

CAITLIN AND FLASH RIDING HIGH

Caitlin Crossley and her Dales pony Adamfield Flashlight are now safely home after their recent trip to Eersel in Holland representing Great Britain in the FITE Young Rider European Championships. This is the third time Caitlin and Flash have successfully competed at the annual Young Rider Championships. This year she finished in a very creditable 23rd place, equalling her result from last year's competition in Italy.

Caitlin finished the POR on a respectable score of 185 after one small ticket navigation error and some time penalties. They managed to clock up 27 points on the MA and some unfortunate PTV time penalties reduced their otherwise solid PTV score of 119 to 89.

The pair arrived in Holland on Tuesday the 1st of September and after giving Flash a well-deserved rest after his travels, Caitlin spent the following two days out in the Dutch countryside armed with a map to familiarise herself with the surrounding area.

There was an early start on Friday for the pair with vetting and equipment checks; the first official part of the competition. The checks went smoothly and were followed by an initial walk round the PTV. It was then 'all hands to the pumps' to get Caitlin and Flash polished up for the opening ceremony and procession through the local town of Eersel.



Caitlin reported that Saturday's POR was flat and fast as expected. Her route was mostly through woodland following sandy tracks and she found she had to do lots of counting distances and strides to navigate her drawn route correctly. The pair completed the test and were successfully vetted just before the rain started, having had a really enjoyable ride. Flash was then able to have a rest in his grass corral on the campsite - but no time off for Caitlin who had to walk the MA and PTV again!

Flash passed the Sunday morning vetting and then it was on to the MA. This phase was run along a straight, sandy track next to some woodland with scores of spectators lining the sides and the judges hidden under huge umbrellas to keep off the inevitable Dutch rain. The PTV phase followed in the afternoon. Most of the competitors incurred time penalties on the long and twisting course but due to a brief parting of company after the low branches, which understandably made the pair continue at a steadier pace, Caitlin and Flash unfortunately incurred 30 time penalties. However, Caitlin was

delighted with Flash's performance and is now more determined than ever to return and stand on the podium at these Championships - hopefully next year in Spain!

Thanks again to all those who raised and contributed funds to help get Caitlin and Flash to Holland and to Caitlin's many generous sponsors.

Next year sees the FITE World TREC Championships in Segovia, Spain, from 1st – 3rd September. If any Young Riders are interested in qualifying to compete there (minimum age at date of competition is 16) please e-mail katie.morgan01@btinternet.com for details and an application form.