

Olympic Games training in Royal paddock

Evening Standard Reporter: Ascot, Berks, Thursday

IF British horse riders win an Olympic gold medal this summer the Queen will have had an important part in helping them to do so.

Our show jumpers won one of our two gold medals at Helsinki in 1952. There is a fine chance that they will repeat their success when the equestrian section of the Olympic Games opens in Stockholm in June.

Britain's team will be chosen shortly. Those in the running are training four

days a week at the Royal Windsor Forest Stud, which is less than a mile from Ascot's famous racecourse.

A first Royal offer of help could not be accepted because there was not sufficient space available at the Windsor stables.

A second offer came from the Queen—the use of the paddock and stables at the Stud. This was gratefully accepted.

Only three riders and three

horses are needed for the Olympic show jumping team. Their selection is all-important—because if a team member fails to complete the course, the team is eliminated.

Four women

Four women are trying to win places in the Olympic team—Miss P. Smythe, Miss Dawn Palethorpe, Mrs. Brian Marshall and Miss Susan Whitehead.

Watching them today was trainer Colonel Jack Talbot-Ponsonby, himself three-times winner of the King George V Cup.

Earlier, there had been another keen eye on the Olympic possibilities—that of Lord Brookeborough, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland.

His son, Captain John Brooke, is one of the riders in training.

Lieut.-colonel H. M. Llŵellyn, Major R. Dallas, Lieut.-colonel Douglas Stewart and Mr. W. H. White are all in regular training at Ascot.

—Going with the show jumpers to Stockholm will be horse trial teams and representatives for the Grand Prix de Dressage.

The horses on which Britain will rely are likely to be chosen from Aberliew, Craven A, Earlsrath Rambler, Flanagan, Marmion, Nizefella, Nobbler, November's Eve, Scorchin, and the Monarch.

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PAT SMYTHE, our finest horse-woman, was the first of the British Olympic show-jumpers to ride a faultless round today when our team in training in Windsor Great Park held its first practice over a full course.

Miss Smythe was riding Flanagan, the horse she described as "great fun" in the first of her recent articles in "The Star"—"Pat Smythe's Own Story."

Flanagan is starting his second year as a show-jumper and she has great hopes for him as one of the Olympic team.

Two other girls, Mrs Mary Marshall, wife of Bryan Marshall the National Hunt jockey, who was on Nobbler, and Sue Whitehead of Gloucester riding Scorchin, also had faultless rounds in today's practice.

The girls put up a better show than the men only one of whom, Major Arthur Robert Dallas on Marmion, equalled them.

Evening News

28-3-56

Jump to it —for the Olympic Games

By IVOR HERBERT

"EIGHT" possible horses and riders, from which the British Olympic show jumping team of three horses and riders and one reserve horse and rider will be chosen, had their first public practice at the Windsor Forest Stud at Ascot to-day.

The show jumping section, under their trainer Lt.-Col. Jack Talbot-Ponsonby, have been grouped together at Ascot for only three weeks.

The course jumped to-day, though well below Olympic standards, was stiffish for this early stage in training. The Stockholm Olympics are two and a half months off.

My Choice

Of the eight horses jumping to-day I picked out three as being at this stage somewhat in front of the others: Flanagan, ridden by Miss Pat Smythe

Compared with the others he is inexperienced in international jumping, but Pat Smythe had him beautifully balanced to go round clear.

Nobbler, ridden by Mary Marshall, the trainer's wife, also jumped well but even more impressive I thought was Marmion a classy looking horse—with the look of a steeplechaser about him—brought over from Germany by the young cavalry officer Ronnie Dallas.

THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY

INCORPORATING THE PONY CLUB

OBJECTS.—To promote the interests of Horse and Pony breeding,
and to encourage the use and protection of Horses and Ponies.

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THE SHOW JUMPING SECTION OF THE BRITISH EQUESTRIAN TEAM

Details of the riders and horses which had been selected to train, were issued to the Press last November.

Training to date

Riders started work on their horses at their homes early in January, and during the period before collecting at Ascot, their trainer, Lt. Col. J.A. Talbot-Ponsonby, visited each of them to see how their horses were.

The Team came together here during the first week in March, and immediately on arrival were inspected by the Veterinary Officer. Since then they have been doing steady work to get them fit. Each day the trainer allots half an hour of his time to each horse individually when he watches it jump - up to date over small fences only. Before this the riders have been riding their horses in, getting them warmed up and supple, either in Windsor Great Park or near the Stud. As well as this during the day the riders have been taking their horses for long slow exercises in the Park, and once or twice a week they have all been going there together to canter and gallop their horses for about two miles.

Today's Trial

Today, each horse will jump a long and fairly large course for the first time since the training started. The fences will be at approximately 4'3" to 4'9". The length of the course will be about 750 yds.

Photographers will be allowed to take pictures of the jumping in the normal way, but it will not be possible to arrange for any further jumping pictures other than those taken during the actual round. Opportunities will also be given for taking pictures of riders and their horses either singly or as a group.

Future Plans

The Team will have their first public practice at Beaconsfield (April 6th) and from there they will go to Taunton Show (April 10th-12th). Then they will go to the Badminton Horse Trials (April 18th-21st April) where they will have daily practises.

28th March, 1956.

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OLYMPIC GAMES EQUESTRIAN TEAM

The Show Jumping section of the Team, who are in training at the Windsor Forest Stud, Ascot, are having their first practice over a full course next Wednesday, morning, 28th March at 10.45 a.m.

Members of the Press will be welcomed at this practice. If you intend to be present, or send a representative, will you please fill in the form below.

The Windsor Forest Stud is just to the North of the Virginia Water - Reading road (A 329). Coming from Virginia Water, take the first turning on the right after the Royal Ascot Hotel, and the Stud is 50 yards off to the left, about three-quarters of a mile up this road.

Major David Satow

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

March, 1956.

The Public Relations Officer,
British Horse Society,
66, Sloane Street,
LONDON, S.W.1.

March, 1956.

It is intended to send reporters and/or Photographers to the practice of the Show Jumping Team at Windsor Forest Stud, on Wednesday morning 28th March.

Signed

Organisation