

Scurry Talk

goes international

With Philip Litchfield

And so to a special feature: the first ever European Scurry driving championships, this year held at Paard and Koets in the Brabant Hallen in s-Hertogenbosch, Holland.



Scurry Superstar Lucy Scott stormed to victory against Dutch maestro Aart Van Der Kamp.

For the British contingent, first impressions of this astonishing venue were somewhat daunting. We have nothing on this scale in the UK. Imagine if you can an equestrian driving event taking over the entire National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham and you will have some idea. The first surprise was to find that our stables were to be inside one of the cavernous halls, and there was even a warm-up surface laid.

The format of the scurry competitions was somewhat different to the usual. Throughout the event, there was a scurry challenge in which drivers competed over three rounds. Points gained in each round counting towards final league placings with the top three in each class going head-to-head in the Sunday evening showdown. Both Britain and Ireland were strongly represented.

International interest

Drivers from other countries showed enormous interest, wanting to know how to get involved, but it was only Holland that was also represented. Their world pony silver medallist Aart van der Kamp not only tried his luck but also steadily improved over three rounds and even won his final class. More of Aart later.

The show organisers had provided a stand for the Scurry Driving Association close to the main ring. Many new contacts were made

and so much interest was generated in the various scurry vehicles that made guest appearances on the stand. Most exciting of all it does seem that another vital step was taken in securing that elusive European scurry series.

Keen competition

Personally, I thought that the standard of competition in rounds 1 and 2 was not up to the mark. Maybe it was tiredness from travelling, perhaps it was the sheer magnitude of the event, but I for one felt we could all do better, that is except for Phillipa Scott who won both her first two rounds with the ever reliable Wallace and Grommet. However, you couldn't fault the profile given to scurry by the organisers. No sooner had scurry superstar Lucy Scott stepped from her vehicle than she was being interviewed for Dutch TV.

If the first two rounds were disappointing, the final round and championship were electrifying. With places in the close of show showdown still up for grabs, all drivers moved up a gear: Carole Davenport put in the driver of her life to grab her place, and when Lucy Scott destroyed sister Phillipa's flying round of 38 seconds to win the pace was in uproar. Jenny Bean and Danny Kinsella had outstanding performances in the large class to join Philip Litchfield in the run off.

Words cannot describe the atmosphere that Sunday. I have not the faintest idea what the Dutch commentator was screaming, but it sure fired up the ponies. Inevitably, it was Lucy Scott who exploded through the finish line in first place for yet another victory. Can anyone stop her? Well I said I would return to Aart. The Dutch maestro was the challenger in the first ever European Scurry Driver of the Year run off. No sportsman in front of his home crowd could have had noisier support. He put in a drive of bravery and skill, bringing the very best out of Lucy who stormed to yet another victory. Even the home supporters had to admit that they had witnessed the planet's finest driver at her best. Next season? I just can't wait.

News from the Osborne Scurry Group will be featured in the next issue.

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