



## **Eventing Ireland Youth Committee Annual Report for 2025**



## Chairperson's Report

Before reflecting on 2025, I would first like to acknowledge the leadership of my predecessor, Kieren Connors, whose dedication and vision laid the foundations on which we continue to build. I also extend my sincere thanks to our exceptional Eventing Ireland Youth Committee (EIYC), whose energy, professionalism, and commitment to our riders make everything we do possible. Finally, we are deeply grateful to our sponsors and benefactors - especially the George Mernagh Memorial Fund (GMMF) and the Mandy Boyle Fund (MBF) - whose generosity empowers us to provide opportunities, pathways, and support for our young athletes to thrive.

Each year, the EIYC sets out to build on previous successes and deliver ambitious training, events and support programmes to our young athletes from U16 Pony level through to U25 level. The GMMF empowers us to primarily support the grassroots of youth eventing through regional training sessions, guest visits from William Fox-Pitt, Caroline Powell and others, bursaries, exchange programmes, and our extraordinary flagship training event, Camp, here at Necarne. In addition, through the MBF, our Irish youth teams receive training and travel support to pursue championship glory. Once again, our teams delivered outstanding performances this year and a special congratulations to our Young Rider European Silver medalist squad.

Several new initiatives were introduced in 2025. Our inaugural Camp was a huge success for riders, coaches and supporters. The Pony Nations Cup and the British & Irish Exchange at Cornbury and Ballindenisk were a testament to the huge effort put into them. We certainly gave Ballindenisk a memorable 100th-anniversary party. The introduction of training and support initiatives for young horses and producers is also the start of a journey to help those committed to producing the very best Irish Sport Horse, and we look forward to seeing the results of their work on the Eventing fields in years to come.

I mentioned at our recent Youth Ball that Eventing demands not just great horsemanship and skill but also great courage, discipline, and resilience. This is required both on and off the horse. We have a social license to compete, and I ask all youth members and supporters to respect that license and continue to showcase our horses and sport in the greatest possible manner. I would also remind everyone that we demonstrate an equal level of respect for one another, both on the eventing fields and through the digital platforms we use daily.

For 2026, we have a more comprehensive Eventing programme thanks to the great work of Eventing Ireland and our landowners. A critical challenge for the existence of our ODEs is the availability of volunteers. We need your support to ensure all these events materialise, so please volunteer at least twice during the season ahead; we need you all. It's already looking like a great year (if it could just stop raining!), and the EIYC will endeavour to deliver an exciting programme of initiatives for you again. While it was disappointing to see youth membership and entries drop last year, the committee will intensify our efforts to further develop and grow youth participation.

Regrettably, we are losing some amazing people from the EIYC as they have served their terms in office. My deepest gratitude to Angela, Aoife, Christine, Marie, Regina, and Zazel for their selfless contribution over the past 4 years. While this is a great loss to us, it also provides an opportunity to bring new faces with different experiences and skills into the EIYC, so please consider joining our wonderful team of volunteers.

We should all be very proud of our journey over the past 5 years. As we look ahead, the future is bright. Together, we are continuing to build a positive, ambitious environment where our young athletes can thrive and enjoy the wonderful sport of Eventing. Let's continue to work together to be a positive driving force in Eventing Ireland.

Yours,

David Nestor

Chairperson, Eventing Ireland Youth Committee

## GMMF Regional Training

The Munster region has been running GMMF training throughout 2025. The Munster Region was lucky enough to get 5\* New Zealand rider Caroline Powell to train the Munster youth riders for a couple of days in the spring and again for a two-day clinic before Christmas. Using simple, effective exercises, Caroline inspired the riders to ask more of their horses/ponies and achieve better training outcomes.



In the North Leinster Region, thanks to GMMF funding, we had top-class training sessions at Greenogue and the Emerald Equestrian with Jim Donohoe, Heike Holstein, Gerald Bloomer and Ruth Robinson. Great to see the stars for the future progressing with top-level training. The future is bright.

The South Leinster region has run 11 clinics with 239 participants throughout 2025. There have been over 9 different coaches and 6 different venues used to deliver quality coaching across the region. There were Dressage, XC, and show



jumping lessons on offer, catering to competitors at all levels. Last year, we launched a new initiative that ran a pre-110 assessment to guide anyone wishing to upgrade to that level and it proved very successful.

The Northern Region have run a variety of training sessions at excellent local venues, Lusks Equestrian, Meadows Equestrian Centre, Danescroft and Hazeldene.

We have used HSI coaches Joanne Jarden and Debbie Byrne, as well as



Cormac Rafferty and Ruth Robinson. The idea this year has been to provide quality coaching and support for all EI Youth Levels from experienced top-level coaches.

The knowledge gained by all participants in these sessions was immense, and thanks to the GMMF, the sessions were subsidised by approximately €20 per participant.

Having EIYC members at the venues helps EI youth families by providing opportunities to answer questions and offer advice more locally.



### **Mandy Boyle Fund**

We are incredibly grateful to Mandy, who has been so generous and supportive of the EI Youth in 2025. All European Squad Members received a bursary to travel abroad this year, and Mandy has also provided financial assistance to talented riders and families who require it.

