FINAL

**Record Numbers at This Year’s Eridge Horse Trials**

This year’s Eridge Horse Trials and Country Market was declared a great success with attendance numbers being up and the overflow car park having to be opened on Sunday.

Five thousand walked through the entrance gates over the weekend to watch Olympic medallists compete in the stunning grounds of Eridge Park, near Tunbridge Wells, in cross country, show-jumping and dressage.

The weekend’s successes included Australian Olympic Gold Medallist and Badminton Winner Paul Tapner on Up In The Air, coming first in the Open Intermediate, sponsored by Swift Alarms. Internationally renowned local rider, Francis Whittington from Rotherfield, came second on Fernhill Sunlight, with Book Staples - also an Australian - coming in third on Doonaveerah O Six.

Olympic medallist and the only the Rolex Grand Slam winner taking part in the event, Pippa Funnell MBE and her young horses, won the Intermediate Novice sponsored by Allen Page on Billy the Biz. Pippa also came second in the category on Billy Cuckoo, with GB Junior Eventer Chuffy Clark, coming in at third place on Willem lll.

Rider Sarah Parkes on Balladeer Durban Hills won the Intermediate, sponsored by Jackson-Stops & Staff, with Susan Eggleton On Balladeer Durban Hills taking second place. Paul Tapner came in third and then went on to win the Novice Regional Final leading him to qualify for the final at Gatcombe Park British Finals in August.

Pippa Funnel, commented; “Another great Horse Trials at Eridge Park. The old turf didn’t ride too firm even though a bit dry and all four of my horses rode really well. I was a member of Eridge Pony Club when I grew up, so it is always a pleasure to come back and ride here. This estate provides the most amazing backdrop for spectators as well as riders.”

Joint Organiser Jenny Nolan said; “We are thrilled with how the event went and that the weather held up. In its second year, the country market is proving a real success, making the event appeal just as much to the non-horsey crowd as those that follow the sport. We have had great feedback over the variety of stall holders and what a wonderful day out it is for all generations and hope that it becomes a date for the diary for many more years to come.”

As well as the country fair and horses, ‘Beths Dog Show’ on Sunday brought in a crowd of 117 dogs with £585 raised for the Sarah Kitchener Perrow Fund of The Brain Tumour Charity. Dog events included a general dog show, a fun dog show, dog agility displays, fancy dress and terrier racing.

The dates for next year’s horse trials at Eridge Park will be 27th & 28th June 2015.

ENDS

For more information including quotes, interview requests and high resolution photography, please contact Sarah Jones on 07775 582 497/barnesy\_78@tiscali.co.uk

**Notes to Editors**

Eridge Park, Royal Tunbridge Wells, East Sussex, TN3 9JT.

Event sponsors:

* NFU Mutual;
* Jacksons Stops and Staff;
* Swift Alarms Group;
* Allen & Page Quality Horse Feeds;
* Newton & Frost Equestrian;
* Batchelor Monkhouse;
* Wadhurst Pet Supplies;
* Mid-Sussex Timber;
* South East Events League;
* Sussex County Gardener.