



NPS Scotland Review of 2021



At NPS Scotland we started our year like any other with the AGM on 7th February all be it on Zoom, something we have all become very familiar with during Covid 19. At that point there was no sign of any let up in the lockdown, so we set up a series of Native Pony Discussion Evenings in February via zoom to give something to our members expecting 30 – 40 people to be interested. It had a phenomenal interest, to the extent we had to close in 24 hours with over 200 people wanting to join in and over 12,000 hits on our Facebook page. The evenings ran on a Tuesday night for 11 weeks covering each breed for about a half hour on the breed type, characteristics, conformation, and show production with a question-and-answer time at the end. What a line-up of presenters we had, some of the very best judges, breeders, and producers in the country who shared their knowledge and provided such interesting, educational and very enjoyable Tuesday evenings for us all. They were Jo Jack (Highland), Richard Telford (Dales), David Blair (Welsh C & D), Pat Rennie (New Forest), Peter Boustead (Fell), Jane Somerset (Connemara), Jill Graham (Exmoor), Christine Anderson (Dartmoor), Tom Best (Welsh A & B), Sarah Ross (Shetland) and Tweetie Nimmo (Riding & Hunter Pony). Undoubtedly, this is something we will continue with in the future for training.

As soon as we had the announcement from the Scottish Government that restrictions were easing the committee put together a very compact season running from May to October with events on each month. We held a Dressage Day as a season opener to ease everyone back to competition on 22 May at Champfleurie, Linlithgow with classes from Intro to Medium. This was our first time or holding dressage on a separate day, and something we are looking to retain as it allowed exhibitors to concentrate on the dressage instead of fitting it around showing at our Summer show.

This was followed by our Spring show on 12/13 June which usually takes place in April but was rolled forward retaining its RIHS Mountain and Moorland WHP qualifier. Our Summer show then followed on a similar two day format, both events being held at the parkland setting of Strathallan Castle, Auchterarder by very kind permission of Anna Roberts. We had good entries at both shows and it was so good to see so many people again that we hadn't seen for 18 months. A great support from our Caithness and Island members, some very strong classes in the large M & M Ridden and Working Hunter Pony classes and a very welcome return to big lead rein and first ridden classes with lots of new combinations that we hadn't met before. We had great weather on both weekends and everyone enjoyed the timetable of classes due to no entries on the day being taken.

As we are not able to hold our NPS Scotland Championships this year due to so many of our qualifier shows being cancelled, we held an Open Show for our members on 28 August at Blair Castle International Horse Trials. As usual entries were good and we all enjoyed a great days showing at the amazing location of Blair Castle.

Sadly we did not run our annual Points Competition in 2021 but look to reinstate this next year but we did offer two junior member bursaries for 2021.

NPS Scotland Young Judge team of Gregor MacMillan, Hannah Nicholson, Alexandra MacMillan and Shanyn Wilson gave a sterling performance in the Jenny Seymour Young Judges competition at Malvern to come Overall 3rd in the competition, and be the highest placed Mountain and Moorland team. Gregor won the 19 – 25 years section, Alexandra was 3rd and Hannah 6th in the 14 – 18 years

section. A great result from the team, and a special thank you to Richard Telford who coached the team.

We concluded our activities of 2021 with our postponed 60th Anniversary celebration of the NPS in Scotland. This day was held at SNEC, Oatridge College on 26th September and was open to everyone and was very well attended. It included the NPS judges conference, and was recognised by the BHS, Pony Club and veterinary/Physiotherapy as a CPD day. Presenters Erik Mackechnie-Guire FBHS and Dr Russell Mackechnie-Guire delivered a very educational and enlightening day on 'Biomechanics and its effect on Equine performance'

The day covered a wide range of topics applicable to all equestrian disciplines including conformation, locomotion, foot balancing, and saddlery which was delivered through practical displays enhanced by modern technology and scientific evidence.

To round up 2021, it was forced to be a short season, but it has been a busy one. We are all so glad to be back our meeting each other and competing again and very much look forward to 2022 when we hopefully return to our longer season and Championship series throughout Scotland with the finals at Blair Castle International Horse Trials in August.

Membership for 2021 has closed at 266 and may we take this opportunity to congratulate our many members who qualified and did so well at the major Championships of 2021, and we look forward to seeing you all in the 2022 season.

Provisional dates for 2022 Shows:

Spring Show 23rd & 24 th April	SNEC, Oatridge, Broxburn
Summer Show 11 th June	Strathallan Castle, Auchterarder
NPS Scotland Finals 26 th August	Blair Castle International Horse Trials
In Hand Show 29 th October	Champfleurie Equestrian, Bathgate

We will keep our members up to date and all information, news and updates on NPS Scotland can be found on our website www.npsscotland.co.uk