

**BRITISH SHOWJUMPING** Issue 4 2012 £4.50

**SHOWJUMPING AND THE STAGE**  
Judy Craymer tells us how she got involved with the sport

**BRITISH MASTERS**  
Exclusive pictures and coverage from this year's event

**London 2012: A Guide**  
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**SCHEDULES FOR JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

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**Inside Issue FOUR**

You'll find all you need to know about London 2012 in this issue of *British Showjumping* magazine, along with rider interviews and the latest news

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**CELEBRITY INTERVIEW**

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**Sue Mott** catches up with British Showjumping Ambassador Judy Craymer about her involvement in the sport and friendship with Jennifer Saunders

**Humble beginnings**  
The inspired idea of inviting Judy to become an ambassador for British Showjumping this year stemmed from her long-time love of horses and a career that included being a groom for top rider Ann Davies back in the seventies. "I can't quite remember how it happened, but I heard that Ann was looking for a groom and just said: 'Count me in'. I was about 15 or 16, I suppose. I spent all my summer, Easter and Christmas holidays from school working for her. It was the most incredible opportunity. "We travelled all over the place in the lorry, from Hickstead to Dublin. At first I had a little tent to sleep in. People laugh when I tell them because, of course, I am known for being a little bit more high maintenance now. In fact, it's probably my experience with horses that made me high maintenance. The Hickstead showers, the shared toilets, cleaning your teeth in the outside tap water... Now I travel with loads of luggage and only stay at the Four Seasons."

**Setting the scene**  
The impresario was born, albeit with straw in her hair and sawdust on her boots. As time went by, Pony Club and parties in sunlit fields were overtaken by working as a theatrical production assistant and parties in backstage dressing rooms. She worked with Oscar-winning lyricist, Tim Rice on *Chess*, which is where she met Benny and Bjorn (Andersson and Ulvaeus) of Abba, who were also collaborating on the show. Bjorn and Judy had a shared interest in horses and Judy regularly exercised his horse, Oskar, around this time. The joke is that the hatching of *MAMMA MIA!* was the story of Judy Craymer and two blokes with beards who kept saying 'no'. When ultimately, they said 'yes', she sold her flat and cashed in

virtually every asset she owned to bring the story to the stage. "Nobody really believed in it at the beginning. Sadly, I'd little time then to ride horses but that early discipline of looking after those majestic creatures, along with the experience of the riders' dedication to training and constantly wanting to improve, gave me the basic skills that were required to stage a theatre show."

The rest is history. *MAMMA MIA!* is now a global phenomenon, has been seen by more than 50 million people, in 14 languages, in over 300 cities around the world. "Now we're doing the Spices." By which she means her new musical, *Viva Forever*, based on the songs of the Spice Girls and written by her friend, and comic goddess, Jennifer Saunders. The show launched at the end of June and will open at The Piccadilly Theatre later on this year.

Curiously, despite the common thread of their other passion for horses, Craymer and Saunders had never met before their collaboration over "Spices", as she calls it.

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