

# From the Horse's Mouth



A Newsletter for the Supporting Riders of the Light Cavalry HAC

April 2008

## Stable Notes

Hello Again Everyone, and welcome to new Supporting Riders!

We are happy to report that all the horses are thriving. Let us hope that the worst of the winter weather is behind us and that we have a long warm summer of happy hacking ahead of us. The only incident of note is that Amos received a bad kick last month but he is recovering well and we anticipate he will soon be back in work.

We would also like to remind you, if you have not done so already, to sign up for the John Palmer Cup (show jumping) and the Pyramid Trophy (dressage) competition to be held on April 13th. This can be done by signing up on the sheet in the office, or indeed phoning Flemish Farm. Please do invite friends and family to come and watch your moments of glory and remember to bring a picnic.

We have had a good response from Supporting Riders wishing to volunteer their help as grooms for the Light Cavalry's polo-guard days at Smith's Lawn. Please do let Caroline know if you would like to help on either 15th and 27th June or 27th July. If transport is a problem for you, we may be able to arrange a lift for you on the day. If you would like to volunteer, but feel you would benefit from some training in groomsmanship, please let Caroline know and she will arrange a group session.

Please be advised that the Light Cavalry will be holding their annual camp at Flemish Farm on April 19th and 20th and therefore there is no riding available that weekend for Supporting Riders.

Finally, do you know of any Supporting Riders or friends of the Light Cavalry who are not receiving a regular copy of the Horse's Mouth? Caroline maintains the mailing list so please let her know if someone should be added to the list.

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## Forthcoming Events: 2008

### April

13th April John Palmer Cup and Pyramid Trophy

17th-20th April: Annual Light Cavalry Camp at Flemish Farm. No horses are available to Supporting Riders on 19th and 20th April

### May

4-5th May : Chiltern Museum Skill at Arms Display

8th-11th May: Royal Windsor Horse Show

11th May: Skill at Arms display Ampton Race course

20th May : HAC Open Evening Armoury House

### June

15th June Queens Cup at Smiths Lawn Polo

22nd June Royal Windsor Cup Polo Guard Smiths Lawn

### July

24th July: Annual Light Cavalry Dinner at Armoury House

27th July : Cartier Polo

If you are a rider, the number one thing to do is... marry money.

(an impoverished horse owner)



## Why Tiger Sox Did So Well

By Caroline Queded

Many of you noticed that Sox came 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the last show we held. I just wanted to let you know how Sox and his three riders got to that point.

Ashish is Tiger Sox's owner and three years ago Ashish was learning the basics of riding, being thrown from Larry in the park and pretty often coming off Jake in the school. After many hours of practice and learning to stay in the saddle, he decided to buy his own horse and that's how Sox came to be here. The pair of them have learnt so much together and this has been done through Ashish being willing to learn, listen and put into practise what he has been taught. Robin and Annie more or less fell in love with Sox as soon as he arrived. Both of them have, like Ashish put in a lot of time and effort into riding Sox and forming a partnership.

We have seen Sox go from a horse who used to take four strides to get round the school in canter, had a trot that if you could stay with him killed you in 10mins, to a horse that can collect in canter, the trot has softened, you now last 20mins!! And has filled out to look fantastic and this is down to the hard work that has been put into him by these three riders. It goes to show what can be achieved and hopefully is an inspiration to us all.

## The Light Cavalry HAC Visit India

By Christopher Robinson



PBG Trumpet Major on his horse TAJ

Officers of the President of India's Body Guard visited London Last year, at the Invitation of the Light Cavalry, to participate in the Uniformed Services Show Jumping Competition run by the Light Cavalry in the Kings Troop Barracks at St. John's Wood.

This invitation was reciprocated by an invitation from the President's Body Guard to eight Members of the Light Cavalry to attend the Silver Trumpet and Banner Presentation by the President of India in Delhi, a ceremony that takes place every 5 years.

The President's Body Guard is an active regiment with proud traditions and a ceremonial role in addition to their military duties, akin to our own Household Cavalry. Three Officers of the Household Cavalry were also invited. The Presentation took place at the President's Body Guard HQ and was a spectacular display of Ceremony and military equestration, attended by dignitaries from the Indian armed services and government. The highlight was the President's Presentation of her Silver Trumpet and Banner to the PBG Trumpet Major on his horse TAJ.

