significant experience when judging these ponies; in fact many of our judges are also on the NPS, Ponies UK and/or breed panels.

Q) Are you intending to invite judges from other societies onto your panel?

A) The BSPS is conscious of the fact that many shows will already have invited judges for this year to officiate in Olympia qualifying classes, we are also aware that for many NPS Mountain and Moorland Judges have already judged Olympia qualifiers or aspire to judge these or the final itself and we would not wish to preclude experienced judges from having this opportunity, therefore the BSPS will be inviting many leading M&M judges to join the Heritage Ridden Panel as we would not wish them to be precluded from judging these classes in the future. We believe that this is a positive gesture to many experienced judges who have put themselves forward for other panels to be able to judge these and other classes.

Q) Are there any significant rule changes that competitors will need to be aware of?

A) Apart from qualifying rounds being judged by two judges on a 50/50 mark system as described above, the same rules would apply to these classes as to the heritage classes, these rules cover age of riders for stallions, with the exception of the conformation & breed type mark taking precedence in the event of a tie. Judges can undertake two qualifiers in different sections; conformation performance, at least 100 miles apart. The only other significant changes are that ponies must be 4 years old or over and that competitors can continue to compete in the qualifying classes and semi finals even when they have qualified for the final as qualification will pass down the line in the ten qualifying shows, semi final and breed classes. There are no restrictions on judges judging and competing providing, of course, this is not on the same day. This also applies to any other BSPS classes that they may be officiating in. Other than those changes, competitors should see no real difference in the other rules that they have become familiar with.

Q) There has been gossip on the internet that the BSPS intends to have a celebrity judge at the final. Is this correct?

A) No, this is not correct although there will be changes to how the final is judged. There will be four judges at the final that will each be allocated 25 marks each. Two judges will allocate up to 25 marks for performance. These will be Mrs Janet Bushell and Mr David Puttock. Their marks will then be displayed so the audience can follow the performance marks that have been allocated. Mrs Joanna McInnes and Mr Robert Parker-Jones will allocate up to 25 marks each for conformation and breed type. These marks will not be displayed. In the event of a tie, marks for breed type and conformation will take precedence.

Q) In the past, exhibitors at the final have had free entry and stabling, will this continue?

A) No, there will be a charge of £50 for entry and stable. We believe this is a reasonable fee as we have significantly been able to increase the prize money for exhibitors at the final. BSPS members will get 40% discount on tickets for Olympia (including non-showing members which costs £25 a year to join.)

Q) Who is sponsoring the final and what is the increase in prize money?

A) We are delighted that the Hawkins family and TAAS Limited have agreed to sponsor the final. Alex Hawkins is one of our BSPS Heritage Judges and an M&M enthusiast and having bred and exhibited New Forest ponies. The prize money for the final will be as follows: Champion - £1000, Reserve Champion- £500, Third - £200, Fourth-Tenth - £100 each. There will also be £100 to the breeder of the champion pony and £50 to the best of each breed. We believe this increase in prize money significantly offsets the need to change for entry fee and stabling.

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