



## OLIVER SAYS...

*"LAST year's Badminton took the sport to a new level — even on good ground the course would have been really tough. A lot of people asked afterwards whether horses are not as fit as they were in the days of long format, but I believe it has more to do with a change in horse type than fitness — the top riders' horses are just as fit as in the 'old days,' if in a slightly different way.*

*"It'll be interesting to see where Badminton goes this year — it could become like the Hickstead Derby in showjumping. That's a great competition but nowadays it isn't won by a horse who is winning at the top level in other classes because they are simply too careful.*

*"Horse type also feeds into decisions riders have to make about where to run horses — and I don't believe everyone pays enough attention to that. It applies at every level, from grassroots to four-star, and sometimes the calendar pushes you towards the wrong decision. In my team we spend a lot of time on placing the horses at the right events, and type and ground are crucial factors."*