



Timber Tongues

New BHL Apprentice Appointed

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Left to right: Sol, Kate Mobbs-Morgan, Kevin Taylor, Barbara Haddrill, Tyler

The British Horse Loggers Charitable Trust (BHLCT) has appointed the first Wales apprentice. Kevin Taylor of Talysarn, Gwynedd started his three-year apprenticeship in July, placed with Barbara Haddrill (Carnog Working Horses, Powys), and Kate Mobbs-Morgan (Rowan Working Horses, Monmouthshire).

The apprenticeship is supported by a financial grant from Natural Resources Wales, and is a direct result of the "Seeing is Believing" event hosted by HRH The Prince of Wales at Llwynywermod, Carmarthenshire in July 2012, to promote horse logging in Wales (see the October 2012 newsletter).

Find out more about Kevin on page 5.

Horse Logging at Pferde Stark 2013 — See report on page 3



Left: 2013 European Horse Logging Champion Matthias Rensing (Photo: David Roycroft)

Above: a pair of horses on a treadmill, driving a band saw and a log splitter; Right: Ken Hachimura from Japan with a borrowed horse (Photos: Julian Philipson)

European Horse Logging Championship 2013

Julian Philipson



Left: Singles and Pairs Champion, Matthias Rensing (photo by David Roycroft)
Above: Josef Svoboda (photo by Julian Philipson)

Pferde Stark 2013 was held in north Germany over our bank holiday weekend at a new venue and after a gap of four years. It is a splendid event for lovers of draft animals and a great opportunity to meet friends old and new. The programme listed 270 horses entered and there must have been more animals present as there were ponies, donkeys and mules and almost certainly additional horses brought for the show ring acts.

Some 28 breeds were represented and participants come from all over Europe, not to mention our Japanese horse logging friends. There is no in-hand showing and no decorated harness classes, as the purpose of the event is to show what draft animals can do. There are machines old and new set out on display, stalls selling

harness and similar stuff, demonstrations of farming and row crop and vineyard work, ploughing competitions, a weight-pulling contest, and of particular interest to BHL members there were open horse logging competitions plus the European championships.

The open singles and pairs contests were held on the Saturday. Doug Joiner and Ken Hachimura had a go with a borrowed horse but it did not like the crowd and was never going to cross the water hazard. That day counted as a first round of the European championships which continued on the Sunday. What was noticeable was that certain teams were far more adept

than the rest, both in pairs and singles: they strolled round with deceptive ease, getting the log, all 10 metres of it, in the correct position at the first attempt, moving forward a centimetre at a time when required, and walking straight through the water hazard (a hole lined with plastic sheet) as if they did it every day at home – and that no doubt is exactly what these seriously competitive handlers do. Make no mistake, these handlers are very good indeed.

The results for the singles were:

- 1st Matthias Rensing
- 2nd Josef Svoboda
- 3rd Peter Niebauer

Daniela Svobodova was in line for third place when an idiot in the crowd clicked his tongue just as she was about to master the stack, and she ended in fifth place.

In the pairs the results were:

- 1st Matthias Rensing
- 2nd Anton Laux
- 3rd Jean-Paul Moureau
- 4th Josef Svoboda

It was grand to see our good friends Rensing and Svoboda do so well, but even better to observe the warm friendship between the two, forged at our event last year, even though the two hardly understand a word of the other's language.



Belgian synchronised riders; German team of Shires and Clydesdales (by Peter Coates)

Brewery team; UK entrant Doug Joiner (by Julian Philipson)

... and looking forward to 2015 ...

BHL members Carole and Peter Coates also attended Pferde Stark, and Carole said: "This event highlights the commercial uses for horses that exist in modern business and doesn't just sideline them for riding or showing. Heavy horses can contribute more to British life! The next Pferde Stark is August 2015 at Wendlingshausen and I would urge anyone who is interested in working horses to visit (the area is lovely and the weather is excellent)."