### **International Youth Recognition**

At all Irish International events, prize bags & rosettes were given to the highest-placed youth eventers to acknowledge their achievement. These prizes are supported by Helen Dempsey, Demlay Equestrian, and the Youth Committee and are a fantastic way to acknowledge the incredible achievements of the Youth at an international level. Winners are publicised on EI Youth Social Media.



## EI Youth Exchange

This year's GMMF Youth exchange took place in Cornbury and Ballindenisk. We had several teams at Cornbury: CCIY3\*S (2 teams), CCIJ2\*S (1 team), and PT105 (1 team). At Ballindenisk, we had teams in CCI2\*L (3 teams), CCI3\*S (3 Teams), and CCI3\*L (1 team). This year, the George Menagh Memorial Fund provided support in the form of bursaries, as this was the preferred option for those planning to travel. Additionally, Sue Shortt travelled as part of her HSI remit, and we were lucky enough to have Susie Berry (Irish Olympian) lead a course walk for our athletes.

We also had Under 25 members travel over to Cornbury to participate in the young horse classes and the normal FEI short classes. Unfortunately, the weather was not kind, and the rain fell in abundance even before the competition began, leaving the parking/lorry park like a slip-and-slide obstacle course. With the drying, the heavy, sticky mud made packing to go home a battle of strength and perseverance.

The weather might not have been ideal, but Cornbury is still a lovely event. The Irish did well against their English counterparts, with Jack O'Haire finishing 2nd in the Young Rider 3\* class, Beth Coveney finishing 2nd in the 105 Pony Trial event, and Carla Williamson lying in 1st place in the Junior 2\* class, which was unfortunately abandoned due to an incoming storm. There was the usual entertainment and dancing on the Saturday evening, which was quite the party, as well as a quiz on the Friday evening (this we were not so good at). From memory, the team of Ben Connors, Jack O'Haire, Jasper Kelly and Maddison Peries won the 3\* Young rider team competition.

At Ballindenisk, we had a strong contingent participating throughout the competition as well.

The youth exchange had teams across three levels of competition, with the Irish team of Ciara O'Connor, Alice Curley and Erin Mathieson winning the 2\* long team competition, Ireland's teams also came 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in this very competitive class. The British won the 3\* long class, but the Irish came out on top for the 3\* short class with the winning team of Anna Nangle, Hannah Willis and Hannah Groves. The Irish also finished 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in this fun team competition. The strength and depth of our youth at this level are real indicators of the dedication and talent Ireland has on show at the moment.

All the under-21 riders who competed in Cornbury and Ballindenisk contributed to the inaugural George Mernagh Memorial Challenge Cup, which Ireland won. This is a great start to this annual event. Long may it continue.



## The George Mernagh Memorial Trophy 2025

The George Mernagh Memorial Fund, Eventing Ireland, and British Eventing were delighted to announce the official launch of the George Mernagh Cup in 2025.

George Mernagh was the managing director of Tattersalls Ireland. He was an extraordinary horseman and one of the greatest gentlemen to grace the turf or the show arena. A former jockey and event rider, George was no stranger to the show ring, where he enjoyed much success in the saddle. He became one of the most sought-after and respected judges in Ireland and Britain. George sadly passed away in 2011 after a battle with cancer, aged 56. George, who was the driving force behind Tattersalls International Event, which ran for 15 years, left a lasting impression on all who met him. In his memory, the George Mernagh Memorial Fund was established, and to this day, George's generosity and kindness continue to reach out to young equestrians the length and breadth of the country.

The George Mernagh Cup was born of GMMF's continued support for youth eventing. This ongoing support has provided a wide array of competition and training opportunities for underage event riders. The George Mernagh Cup is contested annually, at the underage level, between Ireland and Great Britain. There are two legs, one in the UK and one in Ireland. The Cup is awarded to the winning nation based on the total of the average cumulative scores across all classes. What makes this competition unique is its inclusivity. Each nation will be represented by all pony, junior, and young riders competing in the 2\* and 3\* classes, long and short, at both legs, with all scores for each nation added and divided by the number of riders. The winning nation will be the one with the lowest score across

the two legs. The hosts for the 2025 legs were Cornbury House International in the UK, which ran from 10-14 September, and Ballindenisk International in Ireland, which ran from 24 – 28 September.

At the Cornbury leg, Ireland provided a strong team of riders at both 2\* and 3\* levels. Disappointingly, the weather didn't play ball, so the 2\* class was abandoned, and the scores from the CCI-S 2\* were unfortunately not taken into consideration. Cornbury is a super venue, and despite the poor weather, all who travelled had a very enjoyable weekend.

While most of the Irish contingent were competing in the 2\* class, Ireland was represented by 6 combinations in the CCI-S Y3\*. The hosts, GB, fielded 53 combinations. This being the only competition providing team scores towards the first leg of the GMM Cup, Ireland, which had possibly fewer runners, led after the first leg with an average score of 53.75 penalties, while GB finished on 71.95 penalties. The second leg in Ballindenisk attracted a large entry across four classes, CCI-S 2\*, CCI-L 2\*, CCI-S 3\* and CCI-L 3\*. A total of 46 combinations competed, 16 from GB and 30 from Ireland.

Ballindenisk were celebrating 50 years of eventing at this super venue, and our hosts provided great entertainment for the youth contingent over the weekend.

