

2011 Training Grant report by Mike Rickman riding Wizard

Having had the same Instructor since I started to ride at the age of 38, and believing that you should stay consistent in the horse's training, I decided to use my prize from the Rutland Riding Club with lessons from Peter Hales.

Wizard has reached the stage where the next improvement for him would be to attack the subject of flying changes.

We started by confirming the counter canter and simple changes, which Wizard and I had worked on previously and by the end of the first lesson we had gained a little more balance and quick response.

In the next lesson Peter decided that he should ride Wiz to start the changes – knowing what he was doing !!!! and after a few slow changes behind, the horse started to understand what Peter was asking for.

Then it was my turn!

Starting with simple changes with 3 walk steps, Peter then asked me to decrease it to 2 then 1 and suddenly the change came through which was very exciting.

Peter kept reminding me to maintain my poise –difficult when you are trying to concentrate- stay light through the rein –even more difficult!- and remember where my legs should be-impossible!!!. Talk about learning to drive all over again!

We made two changes on each rein and then finished our session cooling down.

It really has given me a base to work on and take the next step and I am very grateful to the club for the opportunity to do so through their bursary.

Michael Rickman