



Since taking on my boys...my life has changed dramatically for the better

I would like to say that since taking on my boys... my life has changed dramatically but for the better.

It started in 2008 as I had got a pony for my daughter, and I was talking to one of the girls in the stables, Emma, that it would be nice to have another horse then my daughter and I could go riding together.

Emma worked for the NRC (Northern Racing College) and said that sometimes the horses come up for re-homing. I was a little dubious as this was a racehorse, maybe a little advanced for what I was looking for.. but did not think too much about it until one day Emma said that one of the instructor's horses was in need of re-homing. Well my eyes must have lit up, but she made it clear that I could try him out and there was no pressure to have him so I agreed to have a look at him and try him out.

I was so excited on the day I was going to see him that I felt sick. Emma walked me in to this very grand stable block and in front of me was this very handsome beast, Gayles & Showers (Piggy) WOW..... She did not even need to ask I just said I will have him he is so handsome... I tried him and was very nervous, I could feel the power in him but he was a delight to ride and he made me feel so safe... I loved him from that moment.

Preparations were made to get him home and started to get all the things we needed for him, saddle, bridle, rugs, brushes, boots... the list was endless but I loved every minute and spent a small fortune. On the day we went to get him my heart was pounding at just the thought that he was coming home and he was mine to care for as well as Jake the 30 ish year old pony...

We got him home without any fuss, he got in and out of the box no hassle. I whispered in his ear welcome home as we got him off the box, and I felt so proud and happy that I think I would have burst.

I made a big effort to gain his trust and he has had some major things happen to him, He got a nasty injury and had to go to York hospital as he tore a massive chunk out of his rear leg. He spent three weeks there and three months stable rest. He must have had a lot of pain but he was so calm and gentle and let us do all the necessary things to make him well again.

He gave me all the love and care back as in April 2008 I had a hysterectomy and was feeling very ill. Even though I was not allowed out of bed to make a drink I went to the stables to change his dressings and do the little that I could

get away with. We took the next two months recovering together, he knew I was fragile and we would walk gently round the field together, stopping to have a munch of grass or a little breather if I was getting out of puff he knew and stopped.

Towards the end of the summer of 2008 we were both well on the road to recovery that we started just having a little ride round the field... with out too much fizz. We have gone from strength to strength and the bond between us now is inseparable, he knows when I am sad, and when I am happy. He is my best friend.

This is where a success story might end but not in this case.

Emma knew I may be interested if a calm version of Piggy came up, and asked me when I went to see Piggy for the first time did I remember Solo? I said yes and for a very good reason... he was injured as a tiny foal by his mum and only had one eye and a strange shaped face. She said that the college were looking for a home for him but no one wanted him as he could not be ridden.

Well the rest is shall we say history... he lives with us and is an angel. He is just as loving as Piggy and he loves staying out in the field all the time. He loves to be pampered and fussed over, and the support we have received from students that know him is wonderful. He even has his own Facebook pages for all the people who know him and there are hundreds.

No not done yet... as we were taking Solo home Emma asked if I would like to take a look at Nick Ross. He was an old gent and one that they trusted with all the students that had never ridden before let alone a race horse so he was safe... Just what I needed now that my daughter had advanced enough to ride something bigger.

We went to see him and we both fell in love with this dopey, doe eyed, huge bay horse. So a couple of weeks later he came home as well... they are all gentle giants, so loving and so much fun that they have changed my life from working 24/7 to caring for them, working less and having a ball of a time.

They know the sound of my car and are at the gate ready for their tea, they know where I hide the carrots and apples in my pockets and they are cheeky chappies. They are so good to everyone that comes to see them and feed them, and make me the proudest owner of the three most fantastic ex-racehorses in the world.

This will be the first full summer for my daughter and I to enjoy riding out together. We are going to the NRC for one of the training sessions and will be doing some endurance rides this year, and maybe even do some novice events... so we are looking forward to the summer in our stables...

So now that is our boys' success and it is their success that has made my life at 41 worth living again. I have a reason to get up at silly o'clock to go and

feed them in the morning, change their rugs, put them in a muddy field that you just know they are going to roll in, to come in caked head to toe in thick mud, ready for me to groom off again.

With out My Boys... I would be a boring accountant / payroll manager coming home from work to watch TV or go out for a meal with friends... now my friends come to me and help me with my BEST friends... Piggy, Nicky & Solo.

(Written by Debbie Wood, April 2010)