With a difference of just 18.2 penalties from the first leg, and with so many runners in Ballindenisk, this was always going to be a close call. The result at Ballindenisk saw GB emerge as winners of the 2nd leg, with a total score of 218.1, while Ireland finished on 231.2. With 105 participants across two legs, the final standings were GB 290.05 and Ireland 284.95.

This gave Ireland a winning margin of just 5.1 penalties, who were the overall winners of the GMM Cup in 2025. We are now looking forward to 2026. If anyone would like more information, please contact Kieran Connors at [kieran@clg.ie](mailto:kieran@clg.ie).

## European Squads

### Junior & Young Rider European Championships at Strzegom, Poland

20th – 24th August 2025



The first two months of the 2025 one-day season were all about Tyrella and Ballindenisk. These events provided a great start for all Juniors and Young Riders (YR) with championship team places in their sights. Both Ballindenisk and Millstreet Internationals provided strong international competition and gave team managers, Dag Albert (YR) and Sue Shortt (Juniors), time to get to know the riders and their horses. Training in 2025 was organised in conjunction with Eventing Ireland, and thank you to them and the EI Youth Committee for facilitating this.

The Junior(U18) squad:

- Gearoid Bolger & Into Mischief (ISH)
- Ali Fitzpatrick & Kelly (ISH)
- Maria Fouhy & Hillcrest Horizon (ISH)
- Katie Gibbons & Milchem Free Spirit (ISH)
- Ciara O'Connor & Cooley Rebound (or Ashwood Iron Lady (ISH)
- Carla Williamson & Goldman (or Powers (ISH)

Reserves):

- Ben Connors & Zuperlative
- Anna Nangle & Stroke of Genius (ISH)
- Molly O Connor & Stillbrook Aoife (ISH)

Unfortunately for Maria, she had to withdraw shortly before the teams were due to travel. As a result, Molly O'Connor received the call-up.

The Young Rider(U21) squad:

- Ben Connors – OLS King Aragon (ISH), owned by Kieran Connors and Michelle Nelson
- Oleana Cowan – RCA Royal Mist, owned by Amaya Cowan
- Godfrey Gibbons – Kilroe Lego Land (ISH), owned by Maurice Coleman by OR Kilnamac Kasu (ISH), owned by Marie Dunne
- Amelia McCarthy – Finsceal Endeavour (ISH), owned by Zazel McCarthy
- Tom Nestor – Cooley Diamond Dancer (ISH), owned by David Nestor
- Momo Sheehy – TMX Herby, owned by Morgan Sheehy OR HHS Noble Call (ISH) owned by Morgan Sheehy

Reserves:

- Keeva Johnson – Cornasaus Lad (ISH), owned by Keeva Johnson
- Keelin McCarthy – Romans Mr Kane, owned by Tom McCarthy
- Jack O’Haire – Jamaica Rose (ISH), owned by Penelope Guinness

There was great talent across the squads in 2025. The success of the youth squad programs relied heavily on the incredible support from the riders’ families and owners, as well as coaches Gerald Bloomer, Heike Holstein, Cormac Rafferty, and team vet JP King. A huge thank you to them.

The Irish Junior Eventing team finished eighth of 11 teams in their Championships.

In the individual standings, Carla Williamson was the best of the Irish in 12th place aboard Powers, while Ciara O’Connor finished 20th with Cooley Rebound. Ali Fitzpatrick with Kelly finished 35th, just ahead of Gearoid Bolger and Into Mischief (ISH) in 36th, while Katie Gibbons with Milchem Free Spirit (ISH) finished 43rd.

The Irish Young Rider Eventing team delivered a strong performance, capturing the team silver medal at the European Championships in Strzegom.

In the individual standings, three Irish riders finished inside the top 10. Momo Sheehy with HHS Noble Call (ISH) was best of the Irish in 8th, just ahead of Godfrey Gibbons and Kilroe Lego Land (ISH) in 9th and Ben Connors with OLS King Aragon (ISH) in 10th. Oleana Cowan with RCA Royal Mist finished 17th while Amelia McCarthy with Finsceal Endeavour (ISH) finished 25th.

The team camp in Strzegom was a focal point for those travelling, and the great spirit and camaraderie displayed by competitors, parents, supporters and their coaches made the trip all the more memorable – it's truly amazing to see over 40 people catered for at a mobile kitchen in the height of Polish summer. Memories made for life.

None of this would have been possible without the support of the sponsors of the Youth Squads. We are incredibly grateful to our sponsors, whose continued support is sincerely appreciated. Special thanks to GMMF, Mandy Boyle, Equieire, GAIN, Bucas, TRM, Dubarry of Ireland, Berney Bros, and PC Racewear.

### **European Championship at Le Mans, Ponies France, July 30th – August 3rd**

The 2025 International season kicked off for the pony riders at the North Holland Horse Trials in Oudkarspel in April, with the Irish pony riders dominating the CCIP2\*L, securing 7 of the top 10 positions.

Ballendenisk International followed swiftly after, with all pony riders again showing some great form.

A total of 25 combinations took on the CCIP2\*L in Millstreet, showing great strength and depth in the pony category.

With so many pony riders with championship team positions in their sights, the final two viewing days at Grove and Ballindenisk saw strong performances across the E1110P class.

