

THE Equestrian area at Devon County Show encompasses a wide range of interesting breeds and entertainperformances. providing fascinating insight into the world of horses and ponies.

This year record numbers are expected to compete in the events. Packed into four separate rings, the programme will include Anglo and Part Bred Arab and Hack Breeding classes, and Three In Hand, Filly, Colt or Gelding Yearling, Two Years Old and Three Years Old in-hand classes, and one a Ridden Class and a Mare, Stallion or Gelding Four Years Old and over class.

For the first time a Mountain & Moorland First Ridden Working Hunter Ponies class will compete. In the show jumping section there will be an open show jumping class for riders in BSJA Region J, offering a great op portunity for local riders to jump at County Show level. And the Renault Jump series, now in its second year, is returning.

For those interested in rarer breeds, native UK horses and ponies,

including adorable Exmoor and Dartmoor varieties, will be on display. Meanwhile, scurry driving, private driving and the spectacular Concourse d'Elegance, which looks for the most elegant turnout of horses and carriages, will exhibit alongside the much-loved gentle giants of the horse world — the heavy horses.

### Dogs

As the largest open dog competition in the South West, Devon County Show is an important date for canine enthusiasts. Successful dogs are also able to accumulate points for championship shows later in the season.

A massive operation, the dog show includes 293 classes and three iunior and three adult handling classes. Over three days, 29 judges from all over the country will have over 1,000 dogs to rate.

There will be six rings running each day, monitored by two volunteer stewards. Rita Morgan is secretary of the dog show and each year she helps to organise the event.

"I have been doing

this for more than 30 years and it is such a lovely show," she enthused.

Each day different pedigree dog groups are shown and judged and a Best in Group winner is chosen. These dogs then go on to compete in the grand finale on Saturday, for the highly prestigious best in show cup.

They may be small, but these cute, cuddly balls of fur can be just as entertaining as dogs and horses. The cavies section hosts an adorable array of guinea pigs, hamsters, rabbits and chinchillas. Breeders, such as Margaret Rogers, of the Southern Hamster Club, will be on hand to offer ad-

"We display a variety of hamsters, such as Syrian, Russian Campbell, Russian Winter White, and Russian Roborovski," she said. "They are all ones you can buy in pet stores and have differing coat types - long and short, and satin and curly.

"If they are handled well when they are young, hamsters tend to be very well tempered when older. If you know the tricks

of the trade it's easy and we're here to give advice! We will show

people how to use different techniques and solve problems and let

them stroke the hamsters. They make lovely pets!"

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The company has expanded dramatically over the last two

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