

# Sunshine Tour Championship 2018



From 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> September a total of 113 amateur competitors will become champions at The All England Jumping Course, Hickstead. They will be celebrated in show jumping, dressage, showing and eventers challenges. Competitors have until 22<sup>nd</sup> July to qualify for this exciting event at their local competition centres, pony clubs & riding club shows, local venues and charity shows. Any age, any colour, any breed, any height and any ability are welcome, and all have a shot at being crowned a Sunshine Tour champion at England's most famous showground at Hickstead. This year, to honour and showcase the fantastic work that so many owners do by taking on a less-fortunate equine, the Sunshine Tour have introduced two classes just for rescued horse and ponies. So, if your horse or pony has a history of being rescued and brought back to blooming good health, the Sunshine Tour is the place to show off all your hard work! For further details on The Sunshine Tour, go to [www.sunshinetour.co.uk](http://www.sunshinetour.co.uk)

We caught up with some competitors vying for a place at this year's Sunshine Tour and looking forward to their special weekend at Hickstead.

## Four-legged friend

Six years ago, Hayley Goodall rescued 12-year-old piebald gelding, 'John'. John had been very badly treated and feared human contact. After lots of TLC from Hayley, John has found his feet and with time and patience



he has learned to love human contact again. Last year Hayley needed brain surgery, with fears of long term effects but Hayley felt that John returned the support that she had given him and got her through her recovery. The pair won a Coloured class, came 2<sup>nd</sup> in Best Cob and 6<sup>th</sup> in Best Condition to qualify for the Sunshine Tour. Hayley hopes that her story will "encourage others whatever life throws at you, you always have your four-legged friend to help you through it".

## The Unflappable Bubbles

8-year-old William Hodges and his 12.2hh, grey, Connemara cross, gelding 'Bubbles' have been a partnership for 2 years now and have qualified for this year's Sunshine Tour 60cm show jumping. William's mum, Ingrid describes Bubbles as 'fizzy' so when they first got Bubbles, William had to step up his game and learn to ride quickly and sensitively as Bubbles did not like being on a lead rein! The pair had to learn to ride show jumping course very slowly – walking between fences to keep him calm and only slowly introducing him to Pony Club rallies and events as it was all a bit much for him to start with. However, over the past couple of years Ingrid says the pair are now a "gorgeous partnership" are "perfect friends" and now join in on pony club events and local competitions. Bubbles is adored by all but none more than his dedicated owner who is always mucking out and filling hay nets, cleaning tack and gets up early before school, even in the winter, just to keep him fit. In return, Ingrid says that Bubbles uses his "amazing temperament" to look after William.



### He was the one



Early this year, Emma Sparks brought bay, 8-year-old, 16.2hh, gelding 'Finn'. After having him for only 2 weeks they went to their first show, went clear in the 80cm Show Jumping and came 4<sup>th</sup>. However, Emma told us that "his leg then blew up and the vet said he had a granuloma which meant he would have to have it cut out and skin grafted" I'd bought him knowing he had an old hunting scar but was assured it had never affected his performance". Finn was off work for a month and Emma feared she wouldn't get to compete again this season. But Finn "pulled it out of the bag" on their second show since his skin graft, they came 3<sup>rd</sup> and went clear. Emma says "It was pony strides and I was so worried but we are now jumping 1m courses and have qualified for the Sunshine Tour 2018!"

### From a run around to a Ferrari

Qualifying for the 50cm and 60cm at Church Farm Equestrian Centre, Mawdesley, Louis has been on a challenging journey. Starting out with a "steady eddy first pony" and moving onto a "fast sports pony" called My Miller aka Junior, Louis tells us he encountered "many falls, refusals and even a broken collar bone along the way". 2 years since they joined forces Louis feels like they have now become a team and have started winning their classes. The pair are excited to be attending Hickstead for their first time in September 2018.



### Back in the game



Clare Payne and her one in a million horse, Carrickrock Flashy Boy, known as Toby, are glad to be back and to have already qualified for the Sunshine Tour in Showing. Having had a big break from the show circuit to have her daughter Rosie, at their first show back in the saddle, Toby won his Maxi Cob class and came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Open Cob class at Petley Wood. In addition to this, with his sharer he has also qualified for the Dressage! "We're looking forward to coming to Hickstead and staying for the whole weekend of showing and dressage classes" this year which they are very excited about. Clare is understandably really chuffed with her boy who she has been with for the past 5 ½ years.

### Have a little patience

Sam Koroglu rescued 15.3hh piebald cob, Carltonlima Jo, known at home as Ted. He had been abused in the past and as a result is partially sighted. "He has issues, but on a good day he does ok, he is a difficult horse" but that doesn't matter to Sam because "he saved me as much as I saved him". The combination made it to Hickstead last year but unfortunately the atmosphere was a bit overwhelming and he was so upset, "he didn't even enter the arena at Hickstead the second day". Sam is hoping to qualify this year again in the dressage walk and trot and with a little patience and training she is also hoping to get his canter perfected and qualify for prelim as well.



### Apple of my eye

3 years ago, Amigo was brought for Jo McKeown by her Dad following the loss of her beautiful horse Breeze. Amigo, a 16.2hh Dutch Warmblood gelding who is now "the apple of my eye". Jo says that "he's grumpy, quirky and at times jolly frustrating, but we've soldiered on and the show jumper we knew has become a beautiful dressage horse and we've qualified for the Sunshine Tour. We are really looking forward to having a brilliant time this year and seeing all the fantastic competitors and horses, it's such a wonderful and special weekend!".

### Taken Under Courtney's Wing

Louis, better known as, The UnderTaker is a 12hh, 8-year-old Gypsy Cob. 8 weeks ago, he was adopted from a rescue centre by Courtney Clarke who "fell in love with him pretty much straight away". He was left by his old owners and as they didn't come back for him Courtney went through 2 months of checks and waited for him to be gelded but it was worth the wait. "He got delivered by the rescue centre and he was amazing, everything I wished for and more" and he now lives the life of luxury with Courtney's two other ponies. He has been out showing at Posh Nags and the Golden Circle getting that all important golden qualification to the Sunshine Tour.



### The patient teacher

4-year-old Isabel McNamara is hoping to take her 12hh, 20-year-old pony, 'Dandy' who she has had since she was only two, to the Sunshine Tour this year. Her mum, Victoria competed at the Sunshine Tour last year and Isabel was most upset to be left out! Victoria told us "Isabel has nagged me endlessly to take her to shows so she can qualify and hours of practicing, going to rallies and having lessons with her instructor she has qualified with the assistance of her runner Georgie Lennox. Isabel has "learnt everything on him and he is a fantastic, patient teacher". It turns out the weeks of nagging her mum for lessons and lifts to shows have paid off because she will be at Hickstead in just a few months' time.