Training was also ongoing in May and June, which gave further opportunities for team manager Sue Shortt and her coaches to get to know the children, ponies, and their support network.

The Pony (U16) squad:

- Suzie Cosgrove and Kilcoltrim Swift
- Kitty Cullen and Coppenagh Spring Sparrow/Greenaun Russel
- Hugh Kelly and Fairyhouse in a Pickle
- Tadgh O'Haire and Ballinagore Hero
- Anna Radford and Essenar Double Dutch
- Sophie Swain and Here Comes Trouble

Reserves:

- Beth Coveney and Forans Daylight
- Sarah Smullen and Carhu Melody
- Niamh Verkade and Penny Lane

The final training day in Abbottstown was fun and exciting, with the squad receiving their official team kit and taking part in a photo shoot. A huge thanks go to the incredible sponsors who kept the team looking and feeling their best:

Sport Ireland, TRM nutrition, Equiere, Dubarry of Ireland, Berney Bros, Bucas and PC racewear.

The Championship in Le Mans got off to a great start with some fantastic dressage scores posted on the first two days of competition.

Cross country was a testing day for the Irish squad, with only 4 of the 6 combinations completing over a track that saw only 10 clear rounds inside the time.

On the completion of showjumping on Sunday, the Irish Pony Eventing Team finished 6th in their championships.

In the Individual standings, Kitty Cullen was the best of the Irish in 10th place, while Hugh Kelly finished 11th, Anna Radford finished 27th, and Suzie Cosgrove finished in 29th place.

The Team camp in Le Mans was a centre of activity with all riders, families, supporters and coaches catered for daily. There was great spirit within the camp, no more so than on the opening ceremony night, with everyone proudly wearing their green jerseys and tricolours. It was a sad farewell to friends old and new on departure from Le Mans, with memories for life made, an amazing experience had by all, and riders left inspired by the invaluable experience.

Huge thanks must go to Team manager Sue Shortt, along with coaches Sue Smallman, Cormac Rafferty, team vet Tim O'Hagan and grooms Leah Daniels and Jenny Kuehnle for their support during the championships.

A special thanks must also go to the GMMF, Mandy Boyle and all the previously mentioned sponsors for their continued support, which is sincerely appreciated.

## Oudkarspel Trip - part of GMMF Youth Exchange

Twelve youths made the trip to Oudkarspel in the Netherlands this April for their Spring International, building on a successful visit in 2024.

The group was made up of eleven pony riders competing in the 2\* Pony class, along with one junior rider, Paddy Smullen, who competed in the 2\*L. Senior rider James O'Haire also made the journey and contested the 2\*L.

Kieran and Michelle Connors, alongside Chef d'Équipe Jane Kinsella, went above and beyond in their preparations, organising a specially built training course in Punchestown. This proved invaluable, giving both ponies and riders the opportunity to school over purpose-built combinations. The professionalism and dedication shown by Jane, Michelle and Kieran were evident, and their hard work was reflected in the team's outstanding results.

Building on last year's success, the Irish riders brought home first and third place finishes, with an impressive seven combinations finishing inside the top ten.

Kirsty Greene delivered a superb performance to take the win on Our Girl with a brilliant clear showjumping round. Sarah Smullen finished third on Carhu Melody, with just one unlucky pole in the showjumping phase.

The Irish results were further strengthened by:

4th place – Tadgh O'Haire on Ballinagore Hero

6th place – Sophie Swain on Here Comes Trouble

7th place – Molly Egan on Divine Fernando

8th place – Hugh Kelly on Firehouse in a Pickle

9th place – Suzie Cosgrove on Kilcoltrim Swift

Niamh Verkade, Robyn Dempsey, Maeve Fleming, Isabelle Walsh and Paddy Smullen also produced credible performances over the Dutch track.

Training beforehand, along with the travelling coaches — Jane Kinsella, Sue Smallman and Caroline Powell — was subsidised by the George Mernagh Fund. The trip was a wonderful experience for all involved, providing invaluable early-season confidence for this talented group of young riders.



## **PONY CLUB NATIONS CUP**

Ballindenisk International Horse Trials in September 2025 provided a great backdrop for the inaugural Pony Club Nations Cup of Eventing. Several years in the making, this wonderful event gave high-achieving pony club members a true taste of international competition. With team competitions run at 1\* and 2\* level, we welcomed English, Welsh and Scottish teams alongside our home Irish Pony Club and NI Pony Club.

The athletes experienced a full international atmosphere, from meticulous trot-up to the electric pressure of the main arena. The 1\* and 2\* tracks demanded the very best from every combination, bridging the gap between national rallies and the global stage.

It was a weekend of fierce but friendly rivalry. We are delighted to congratulate Ireland on a magnificent victory in the Nations Cup\*. Their consistency across all three phases was a testament to the depth of talent within the Irish Pony Club. Our Northern Ireland squad also did very well to secure 3rd place in a hotly contested competition.

Equally impressive were the visitors from across the Irish Sea; a huge well done to England for securing the 2Chairman's Cup\*. Their polished performances in the show jumping phase ensured the silverware headed home with them after a closely fought battle.

None of this would be possible without the support of the George Mernagh Memorial Fund, and a heartfelt thank you to Connolly's Red Mills for their hugely generous prize sponsorship, which was the envy of every FEI class!