The Light Cavalry were subsequently lavishly entertained in the days following at polo, a garden party at the President's Palace and dining with the President in the PBG's Officer's Mess. The President was also photographed with the Light Cavalry Members (below).



## Checklist For Grooming Your Horse

Debbie Pengelly responded to our plea about grooming by providing a useful check-list on how to get your horse ready for riding:

Estimated time : 15-20 minutes

- Take off blankets, fold and put them out of the way in a clean place
- Brush horse using dandy brush (hard bristle) to remove mud on long hair and legs, body brush (soft bristle) on body and face
- Use mane and tail comb to remove all traces of bedding
- Wipe around eyes and nose (clean sponge)
- Pick out feet using a hoof-pick
- Check if your horse wears boots, ensure that you have the right tack.

## Windsor Park Equestrian Club Training Day



Sunday 23rd of March, the day of the Windsor Park Equestrian Club (WPEC) training day did not begin well. In central London at 9am the snow had been falling for the last hour with an air of some determination. The phone went and Fiona Charman and I agreed that, (committed horsewomen that we are!), we would actually pay not to ride on a day like this. However, somebody had to ride our horses even if we did not participate, and since our names were down in the book, we decided to drive out to Flemish Farm and judge the atmospheric conditions on arrival.

In fact, just as we arrived and I uttered the words, “we should withdraw from the training day” the heavens cleared and, although the arctic winds were still persistently evident, at least it was dry. We hastily groomed and tacked up Shirley and Ebony and rode over to Smith’s Lawn where a green caravan filled with sundry well-wrapped up stalwart members of the WPEC organisation and 4 dressage rings awaited us.

The format of the day changed slightly (because of the awful weather the dressage test was dropped) and we spent half an hour with a dressage trainer as she gave pointers and training ideas to improve horse and rider for the competitions held later in the year. A motivational trainer also worked on the mental aspects of competing.

I am happy to report that Fiona on Shirley, Ashish on Tiger-Sox (who arrived later) and myself on Ebony all “held our own” and we felt that all horses and riders had improved since the last training day held in early 2007. In spite of the dreadful weather this was an excellent opportunity to introduce the horses to the atmosphere of a horse competition with all the distractions of horse-boxes and other horses – and the non-competitive nature of the day makes it much less stressful for the rider.

Dates of dressage and jumping competitions run by WPEC can be found on their web-site: [www.wpec.org.uk](http://www.wpec.org.uk). Membership of WPEC is £50 per annum with the cost of competing and use of a horse an additional expense. I would encourage anyone who is interested in competing at a WPEC event later this year to get in touch with me or to consult Caroline at Flemish Farm. I would also encourage anyone to go and watch one of these competitions especially when the weather gets better and the idea of a picnic outdoors seems pleasurable!

# HAC Special Constabulary



Ashish, owner of Tiger Sox is a member of the Light Cavalry but is also a serving member of the Active Unit of the HAC. Here he provides some background on the HAC Special Constabulary.

## By Ashish Singh

### Introduction

The Regiment is actually made up of two Active Units, the blues (the Special Constabulary) and the greens (the Territorial Army).

### Our History

In 1919, following a decision to increase the strength of the Metropolitan Police Reserve Force the Home Secretary of the day approached the Earl of Denbigh, Colonel of the HAC, to form a Division of Special Constabulary. Some 150 members, mostly Great War veterans, rallied to the call and joined the Division, which was established as the HAC Detachment of Special Constabulary. The Detachment has served continuously since then and is now an operational unit of the City of London Police, with its officers assigned on Division at Bishopsgate and Snowhill police stations. Indeed, the Detachment can claim to have a longer history, as the Regiment frequently provided aid to the Civil Power prior to the establishment of the Metropolitan Police in 1829.

### Training

I joined the HAC Special Constabulary in October 2006, after a six month training course, conducted over twelve weekends. When the course was underway, an immediate and hugely fun camaraderie was evident and our trainer, Sergeant Mick Jackson, truly made the course come alive – helped by the odd post course drink! Including myself, there were three future HAC Regimental Members on the training programme that was lead by the City of London Police.

The course included all aspects of law, including stop and search powers, powers of arrest, first aid training, unarmed and armed defence training, practical scenarios as well as exams. Once the six months were up and exams passed, we were “sworn-in” in front of a magistrate and issued with a badge and warrant card – a hugely proud moment, and the fitting conclusion to an enjoyable, challenging and thoroughly rewarding experience.

