**Extracts from the winning entries**

**Ten and under (and the overall) winner: Vivien Williams, from Lancashire, aged 10**

*This event took place when I was four. It was funny (afterwards!) shocking and a bit sore. From this event I learned to always get back on the pony! And never, ever use too much shine spray!*

Before we went to our first Pony Club show, I washed and washed Paddy and used nearly a whole bottle of super shiny show spray. I wanted him to look his best. When we got to the show, I added a bit more super shiny show spray, just in case. As we were about to put his saddle on he still looked sweaty so I splashed a bit more on. Man, I was super wrong. That was my mistake. My Mum put his saddle on and I got on and trotted over to the other children and the all-important judge.

I was riding Paddy across the field, impressing the judge, just saying. And then SHAKE, SHAKE, SHAKE AND SLIP! It felt like a volcano had exploded, or an earthquake had moved the ground. And there I was…. sitting on the ground.

I looked around for the 30 seconds I was left sitting on the floor, wondering what had happened and looking at everyone laughing. Then my Mum put me back on Paddy and we joined the others. That was how I found out about the Shetland Shake – Paddy had done a full body shake while trotting and my saddle and I had slipped off. All the super shiny show spray had helped make the saddle super slippery.

**You can read Vivien’s full entry at** [**www.ponymag.com**](http://www.ponymag.com) **once it’s published**

**11 - 13 winner: Rebecca McIntyre, from North Lanarkshire, aged 12**

***This event took place when I was six. It was exciting, thrilling and terrifying. From this event I learned that when you are learning to ride, you need to be patient and wait until you are ready before you try anything new.***

As I brushed Honey’s long, chestnut coat, I realized that she was glowing in the sun. Although her Shetland features made her small and stubby, I thought she looked just like a professional show pony. As I put her tack on, she stood perfectly still. I grabbed my riding hat and body protector, then waited for my sisters to get their ponies ready. Today we were heading up to the Lily Loch for a relaxing hack as a family. Hannah and Amy, my two sisters, were riding their horses, Callie and May, while I was riding my little Shetland pony called Honey. As I we waited for my mum, dad and little brother, Robbie, I stroked Honey’s soft face. She closed her eyes and rested. I just knew that today, the day I went my very first hack on Honey, was going to be awesome!

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After lunch, we decided we should head back to the yard as the horses were getting a bit hyper. Hannah and Amy galloped ahead. Mum, Dad and Robbie were putting our lunch leftovers into a back pack, when Honey started to walk off in the direction that Callie and May were heading. ”Be careful Rebecca! Watch Honey doesn’t gallop after them.“ I heard my mum call after me. I nodded my head in reply. Honey started trotting. And then before I knew it, we were cantering. Honey cantered for a few strides before she reached gallop. Meanwhile, I was clinging onto Honeys mane, trying to stay in the saddle. After a few more minutes, I lost my energy and came tumbling out of the saddle.

**14+ winner: Molly Dollner, from West Sussex, aged 15**

*This event took place when I was fifteen. It was scary, impactful and emotional (to write).*

*From this event I learned to appreciate everyday tasks that I do with my horse and it encouraged me to accept my situation and realise that the simple things that I do with my horse hold the greatest significance to me.*

To the society that saw them, neither would be viewed as attractive. Lady was not an expensive show jumper and the girl wore no fancy riding clothes. They were merely a fascination to those looking on, a result of someone who had defied the odds, hatred and disregard of their peers. The girl was simply her true self on the back of her horse, she could finally be fun, smart and fiery again. On the back of her horse, she admired the audience watching her. Rather than being humiliated by their stares, it gave her more confidence to complete any task. Somehow, they made each other better, without the recognition that they were doing so. The easy-going lope of Lady's long and steady canter came to an end and it was already time for them to head back.

Walking home, the girl found her mind wandering back to a time when she thought that she saw the world only through pigments of black and white but, in the duration of this walk, she had realised that there was so much more to it than that. There was so much more to life. She saw so much colour through the ears of her horse, arrays of senses that she couldn't even comprehend.