Thank you also to Jane Flynn, who was the chef d'équipe for the IPC teams, and to Debbie Byrne, who was the chef d'équipe for the Area 17/NI teams.

It was really great to develop relationships with our UK mainland-based friends, meet Dave Burton and Sam York from UKPC, and raise the profile of Irish Youth eventing across the water.

Thank you to John Lyttle, FEI steward and his team for all their help and support at the event and HUGE thanks to the Fell family and all at this fantastic venue who supported the Pony Club and EI Youth Committee throughout.

Beyond the results, the weekend was defined by a fun and friendly atmosphere, with branches from different nations coming together to celebrate their shared passion. We are already fielding questions about the September 2026 event.

The inaugural Pony Club Nations Cup of Eventing was a true celebration of youth equestrian sport, and we are aiming for it to continue!



## International Subsidies

One of the EIYC's aims was to encourage youth eventers to make the step up to the International level. A barrier to this is the high cost compared to a national event, especially for families with multiple children. To assist with overheads at their first FEI event, an EIYC-GMMF subsidy of over €8,250 was offered. At the end of the season, eligible combinations were asked to apply, and just before Christmas, over 33 families received their subsidy.



## Young Rider Bursary

GMMF Bursary Report 2026

There were only 2 Applicants for the 2026 Bursary: Molly O'Connor and Yvonne Daly. In the previous 2 years, there were 4 and 6, respectively.

That said, the quality of the applicants was excellent, and they had serious credentials. Molly O'Connor had many achievements as a rider, but Yvonne Daly brought aspirations to become an eventing coach, in addition to her equestrian skills.

The purpose of the fund is to assist a Young Rider is to support a 'young rider' in training placement abroad, which aligns with the objectives of the EI Youth Committee.

The panel decided to support both applicants and shared the funds available

## Social Events

Social events for youth form a significant part of this plan. By bringing together youths from across Ireland of similar age with common interests, we can foster a sense of belonging and team cohesion across age groups.

We started the Youth Suppers in 2022 thanks to the generosity of an anonymous sponsor and the team at Ballindenisk International. In Autumn 2025, our main supper was held in the Ballindenisk marquee near the main arena. As we were also hosting the youth exchange and the Pony Club Nations Cup, the marquee was packed with parents and young people. Our coaches & Chef D'Equipes all had a turn on the mechanical horse with lots of encouragement from several hundred attendees. The barn was decorated in Nations Cup colours, and the food provided by Ballindenisk caterers was fantastic. It is really important to continue bringing young people together to enjoy all aspects of the eventing lifestyle.



## Youth Awards Ball

We celebrated the 2025 achievements of all EI Youths at the annual EIYC ball, held at Barbertown Castle in January 2026.

MC Raymond Brady announced many categories of awards, including youth league winners, championship squad presentations, and individual awards for the international, showjumping, cross country, and dressage rider of the year across all age categories.

The Special Recognition Award of the night went to Gearoid Bolger for his incredible determination in representing his country at the Junior European Championships in Strzegom whilst battling a serious illness.

Charlie Lyttle was awarded Volunteer of the Year.

EIYC chairman David Nestor gave an address outlining how privileged we have been, over the past number of years, to be beneficiaries of a share of the George Mernagh Memorial Fund. The ball was attended by approx 160 pax and has become a feature of the youth eventing social calendar.



## William Fox-Pitt Clinics



William Fox-Pitt Clinics, June 13th 2025 & August 4th and 5th 2025

Using a share of the funds raised at the EIYC Ball and a subsidy from the GMMF fund, 85 individual youth riders got the thrill of a cross-country lesson with William Fox-Pitt at Clonmahon House. Held in June and August of 2025, William, the winning most 5-star event rider to date, was extremely attentive to each rider and, despite torrential rain at times, shared his expertise and vast knowledge to the benefit of all attendees. Rider groups of 5, ranging from 90 cms to 115 cms, developed their technical skills with William throughout the sessions. The EIYC received some wonderful feedback on organising the wow-factor sessions, and thanks must also go to Michael McNally for providing an excellent facility.

## ACCOUNTS FOR 2025

31st October 2025			
Income and Expenditure 2025		Statement of Affairs 2025	
	€		€
Borealis Ball	9,184.54	Bank	67,772.42
Bank Fees	(370.67)	Debtor	1,000.00
Write off grant already received	(1,087.35)	Accruals	(3,990.00)
Ballindenisk supper	(107.74)	Bursaries to be paid out	(27,450.00)
EIYC Highest placed Youth at an International	(622.61)	GMMF expenses – 2025	(3,262.86)
EIYC expenses	(500.00)	MBF 2025	(5,666.91)
Excess	6,496.17	GMMF 2025	(22,298.27)
		Funds for U25 sponsorship	(1,500.00)
			4,604.38
		Opening reserves	(1,891.79)
		Excess to date	6,496.17
			4,604.38

### The Eventing Ireland Youth Committee spend

Our main fundraiser for the year was the Borealis Ball held in early January 2025. This raised approximately €13,000, with €3,800 allocated to the William Fox Pitt clinics, leaving a surplus of about €9,000 left to distribute to future clinics and initiatives as directed by the committee. Some of this money is being used to cover the committee's running costs and any incidental overruns, with the main initiative at present being the funding of the Highest Placed Youth at Internationals awards, which was previously kindly sponsored by Demlay Equestrian.

