

Rotary club are back in the saddle

EACH year since 1985, The Rotary Club has been organising a cross country horse ride to raise money for charity. This year's event on 12th September will be the 25th anniversary celebration.

In that time, leading organiser John Smith estimates that at least £25,000 have been raised for charities, including Tarporley War Memorial Hospital, St Luke's Hospice, in Winsford, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group and The Special Riding Centre, Llanfynydd, Wrexham.

The first rides were held at Oulton Park, actually crossing the track on protective matting but these days there is limited availability for the circuit. For many years it was then run from Organsdale Farm in Kelsall until they started running rides commercially, and for the last few years it has been run from Utkinton Lodge Farm, Cotebrook.

Each year at least 100 riders come with horse boxes, and in one record year there were actually 240.

The ride can only be run with the help of several farmers who allow access across

their fields – generally when they are in stubble, The Red Cross always attend to deal with potential injuries and the Forestry Commission kindly allow access in Primrose Woods and surrounding forest.

The event has had a good safety record, with just one dramatic incident in 2003 when paramedics called to the scene by the injured rider's companions chose to call in the NW Air Ambulance to evacuate the patient to hospital. She suffered lacerations requiring stitches but no broken bones.

This year's ride will be on Sunday 12th September, again from Utkinton Lodge Farm. The course which is only finalised in the last few days before the event, will pass through Delamere Forest and over farm land rarely available to riders and forest trails providing fantastic views across the Cheshire Plain.

It's a great day out for riders and their supporters, with refreshments available, and rosettes for everyone completing the course which is usually about 8-10 miles long. Further details are available at **www.tarporleyrotary.org.uk**

