

Autumn Hunter Trial

October 31, 2020. Danethorpe



Spooky thrills and spills

The weather could have been kinder but even lashing rain and gusting winds couldn't dampen the spirits of competitors at our Halloween hunter trials. After six months of lockdown and few events to attend everyone was clearly very keen to get out and blow away the cobwebs and within a couple of days of announcement all places had been taken and a long waitlist started. As it was Halloween the jumps were adorned with pumpkins and scary masks, but most horses took it all in their stride, just a few taking exception to flapping web covered jumps.



Behind closed doors

Due to Covid regulations the event had to be run "behind closed doors" which meant that spectators weren't allowed and all attendees had to observe social distancing, not too difficult over a 100 acre site. It was a bit weird to see paramedics in full PPE rushing to check the occasional fallen rider and the event certainly lacked the normal family atmosphere as people came, competed and pretty much kept to themselves. As a jump judge I missed the customary bacon roll, briefing and coffee delivered to the car on the "bun run", but on the plus side we did get to keep the whistle 😊



Sanitise, sanitise, sanitise!



Something for everyone

As usual there was a good mix of classes, with classes ranging from 45cm for the littlies up to 90cm for those with reinforced brave pants. Pairs classes proved popular as ever, with mother/daughter, young friends and older friend combos going round shouting encouragement at each other. It is always gratifying to see the more timid half of a pair reappear as an individual, flying round with confidence and pizzazz and there were plenty of examples of that.

Good mix of jumps

Not only does Danethorpe offer three large fields to traverse there is also a great mix of jumps, with two water complexes, a sunken road, bank, steps and a coffin combination fence, which as fence four in the 60 and 70 classes did prove a bit of a nemesis for some riders. There are loads of more straightforward fences such as logs and palisades and with up to 20 jumping efforts in a class there was plenty to go at.



Great teamwork

The Burton Hunt branch team of volunteers did a great job setting up and running the day, and although not our usual Hackthorn venue, it felt very much like a regular Burton Hunt Branch event, with all the familiar faces doing their thing.

It all went smoothly and kept to time

The day ran like clockwork which is testament not only to the hard work and dedication of the team running the event but also to the cooperative spirit, sportsmanship and good manners of all the competitors. It was great to see you all and we look forward to welcoming you back next year. Results will be available on the website shortly.