## **GMMF spend**

In 2025, the Committee also applied for and received €60,000 from The George Mernagh Memorial Fund. As at the end of the financial year, there was still €22,000 to be spent on GMMF activities. This is mainly due to the timing of receipt of the GMMF monies, which extends to the end of March, resulting in a slight timing difference. To that end, out of the above, the Youth Camp in Necarne is being subsidised by €12,000. Regional training has taken place since October, and it is likely that the remaining €4,000 will be expended by the end of March. There is €2,500 still to be distributed for the U25 Bursary and €3,800 for the Youth Exchange Bursary.

€8,000 U25 Bursary (€2,500 carry over from previous years awaiting payment)

€2,500 TY Bursary

€ 8,250 First Time International Bursary

€8,133 Pony Club Nations Cup initiative (Carry over from 2024 GMMF money)

€8,200 Youth Exchange Program, with another €3,800 approximately to spend

€9,000 European Squads

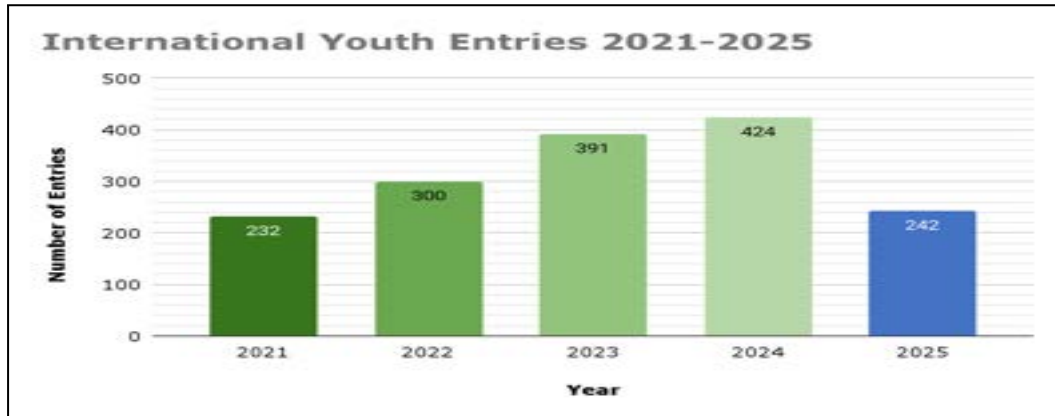
€12,000 Youth Camp

€3,800 Regional Training with another €4,000 approximately to spend

## **Mandy Boyle spend**

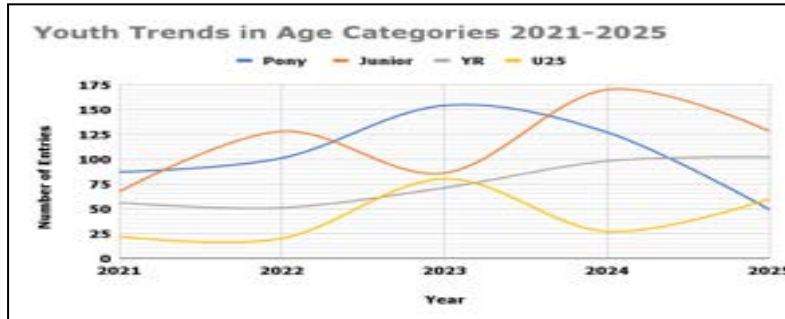
In 2025, Mandy Boyle kindly donated €20,000 to the Youth Committee in support of their initiatives. To date, €13,500 has been used to support our up-and-coming youths at Europeans. Signage has also been purchased to raise awareness of the Youth Committee's work, and there is still roughly €5,000 to be awarded for the year. This is likely to take the form of an Assistance Bursary and a Future Talent Bursary.

