

INFIDELLA – SUPREME EGB CHAMPION 2008

By Caroline Sussex

On 29th November, 2008, the 12 year old Infidella, a Part Bred mare was crowned EGB Supreme Champion at the Annual Awards Dinner.

Infidella is owned and bred by Carolyn Pacey and is a grand-daughter of the famous Crabbet stallion Hanif, bred at Crabbet Park and purchased by Geoffrey Plaister for his Imperial Stud.

Carolyn Pacey admits to being a “thoroughbred” person but got to know Arabians when she worked at Geoffrey Plaister’s stud. Her particular favourite was Magic Sun who was a “real horse” as Carolyn says, with good bone, bold head and above all was exceptional to ride. She rode Magic Sun and found that not only did the myth that arabs can’t jump be proved incorrect, but also that they will go through water! Magic Sun got Carolyn involved with Arabians and she purchased two thoroughbred mares [when Geoffrey sold his thoroughbreds to make way for his Arabians?]. One Carolyn sold, but she retained the mare River Chant.

River Chant was bred to Hanif whilst Carolyn worked at Imperial Stud to produce the mare Hi-Fidelity-Hi. Carolyn then decided to use the lovely Hanoverian stallion, Louella Inschallah II. Although registered as Hanoverian, Inschallah II actually carries some Arabian blood on the sire side through Inschallah I. In fact, the Anglo Arabian blood goes back some way before the division between thoroughbred and arabian parts company, in some cases back to the latter 1800’s.

On 20th May, 1996, a chestnut (soon to start turning grey) filly was born and named Infidella. She is therefore second generation and has grown to 16.2hh. Carolyn’s normal procedure was to back her youngsters at 2 ½ and turn them away, breeding them at 3, subject to them having grown well, before they embarked on their ridden career at four and a half. This is in fact an excellent procedure as apparently, if mares are bred young, they are much easier to breed again in later life as the womb has already had a pregnancy.

In Infidella’s case, an injury in the field where she sliced her hock on a fence meant that she could not be backed at 2 ½ and although the injury healed well, Carolyn decided to ensure the leg had fully healed before backing her. So it was at 3 ½ that Infidella was backed. Carolyn found her very energetic and decided that she needed to work. At four she was ridden and schooled on and at five it was decided to start in endurance at the lower levels and the increase in work seemed to suit the mare.

At six, the combination went to Intermediate level and at seven they did 2 slow ER’s with the maximum being 80K. They also represented England in the Home International that year. At eight years old, Infidella took part in her first Golden Horseshoe and attained a gold award in the 100 mile over 2 days. An exceptional achievement at the first attempt.

In 2004, she was listed for the Intermediate squad and was selected to go to France. In

2005, she came 4th in her first 160K at the Dukeries ride and qualified for the World Equestrian Games at Aachen in 2006. They also managed to compete at the end of the season at the Bailey's Northern Championships in the 120K which they won.

Sadly calamity struck at the selection ride for The World Equestrian Games at Cirencester 2006 with an injury that put her out for the remainder of the season. Carolyn likes to ensure that her horses are completely recovered from their injuries before putting them back into the sport rather than working with them.

In 2006, it was found that Infidella was allergic to rape seed pollen and once diagnosed, they learnt to manage the problem by giving her ventilate starting in February and doing the aerobic training before the rape seed flowered in April. After this time, Carolyn keeps the training to competitions and away from the rape seed until after flowering. Infidella gets two to three weeks off prior to going hunting in the winter months. She gets very bored if left for longer. A change is a good as a rest!

After sorting out these problems, 2007 started with a 6th place at an ER in March at Thetford averaging a speed of 18-19 K. Carolyn and Infidella again went to Exmoor for the Golden Horsehoe to compete in the 160K 2 day ride but were sadly spun after the first day although of course the mare then trotted up sound afterwards! That year also saw a win at the Lindum Spirit of 169K over 3 days.

2008 was her best year to date starting with another Gold award in the 160K at the Golden Horseshoe ride in unseasonably hot weather which they loved. They gained Top Mare and Top Lady awards at Horseshoe. They also won the 3 day 169K Lindum Spirit ER again and the 100K Bailey's Horse Feeds Northern Championships, and the last big ride of the season at Red Dragon, they came 3rd in the 2 day 160K ride, enduring some appalling weather!

The Supreme EGB Championship is awarded to the horse or pony who gains the most points from their best 10 rides and Infidella managed an amazing total of 4464 which was more than 1,000 ahead of the Reserve Champion, Solitaire's Star owned by Julie Martin. Solitaire's Star is a Pure Bred of over 75% Crabbet breeding being by Star of the Seasons out of Firefly Solitaire.

In addition to being crowned Supreme EGB Champion, they won Senior Champion, Ross Trophy for the best home bred, the Jasper Trophy for the best 3 graded ride results, the Regent trophy for the best unregistered, the Adonis Trophy for the best 3 ER results and the Performance Equestrian Trophy which is series of 2 day graded rides, one Carolyn particularly wanted to win. Quite a collection after an exceptional season.