



# Lynn Russell – at home with her animals

*Lynn Russell's home is certainly a full house...*

Lynn Russell might be best known for her show horses and cobs, but as we sit drinking coffee in her gorgeous hand-built kitchen it is obvious that it is her dogs that pull at the heart strings. Ten dogs in total, Blake the St. Bernard was lying by the cooker and nothing would move him to join the photo shoot, while the six Scotties, two Westies and terrier all vied for Lynn's attention.

Lynn and her builder husband Dave bought Durfold Farm, Dunsfold in 1990. They originally purchased 30 acres and a dairy, and spent four years in a mobile home, while Dave and his team crafted the former dairy into one of the most stylish, horsey homes I have visited.

The view from the kitchen window is across manicured lawns to an outdoor swimming pool, and as Lynn guides me across the yard to the indoor stable block it is obvious that the same attention to detail has continued in the building of Durfold Farm. Growing up in Middlesex, Lynn worked at the local riding school for rides at the weekend before leaving school to work with horses. An unfortunate broken leg made her consider her options and a five-year career in the marketing department of Avis Rental Cars followed. At this time Lynn really considered herself a show-jumper, competing on the affiliated circuit. It was a young horse she had entered for the Goring and District show that changed the course of Lynn's career. Accidentally entering the Open Workers' class

instead of the Novice, Lynn thought she might as well just see how he jumped.

## Qualified for HOYS

The horse jumped clear, won the class, and judge Roy Trigg suggested Lynn showed the horse in Small Hunter and Ladies' Hunter classes. They qualified for the Horse of the Year Show, having great fun along the way. But Lynn found it difficult to combine work with competing and eventually left her employment to run her own rented yard,



Lynn and Phoenix

buying and selling horses. Selling a hunter to Paul Venner of Baileys Horse Feeds made the introduction and sealed what is, to date, a 22-year sponsorship deal.

There is no denying that Lynn's horses look fabulous and over the last 20 years there have been hundreds of wins and championships, including winning the Ex Racehorse class at the 2007 Horse of the Year Show with *Lin D'Estruval*. Lynn explains that without sponsors it would be impossible to keep showing at the level she does. Other sponsors include Net Tex Industries, with whom Lynn launched her own range of showing products. She knew exactly what she wanted, what sort of bottles she wanted so they didn't keep blowing over, and the type of products that are efficient and effective both inside and out of the ring.

## A range of sponsors

Lynn has also worked with Jan Metcalfe at Regent Boots for a number of years and told me that if something happened to her boots when she was away at a show, Jan would have a new pair with her in 24 hours. Lynn has worked to build relationships with a range of sponsors and it is clear that she is proud to endorse their products which include: Equimax wormers, Teque Style shirts, Sundown bedding, Horse wash, Polly Products, Wahl clippers and Snuggly Hoods.

Having taught herself most of what she knows today, Lynn is keen to put something back into the sport and regularly runs start-