



Monday lunchtime -
here I am at Pony Camp!



Us girls are sitting on the benches outside the farmhouse in the sunshine, and we've all decided to start our diaries at the same time! It's been fantastic here so far – I've met all these fab girls, been given a brilliant pony and we've had our first riding lesson. Wow! I've just realized that I've got loads to say so I'll try writing really quickly!

By the time me and Mum got here most of the other girls had already arrived and unpacked their stuff. Mum had to rush straight off again 'cos she'd left my three smelly brothers in the car, so Jody (who runs Pony Camp) showed me up to my room. All the way up the stairs I was babbling on about how I'd specially chosen to come this week because there's a chance to



do dressage. I've done a few tests at shows near where I live on Fizz or Gregory, the ponies I ride at my local stables, and I'm really excited about learning more. And it's great 'cos some of the girls here are as dressage mad as me! My horsy friends back home are crazy on showjumping instead, so I don't normally get to talk about dressage that much.

When me and Jody got up to the room, the top bunk was already bagsied by a girl called Arabella, so I took the bottom one. The messy bed by the window turned out to be Jody's daughter Millie's. She's really nice – in fact, everyone here is.

After we'd said our names, Arabella was like, "Well, the girls in the oldest room all came together and Millie'll be riding in the other group 'cos she's not into dressage, so you'll have to be my friend." I couldn't



work out if she was joking or not, but she just smiled and put her arm through mine and we went down to the yard together. That's where we met the other girls, and we were all saying hi and telling each other what riding we've done and that kind of thing.



After Sally showed us round the yard and gave us a safety talk it was time to meet our ponies. We all stood in the yard feeling really excited as Lydia the stable girl brought them out one by one and helped us mount up. Sally said usually we would have an assessment lesson to work out which groups we'll be in, but this week we don't need one 'cos there'll just be a dressage group and a normal group.



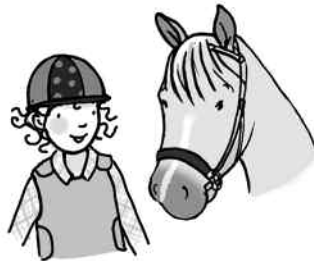


The dressage group (Group B) is:



Paula, age 12, who's Spanish, with **Flame**.

Leonie, also 12, who's half German and is Paula's best friend, with **Charm**.



Marie, Leonie's younger sister, who's 10 like me, with **Mischief**.



Arabella, also 10, with **Gracie**, her own pony (who's a sweet Arab mare with a cute snip on her nose) – how lucky is that!



Me, **Lauren**, and (drum roll please!) the most gorgeous, cute pony I have ever seen, my lovely **LUCKY!**

I couldn't believe my luck when Sally said he was for me. My LUCK in getting LUCKY – hee hee! He's beautiful – a 10-year-old 14hh blue roan cob with this cascading flowing mane, cute clumpy feet and *the* most beautiful eyes.

Arabella said, "Oh dear, Lauren, don't you think he's a bit clumpy for dressage?" But I just pointed out how well Charlotte Dujardin does on Valegro, who's a heavier build, and Stephanie Croxford with Mr President, who the crowd absolutely LOVE. Arabella looked a bit surprised and muttered, "Fair point."

I gave Lucky an extra pat just in case he knew she was not being that nice about him.





As I said, Millie's riding with Group A, 'cos she reckons her pony Tally doesn't exactly get the concept of dressage and is only really happy when he's dragging her through a hedge!



The others in Group A are:



Polly, who is 8, riding **Jewel**.

Bea, who's 8, on crazy **Cracker**.



And **Jojo**, only just 7, on **Sugar**.



Jody



Sally

Sally taught our group, and Jody taught Group A. We were nervous and excited as we mounted up and made our way to the manège. But we didn't suddenly start doing really hard dressage movements or anything – it was just a normal lesson for Sally to see what we can do.

It was brilliant riding Lucky. He's really chilled out, which is great, but he's not exactly quick off the leg! I'll have to get him to perk up for the dressage test, somehow.

While we were walking round on a long rein to warm down, Sally told us she's got a surprise in store, but she's not going to reveal it until this afternoon. Of course, we were all begging her to tell us straight away, but she just did a zipping her lips sign and looked mysterious.



When the lesson finished we all dismounted and ran up our stirrups, and Sally asked Leonie to lead the way back to the barn to untack. Then when we reached the yard, Arabella tried to hand Gracie's reins to Lydia.

Lydia laughed and said, "Nice try, but we all look after our own ponies here, that's the point!"

Arabella laughed too and said, "'Course. Only joking!" But I didn't really know if she was or not. How strange! I'd be desperate to do everything I could for my pony if I had one. Especially if it was my gorgeous Lucky! I'd do anything for *him*!

Lucky was so funny in the barn. Like, when I was grooming him he kept turning his head and trying to eat the body brush. He also nudged the tack box over with his nose, to see if there were any Polos at the bottom, probably! I love him so much already, and when I gave him a big



pat and stroke he did a happy snort and nuzzled into my shoulder, so I think he loves me, too.



Lucky  Lauren

Arabella was waiting by the barn door for me so we could go in for lunch together, but I had to keep popping back to see Lucky! She just stood there, going, "Hurry up, I'm hungry!" so I gave him a last hug and then I gave Gracie one too, so she didn't feel left out.

For lunch we had chicken and salad and—
Oh, we're all off to the yard now. Sally's going to reveal her surprise! Well, fast writing worked, 'cos I got down nearly everything we've done so far!