

A day that dreams are made of...this is lengthy, but a nice story!

When my daughter Cassidy was 3 I was lucky enough to win the point to point on my mums pony Rebel. Cassidy told me when I got my "huge trophy" that she wanted one and one day she would win the point to point like mummy.

Cassidy aged 7 fell in love with a cheeky little foal when he stomped over to her full of his own importance at just a few hours old. Cassidy begged her nanny Maggie and grandad Eric to let her name the foal and after some persuasion they agreed and she decided she was going to call him Rocket...as said that he was going to go so fast that the tannoy would say "here comes Cassidy riding a rocket", so Rocket he became!

After lots more persuading (pestering) Cassidy convinced nanny and grandad that Rocket should be hers, as she would be old enough to race him in the point to point when he was old enough to race too.

It was painfully clear that Rocket didn't much like being a New Forest pony and would spend his days zooming around the field practising his galloping, with Cassidy cheering him on that he was practising for the point to point!

At just a few weeks old Rocket was very mischievous and decided that he would like to meet a vet after cutting his shoulder open on the fence. It was soon before the New Forest Breed Show and the clipping around the wound looked like something rather rude, giving rocket the nickname "Cocket Rocket" for a while! He then decided he'd like to meet the vet again by cutting his nose and modelled a plaster on it for a while too.

It was further clear that Rocket didn't like being a New Forest pony when once weaned he got turned out onto the forest on his own. He would cheekily hide round the corner out of sight and when a car would come into the gate, ensuring the driver was back in the car, he would zoom into the gateway at full pelt and park himself in the stable, refusing to move back out. This went on for a few weeks until after what was amusing, became really irritating, so Rocket got his way and didn't get turned out onto the forest anymore - success for him

It was debated whether rocket should stay a stallion as he was so lovely, but after jumping on Cassidy's shoulders and becoming even more full of his own importance, it was deemed best to geld him!

Cassidy spent the years leading up to him being backed leading him round the field teaching him to jump over her play jumps, to ensure he was a good jumper- safe to say this paid off!

Rocket was kindly lightly backed by Heidi Whetren, despite Cassidy being insistent that she could do it as she'd sat on him in the field loads of times when I wasn't looking, but we wanted him to be done properly. Upon return

Heidi understandably was concerned about a young child and young pony together, but Cassidy is a fearless rider so she wasn't worried.

It was clear from the get go that these two had trust like no other. Within a short space of time Cassidy would hack rocket alone on the forest and "accidentally" jump logs and bushes and let him run to see what speed he could do.

The first 2 attempts at the point to point they came a very credible 2nd, so this year she worked even harder. Cassidy decided to keep Rocket fit and take him pony racing - finally he saw his moment to show us he was actually a thoroughbred racehorse on a proper race track by winning at Ascot on his first attempt. When he won we laughed that he turned into the donkey in Shrek when he turns into a stallion in that he hair flicks and prances full of knowing that he is amazing and won!

Rocket helped Cassidy, along with Nutschullyng Bewitched (NFxTB) owned by Erika Dovey (who Cassidy also raced) to secure Cassidy coming 3rd overall in the pony racing series, being presented with her award at Ascot last week. They then went on to jumping all summer. All that practise as a foal paid off as Rocket is an amazing jumper and won the Knightwood Challenge at the New Forest Show this year, along with National Riding Club champs in arena eventing. He has won at all the local show jumping shows he's been to and jumps 90-100cm which is impressive for a 14hh pony.

The winter has been spent drifting, hunting, galloping in all weathers ready for the big one that would finish the year - the Boxing Day point to point! All that hard work paid off as they won what a day - one that dreams are made of!

Cassidy has decided after racing in the point to points and pony racing, that she would like to be a jockey in the future, so she owes this to Rocket too

Rocket has never outgrown the little foal being full of his own importance and is often sworn at for being so rude, he also never outgrew his message that he is actually a thoroughbred race horse and not a New Forest pony and reminded us of that today and must be treated such as he hates the wet and cold. Rocket also thanks Cassidy for finding him the best name to live up to...as he really does like to go like a Rocket!

Pony of a lifetime our one in a million...Staghill Rocket owned and ridden by Cassidy Francis...the pony with the Thoroughbred sized heart

Lisa Theron.