



National Amateur Committee
ShowjumpingIreland
Newsletter
April 2025 Edition

Dear Amateurs,
Welcome to the Showjumping Ireland amateur newsletter! We are excited to share the latest updates, upcoming events and important announcements with you.

Upcoming Events

- Ingrid Kane Memorial – April 19th – 20th – Barnadown Equestrian Centre
- Amateur RDS Qualifier – May 5th – Kernan’s Equestrian Centre
- RUAS Balmoral Amateur Championship – May 17th – Lisburn
- Amateur RDS Qualifier – May 24th – Galway Equestrian Centre

Please find Farmer’s Journal ‘A’ Qualifier and Orchard/NAPS National Amateur League dates on the [SJI Amateurs page](#), with new dates being added as they become available.

Refer to the [SJI Calendar](#) for additional upcoming events.

Competition Highlights

- Balmoral Qualified Riders – Cavan – Aileen McDermott (Amber Balou), Caroline Gaston (Miss Roman Kora), Brian Cassidy (Bridgemans Olympic Star), Tara Phelan (Galatas), Rachel Shaw (Leestone Vitaire)

- Balmoral Qualified Riders – Kernan’s – Nicole Lynch (My Velvet Lady), Niall Hughes (CES Seamanship), Ava Stubbs (Tullyhill Lucy Diamond), Aaron Gorman (Deerpairc Disney), Craig Lovett (Sligo Candy Call)

- Balmoral Qualifier Riders – Meadows – Kevin O’Reilly (Furore S), Shauna Wilson (Omar Hannah), Kate Murray (Crynoisk Feisty Blue), Justine Harding (RJC Second Bet), Jessica Mark (Centre Fold Belle)

- Emerald Amateur Show – Emerald Equestrian Centre

 Welcome Stakes – Darielle O’Sullivan (One Kamula)

 Farmer’s Journal Qualifier – Shuana Furlong (Clogrennane Diva)

 Power and Speed – Aileen McDermott (Amber Balou)

 Grand Prix – Colm Fitzpatrick (Maretto Flight)

- JAG Amateur Show – JAG Equestrian Centre

 Welcome Stakes – Laura Carrick (Mo Curadh Beag)

 Farmer’s Journal Qualifier – Laura Carrick (Amura R)

 Grand Prix – Colm Fitzpatrick (Bluestone Diamond Fly)

Congratulations to all!

Amateur Spotlight

Pauline and Derrick Burke – A Winning Partnership in Amateur Showjumping

In the world of amateur equestrian sports, few pairs embody the spirit of sportsmanship and horsemanship like Pauline and Derrick Burke. Known for their friendly faces and unwavering dedication, the Burkes are a staple at shows, where their passion for horses shines through.

Over the years, the couple have proven themselves not only talented competitors but also generous sponsors, playing a pivotal role in the development and success of the Orchard/N.A.P.S. National Amateur League. In partnership with Orchard Equestrian and Derrick’s colleagues at Newmarket Architectural & Planning Services Limited, Pauline and Derrick have grown the league into one of the most competitive and anticipated events of the season, with exceptional prizes that draw in amateurs from across Ireland.

Through their support and commitment, Pauline and Derrick continue to elevate the equestrian community, making them true champions both in and out of the ring.

The Start of Their Showjumping Journey

Derrick's love for horses began in his youth, where he started out hunting before venturing into amateur showjumping in the early 1990s. Encouraged by his uncles, Derrick began competing in amateur classes, and the sport quickly captured his heart. "I mainly hunted in my younger years and didn't really show jump until I began riding in Amateur Classes in the early 90's," Derrick shares.

Pauline, however, did not have a riding background when they first met, and it was Derrick who introduced her to the world of horses. After a few years of hunting, she also made the leap into amateur showjumping in the mid-90s, and as their competitive journey took off, they quickly became hooked on the thrill of the sport. "We both competed on a regular basis, and the bug took a firm hold," recalls Pauline. "It's been with us ever since."



Supporting Each Other in and out of the Ring

One of the most remarkable aspects of their partnership is the mutual support they offer each other, both in and out of the ring. They are each other's greatest cheerleaders and advisors, constantly sharing tips and guidance. "We give each other advice on a constant basis, sometimes we even actually take one another's advice!" teases Derrick. Their relationship has helped them both grow as riders over the years.

While Derrick remains relatively calm before a competition, Pauline admits to feeling a bit more nervous. "I get quite anxious and nervous before competitions," she says. Derrick, on the other hand, doesn't often feel pre-show nerves – though a fall a few years ago did lead him to wear an air vest at all times during competitions as an added precaution.