### Joining the HAC

Shortly after, I went up in front of the Court of Assistants of the HAC. In fact, one-third of all of the new Members being proposed that evening were Blues. I was proposed by Capt. Reg Howe, Officer Commanding Light Cavalry and seconded by Lt. Christopher Robinson, Officer Commanding Mounted Troop Light Cavalry, and two years of waiting were finally over as I signed the Velum Book and I became a Regimental Member of the HAC. To make the day even more memorable, my proposer and seconder bought me a very special gift: my HAC Active Unit tie.

## HAC Special Constabulary

And the Detachment itself, also had a special gift for all its new members: the letters “HAC” are proudly worn on the epaulettes of our regular police uniform – a truly distinguishing feature and an immense privilege. It’s amazing to think that all this sprang from a chance meeting with a university chum at a friend’s wedding, where he told me about the Light Cavalry and a small riding school in Windsor!

### Ongoing commitments

The requirements are both to the City and to the Regiment. This involves performing one four hour duty a week on Division (i.e. at your assigned police station) and some duties for the HAC. The initial work on Division is designed to slowly introduce you to police work, from dealing with the public, to radio work and procedures and after about twelve months, subject to having performed adequately and having had the necessary experience, one can be promoted to independent status (i.e. you are considered able to patrol alone), which gives access to applying for specialist roles, such as motorbikes, cycle squad and maybe even one day, mounted branch! But that is not to say that the pre-independent status is boring; to date, I have conducted house searches, passive operations with drug dogs, building site searches, housing area patrols, van duties, person searches for possession of drugs, foot patrols, assisted in arrests and orchestrated emergency services responses to road traffic incidents. Far from dull!

The duties at Armoury House are unique to the HAC’s Detachment and different from any other Special Constabulary Detachment. It principally involves perimeter security in supporting the Military Police and HAC guards on special events such as VIP dinners. Last year, the Light Cavalry were unable to use their horses at the Lord Mayor’s Show on account of the foot and mouth restrictions in place at the time, so I chose to serve under the Active Unit, and myself and another Blue were the only police officers on duty at Armoury House – quite a responsibility. It was also quite a privilege to do so, as traffic stopped as we stood in the middle of City Road to salute the entire Regiment, including its senior officers, The Light Cavalry HAC, The Pikemen and Musketeers (noticing a couple of familiar faces in the latter - Colin and Charles, take a bow!) as they left Armoury House. But more than anything, my over-arching memory as my finest Active Unit moment is standing with the Detachment and saluting as the HAC Captain General, Her Majesty The Queen, left Armoury House after having presented the Regiment with our new Colours.

### In summary

Thanks to James Phipson for convincing me to join, I have been granted the full power of arrest, received free travel around London, saluted my Queen as she stood two meters from me, made a new bunch of excellent friends, ridden my own horse through the middle of London in front of tens of thousands of people, and have charged around at County Shows around the country on the same horse in tent pegging displays and promoting the Regiment. Between the HAC Detachment, Divisional duties, The Light Cavalry, my career, family, friends and schooling my horse, people often ask me how I find the time. I always ask them in response, why they don’t, as there’s no such thing as can’t!

### Upon reflection....

Learning something new and unique through the excellent training was spectacular fun, and a fresh thing next to the humdrum of work! Aside from making new friends on Division, there is also the family that is the Detachment at the HAC and to any one wavering on whether or not to join, don’t hesitate and get in touch! Thus, should any one have an interest in finding out more, please feel free to get in touch with me and you’ll get a warts and all chat about life in the Detachment. Also, there are recruiting evenings on the first Tuesday of every month which will provide you with a presentation and give you the chance to meet other HAC Special Constables, have a tour of the impressive HAC grounds at Armoury House in London and ask more questions, all of course without any obligation from you – except of course for the need to stay around afterwards and have a drink on (and with!) us. See you there!

## Photos!

Michele William's mother, Ann, had a life-long dream to try side-saddle, and who can resist helping a life-long dream come true—not us at Flemish Farm that's for sure! (Especially when Bleu poses like this!)



Caroline Cornish-Trestrail contributed this rather dashing photo of Virgil, “the handsomest gelding you ever did see!” As well as being a Supporting Rider at Flemish Farm, Caroline is privileged to ride as a supporting rider of the Household Cavalry at Knightsbridge. Here Caroline and Virgil peruse the early morning sun over Serpentine!