## Key Performance Indicators

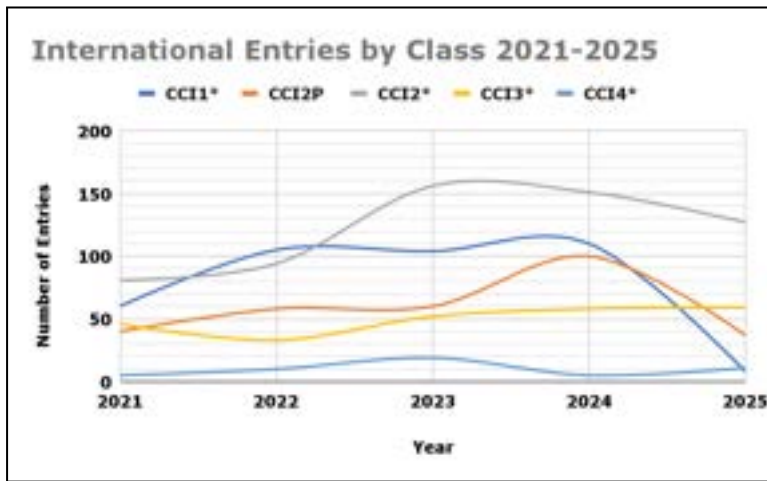


### International Entries

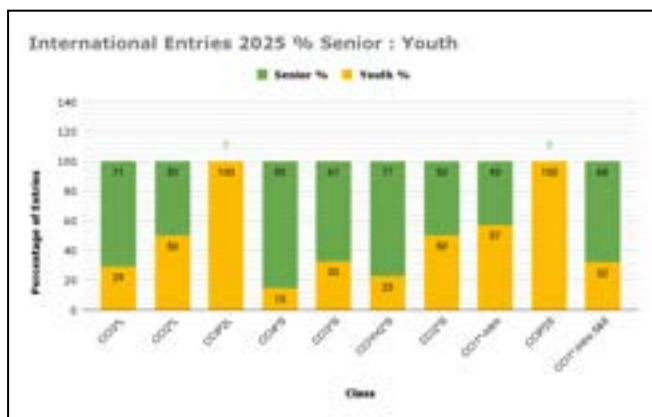
In the Youth Committee's third year, we encountered another challenging start, with events not running nationally or internationally. As a result, we have seen a **43%** decline in entries. The uncertainty in the system significantly impacted the membership, national entries, MERs and International attendance.



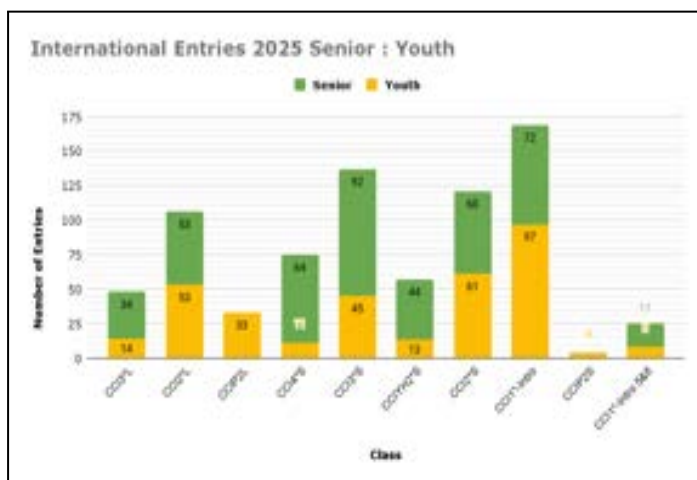
Our goal is to support all youths from 12 years of age on their ponies up to 4\* and up to the age of 25. The International entries profile was healthy and steadily growing year-on-year until 2025. The older youth have maintained numbers, but the drop in Pony and Junior numbers in 2025 is catastrophic and is also reflected in the 1\*, 2P and 2\* entries.






Youth continue to make up a significant share of international entries.



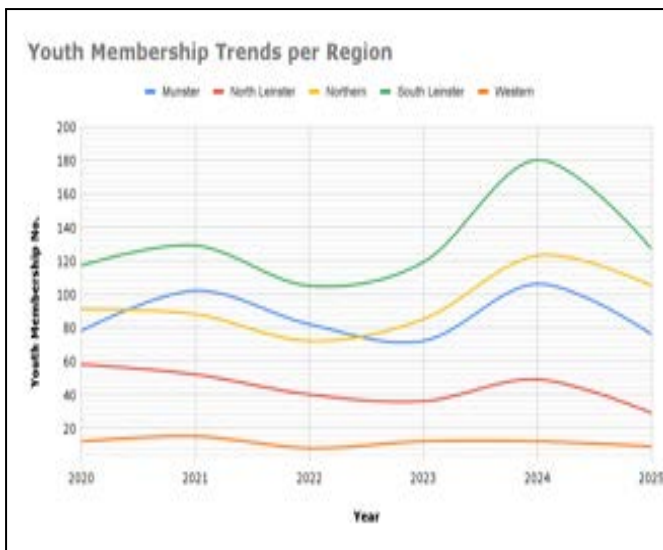
The youth in International classes, although in decline in 2025, still represents a stable percentage of total entries. Youth riders at 4\* are small in number, as to be expected, but we have some excellent talent at this level.



A number of Youth Riders have achieved top FEI rankings in the Junior, Young Rider and U25 categories:

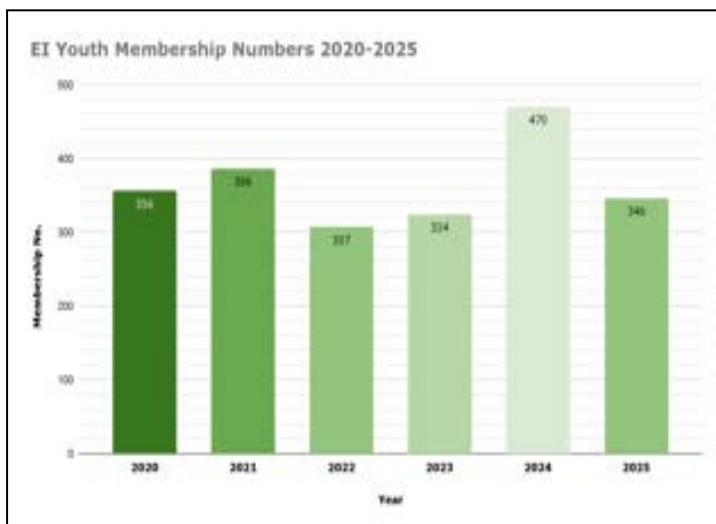
-  Momo Sheehy
-  Ben Connors
-  Godfrey Gibbons