Despite their differing levels of pre-show nerves, the couple doesn't experience any rivalry in the ring. They currently compete at different levels, which allows them to focus on their individual goals while cheering each other on.

A Commitment to the Showjumping Community

Their dedication to the sport extends beyond their own personal achievements. Pauline and Derrick have played an instrumental role in supporting and growing the amateur showjumping community. They are passionate about inclusivity and have worked to sponsor and promote events that provide opportunities for others to shine.

"I competed for a long number of years in the Leddy League, and when the format changed, I felt the original format was more enjoyable and inclusive for amateur riders," explains Derrick. This drive to give back to the sport led them to sponsor the National League through their company, N.A.P.S. Ltd, which teamed up with Orchard Equestrian to make this sponsorship possible. Derrick's architectural firm, based in County Clare, is known for designing equestrian projects like Clare Equestrian Centre and East Clare Equestrian, as well as a variety of residential and commercial developments.



Derrick Burke & Tyreda Chip

Derrick and Pauline have also cultivated lifelong friendships within the amateur showjumping community. "We have made the best of friends through the amateurs. We love the RDS qualifiers because you get to meet so many riders at these events," says Pauline. "For us, meeting our friends at the competitions is more important than the competitions themselves."

Words of Wisdom for Newcomers and Fellow Couples

As seasoned competitors, Pauline and Derrick have a wealth of advice for newcomers to amateur showjumping. "The advice I would give to new and probably all amateurs is not to take it too seriously," says Derrick. "With showjumping, you are going to be at the top one minute and the bottom the next." However, they also emphasize the importance of taking one's riding seriously and committing to ongoing training.

For couples who share the same passion for riding, their advice is simple: "Support each other at all times. It's the best advice possible."

Looking Ahead to the 2025 Season

Looking toward the future, both Pauline and Derrick are focused on continuing their journey in the amateur circuit. "We hope to stay competing for a few more years," Derrick says. "The standard of rider in the amateurs has improved so much, and the level of competition is higher than ever." For the 2025 season, their goals are clear: qualifying for the RDS and securing a strong position in the National Amateur League – both formidable challenges in an increasingly competitive field.

Pauline is particularly excited about her horse, who has become a reliable and fun companion in the show ring. "This will be my third season competing in the Sports Member classes with him, and I hope to travel and compete as much as I can in 2025," she says with enthusiasm.

A Partnership Built on Passion

For Pauline and Derrick Burke, showjumping is more than just a sport; it's a shared passion that has brought them closer together, strengthened their bond, and allowed them to make lasting memories both in the ring and with their close-knit circle of fellow competitors. Their journey is a testament to the power of dedication, mutual support, and the love of horses.

As they continue to support each other and pursue their goals, they remain pillars of the amateur showjumping community, inspiring others through their passion and kindness.

Know a fellow amateur or sports member who deserves to be featured in a future edition? Send your spotlight nominations to us via anna.smith@sjai.ie!

Save the Date

- ◆ Sports Member All-Ireland Final – September 6th or 7th – Mullingar Autumn Championships –  [Rules & Qualifying Criteria](#)
- ◆ Amateur & Sports Member National Championships – September 20th – 21st – Mullingar Equestrian Centre

Incorporating:

- Farmer's Journal 'A' Championship –  [Rules & Qualifying Criteria](#)
- Orchard/NAPS National Amateur League final leg and presentation –  [Rules & Qualifying Criteria](#)
- **NEW for 2025** Amateur Interprovincial Team Challenge –  [Rules & Qualifying Criteria](#)

Stay tuned for exciting sponsorship and prize announcements in future editions!

Committee Announcements

- ◆ 2025 RDS Qualifiers – Please ensure you have met the six-class quota per Rule 254N.C.1.3.1 **before entering each RDS qualifier**. Any rider failing to meet the quota will be ineligible for RDS Dublin Horse Show qualification, regardless of qualifier placing.
- ◆ Exemption Deadline – Applications for exemption from the six-class quota per Rule 254N.C.1.3.2 will close **April 20th**.
- ◆ Rule Clarification – Per 2025 amendment to Rule 254N.C.1.3.2, height classes incorporating amateurs are **not** considered amateur classes; therefore, height classes incorporating amateurs competed in from **January 1st, 2025** may not be counted toward the six-class quota. Height classes incorporating amateurs competed in **before** January 1st, 2025 may still be counted toward the quota.

Get Involved

We welcome all members to contribute to our amateur community! Send your ideas, feedback, and Amateur Spotlight nominations to us via anna.smith@sjai.ie.

We look forward to seeing you out jumping!

Best of luck,

 **The National Amateur Committee**
Showjumping Ireland