20 riders, 10 ponies, 50+ volunteers, sunshine (lots) , ‘Journey from Peru’, Dressage and ‘Splat the Rat.

What have you got ? – Arundel Group Riding for the Disabled held ‘The Big Event’ at Arundel Riding Centre on Tuesday 30th June.

20 riders, ranging in age from 4 to 60 took part in the first ‘The Big Event’ show. Each rider mounted the pony that they ride during their regular riding lesson and completed a handy pony course. The Big Event theme this year was ‘bears’ So the riders helped Paddington Bear on his journey from Peru to Paddington. They collected oranges, for marmalade and luggage tags for Paddington, posted a letter to Aunt Lucy in the Home for Retired Bears in Peru.

A fun event with a serious side too. Each rider rode a dressage test in one of the Three Classes. The youngest riders rode a test based on road safety – with coloured roads and a roundabout to be navigated. The more advanced riders rode a test with walk and trot and were led or escorted as appropriate. Class 1 was won by Noah (6). Class2 /2+ was won by Cody (9), Class 3 was won by Michelle (18). The trophy for the highest percentage score of the whole event was won by Michelle. The best turned out rider was awarded to Ethan Rolfe (12).

Younger riders and not so young volunteers wore bear themed fancy dress. The ‘best bear rider’ was won by Chloe Stanley (6) – and the ‘best bear volunteer’ by Bill Whyte (a very wise old bear !!!).

Volunteers – over 50 of them - cheerfully did an incredible number of different tasks – leading, sidewalking, stewarding, tacking up, manning gates, plaiting manes, cleaning loos, putting up bunting, painting bear noses, making teas and squash, poo picking, taking photos, moving cones and running games on the field. Debbie’s Ice Cream van was in attendance – just what we needed to make the day complete.

We were delighted to welcome Lady Miranda Emmett to present the Hilary and Sheila Tange Trust Trophy – won by Michelle. Sue Coombe-Tennant was with us to present The Ferdie Trophy awarded to the rider or volunteer who for special achievement during the year and decide by The Trustees. It was won by Fiona – ‘she enters into the spirit of anything we organise and always thinks of others’. We were pleased that Janie Lawson and Lindsay Correa from Riding for the Disabled South Eastern Region were with us to present the Lavinia Norfolk Trophy to Daisy for the rider showing best progress or greatest improvement during the year. ‘Daisy always tries very hard and has this year succeeded in her rising trot’. The prizegiving was hosted by our Chairman Terry Clothier and our Group Instructor Simon Luck – both kept in order by our rider Lucy King (12) .

A range of bear themed games were played on the field, Winnies Runny Hunny Trail, Superted’s Spectacular Splat. Baloo’s Welly Wang to name a few. Lots of squash and tea was drunk – and as always there was cake (kindly provided by the parents).

The Big Event was organised by Irene Homes (Group Organiser) and Ann Watts (Volunteer Co-ordinator). None of this would have been possible without the ponies and riding school and all of its facilities provided to us by Arundel Riding Centre – and the incredible support from Alison and Joy Leggett.

Our riders come from around the local area. We have eleven regular riders from the Lavinia Norfolk Centre / Angmering School. Other riders are referred by health specialists or make contact through our website.

All of the riders received a rosette and event medal. Comments heard from the riders made the day for the volunteers.

‘This has made me feel very special ‘ – Chloe – clutching her award , medal and rosette.

To see more photos look at [www.arundelrda.org.uk](http://www.arundelrda.org.uk) and [www.arundelridingcentre.co.uk](http://www.arundelridingcentre.co.uk)

(Photos by Pam Henderson).