

GLENORMISTON TIPPER O'TOOLE

I'm sure you'll be pleased to know that Tipper's out dressaging again. We went to PRARG yesterday and he placed first and second in his two tests. They did separate out the ponies in the results, but he scored well and in the second test he would have placed 4th in a big class had he been competing against the horses. He scored 63% despite being occasionally distracted. We missed a left canter strike off in the first test (which he's never done at home) and that put our score down to knock us out of first. However, he was still over 60%. By the second test he was a bit tired and the wind had come up, and the arena was different and a bit spooky as the letters were hanging on the fence right at the edge of the arena, and he thought he might not cooperate. I was lucky that the judge wasn't quite ready so I could go around the arena a few times.

I just put heaps of leg on and had him really forward, and I think it was a huge breakthrough as he really tried. Other times he's done what's asked but reserved the right to change his mind at any moment. I was so pleased as originally I had Aedin entered but she's a bit sore with a lump on the outside of her off fore pastern. Doesn't look too major and I suspect Tipper may have stood on her when I took them to Gatton to be measured. Tipper measured 13.2 1/2 this time, but I'm sure at least 1/2 was where my mare bit him on the wither. Aedin measured 14.0 7/8 so she's grown an inch each of the last 2 years. I noticed she was a bit sore at the trot first ride after that, and I couldn't work out how she'd get a knock there in the paddock. At that point I had to quickly contact PRARG and ask them to swap horses on my entry, which I was glad they did, because there were wait lists for most of the classes.

Then I only had a few rides to get Tipper's canter and transitions right. He's got a lovely canter but it just wasn't established or consistent. Anyway he's a very smart pony and the canter improved with a bit of work, and he got 7's for his canter circles in the last test, which was great, because there's plenty more improvement there too.

The photographer loved the "mini warmblood" so I'm hoping she got some nice shots. He did win a few fans on the day as he was so well behaved under saddle and tied up that people didn't realise he was a stallion. They also couldn't believe it was only his second dressage comp.

So I've decided to get him out and about on his own for the next couple of months. I've entered him for the regional champs on Toowoomba in May which will be a big test, as I think he'll go better where the warm up areas are close to the arenas so he has a chance to take things in. However, he surprised me but how good he was at PRARG, so decided to enter. In Toowoomba the warm up arena is so far away from the arenas, and if there's wind the advertising signage around the outside can be a bit spooky. So we're off to Gold Coast this weekend, PRARG again 11th May and Toowoomba 2 weeks after that.