## Youth Membership by Region

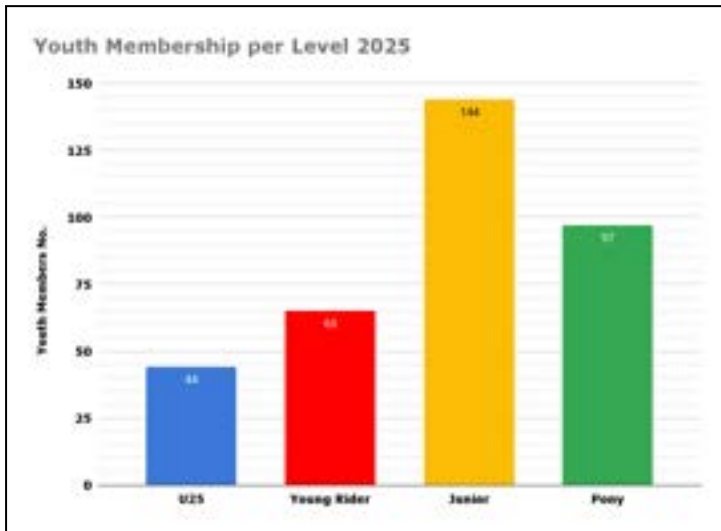


There was a significant jump between 2023 and 2024; this may be partly due to the introduction of rolling membership. The decline in 2025 is most likely due to uncertainty surrounding events in the early part of the year.

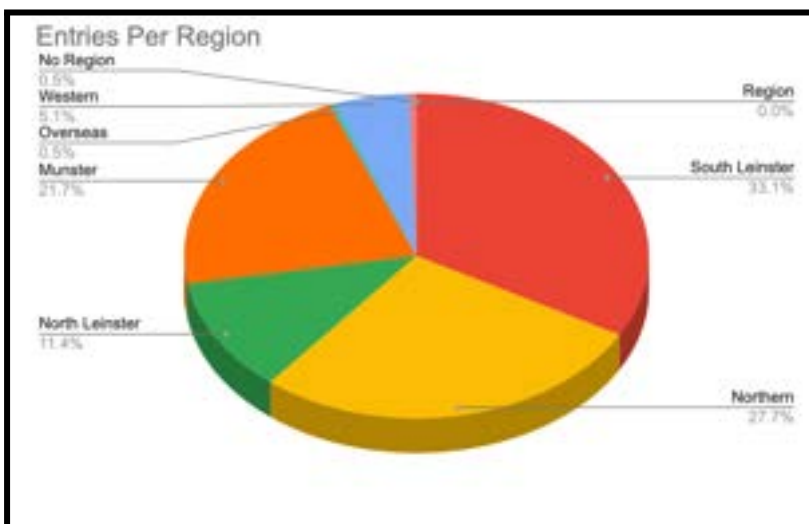
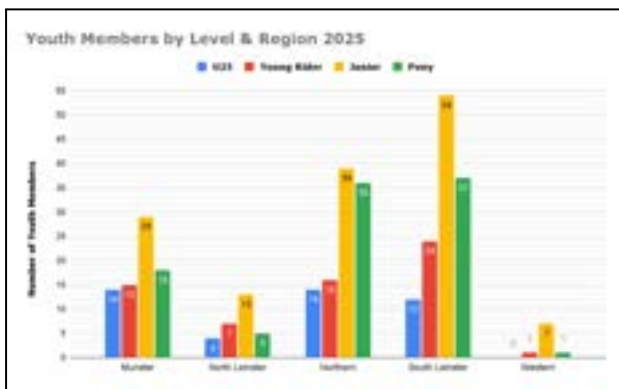
All the regions show a decline in youth membership, which is disappointing but understandable as parents make decisions on a competition pathway for 2025 in the early part of the year.



Juniors are currently our largest group. One of the challenges is to maintain those youth through YR and ultimately keep them in the sport as their careers progress, within or outside the equestrian industry. Salaried Amateur riders who love the sport and have the means to finance it are part of the EI membership profile.



The youth in the regions largely mirror the national profile. However, NR and SL have particularly healthy Junior and pony cohorts, which bodes well for the future. However, we are not currently seeing this impact on the international stage.



## Regional Training - GMMF

The EIYC/GMMF training run within the regions is incredibly popular, with huge demand. In 2025, it is estimated that there were **850** coaching slots through this programme. In the first GMMF tranche, the Regions ran 32 training days. The second tranche had a healthy start in the spring, supporting the Youth Exchange with excellent training at Clonmahon with William Fox-Pitt, followed by sessions in the Autumn and Christmas with HP-level coaches and Caroline Powell. The Inaugural Youth Camp at Necarne in early March 2025 was a huge success with 70 participants and a high satisfaction rating of 4.8/5. The second Camp is due to start on the 28th February 2026, with over 80 participants descending on Castle Irvine for a packed program.

*National - William Fox-Pitt / Camp / Exchange*



We look forward to another exciting year in 2026  
The Future is Bright

Eventing Ireland Youth Committee