

My mother taught me to ride, starting in 1951. During my childhood the only riding activities available were hacking, Pony Club rallies, Hunting, Showing and Show Jumping. I was never any good at Jumping so the latter didn't appeal but I did enjoy all the others.

I was always fond of and fascinated by maps so hacking in different areas was very enjoyable and I took part in 'Long Distance Riding' when that sport started up. I completed the Golden Horseshoe Ride in 1972 and 1973.

In the mid 1970s I discovered Carriage Driving and competed with a Single Pony in Horse Driving Trials for about 10 years being placed in the National Championships several times. That sport, in its infancy, didn't have many competitions so I founded the Midlands Driving Trials Group (with Tommy Coombs) to provide competitions locally, previously the nearest ones were 90 miles away!

When Helen and Anna started to ride I went back to riding rather than driving. I first read about TREC in British Horse in 1998 and thought it ticked all the boxes for me as it involved maps, hacking and all the things one might meet on a hack, and partnership with one's horse.

My first TREC competition was in 1999 and I won! It has been downhill ever since!

Anna thought she might have a go at what Mum was doing and immediately beat me! That was when I discovered glasses were needed so I could see which side of the hedge I should be.

At that time competitions were almost exclusively Level 2. A few Level 4s were held but only at Championships – my first foray into that was a disaster – I got lost in the bearings for an hour! I did complete the competition but was so far behind in time that the TD met me at every checkpoint having sent all the judges home as it was so late!

The first GB Championships were held in 2000 and I was 5th at Level 2. I then competed in national competitions and the Championships with my beloved pony 'Floss' every year until 2007 when my husband demanded we took our youngest daughter, Sally, on a sailing holiday at that time.

In 2000 someone suggested that Anna and I might enjoy doing pairs together. This was a great success for both of us and we were the leading Level 2 Pair with Floss and Blaze (Wiz's mother) for two seasons until Anna wanted to move up the Levels.

I continued to compete individually and found Level 3 to be challenging and enjoyable. In 2006 the European Championships came to Exmoor which meant GB (as host nation) could field 12 competitors so a Development Squad was formed. I was very proud to be asked to join the Long List and then made it to the Short List but was one of two to not ultimately be selected for the GB Team. Anna and Julian (fellow committee members) were selected and it was great to watch them compete on Exmoor. The training I received as part of the Development Squad at that time and later in 2009 to 2011 has been really useful in improving my skills in all parts of the competition. I managed some Level 4 Competitions successfully and so put the disaster of the bearings in the 2000 English Championships behind me.

As with Long Distance Riding and Carriage Driving I have been involved with the sport in its infancy and 'lack of competitions', particularly locally, has been a problem. I have organised several TREC

competitions in Leicestershire with the aid of other 'like minded' BHS members and realised that a Group was needed to help new people to learn about TREC and enjoy competing without having to travel massive distances. Hence 'Central TREC Group' was formed and now has its own kit and expertise to run competitions locally – mostly in Leicestershire, Warwickshire & Northants.

I am still enjoying riding and competing. My daughters call me 'bionic' as I now have two artificial hips and I may have to find stronger glasses. My two regular mounts, Floss and Jack, are getting on in years (19 and 24 respectively) but I hope our 'homebreds' Wiz and Floss's two year old son Nutkin, will take over and enable me to keep going. The challenge of the map and the concentration for several hours keeps my brain working – I'm not ready to 'sit in a Bath Chair' all day yet!