

19 the number of times the now retired Old Road competed here — without a single cross-country jumping fault

Tricky talent shows his best

**JOHNSON & PERROTT
LAND ROVER
BALLINDENISK
IRELAND**

13-16 September

By Catherine Austen

IMPERIAL MASTER may be one of the trickiest horses on the circuit, but he's also one of the most talented. Having one of his 'going days', he led the Johnson & Perrott Land Rover CIC*** from start to finish to give Oliver Townend a shot at winning €50,000.

This sum, the Goersbridge Go For Gold bonus, is on offer to the CIC*** winner on this occasion and at Ballindenisk's April event, if either of them can double up here next September.

"Some of the British riders call him Imperial Disaster — yes, he's tricky, but so am I," said Oliver with a smile. "I owe a huge thank you to my staff and to my dad, who rode him a lot at home and even had his front teeth knocked out by him, for putting up with him."

"He's a pain in the ass every day, but you have to accept him for what he is. He's one of the most talented horses in the yard and I'd rather have a talented, difficult one than a simple, moderate one." He also gave great credit to Imperial Master's owner, Val Ryan, for persisting with the horse.

The Master Imp 14-year-old finished on his dressage score of 40.2, 3.3pen ahead of Oliver's second ride ODT Sonas Roviato, who also completed on a clean sheet.

"He was off form at Burghley and he still didn't feel quite at his best [on the cross-country] yesterday," said Oliver. "But he's such a genuine trier that he came out and showjumped like a stag today."

Sarah Ennis tipped one pole on Miriam Cunning's Sugar Brown Babe to take third — the Porsche mare's fourth top-three three-star placing of the year.

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Oliver Townend on the CIC*** winner Imperial Master



Oliver Townend wins the CIC*** on Imperial Master, setting himself up for a lucrative bonus if he can also win the CIC*** here next September

Sarah, who says that being left out of the Irish team for London 2012 "is still a sore subject", will aim Sugar Brown Babe at Badminton. She describes the mare as "really sweet — she'd live in your house".

She may have a second horse to

take to Badminton as well, in the shape of CCI*** winner BLM Diamond Delux. A year younger than his stable-mate at nine, he added two showjumping time-faults to his leading 45.2 dressage mark.

Sarah's own Olympic Lux

Therese van Rijckevorsel, who had her second child in May, takes the CCI* on Buzzy Bee Du Langwater



gelding was second in his first CCI*** at Camphre last month and has now topped that in his first CCI***.

"Everyone's trying to nobbie him off me, but unless someone offers me Lotto money, I'm keeping him," said the Co Meath-based rider.

Second to Sarah in the CCI*** was Katie O'Sullivan, who completed on her dressage score of 52 on another smart nine-year-old, Lowhill Blackout, by Carrick Diamond Lad.

Just behind her with 54.4pen was Constantin van Rijckevorsel and Butterfly Boy, shortlisted for the Belgian Olympic team this summer. He was another who was disappointed not to make it to Greenwich for what would have been his fourth Games.

Butterfly Boy is owned by Constantin's Swedish wife Therese, who also produced him to advanced level.

Therese gave birth to their second daughter, Tilda, on 9 May,

but managed to win the Heineken CCI* on her fourth event back in the saddle.

"I'm still breast-feeding," said a delighted Therese. "I just came here to have a fun ride round with no pressure."

She led all the way on Buzzy Bee Du Langwater, finishing on her dressage mark of 41.9 to beat her husband into second place on Gillian and Pippa Nicol's Rural Dean.

Buzzy Bee was bred by Therese's father-in-law Eric in Belgium and is a granddaughter of an Irish-bred mare the van Rijckevorsels bought at Dublin horse show in 1974.

Italian magic

THE international line-up of winners was completed by Vittoria Panizzon, who took the Mervue Equine Ireland CCI*** for Italy.

Vittoria and Merlots Magic tipped two poles in the showjumping, but her 39.6 dressage and faultless cross-



Vittoria Panizzon keeps her dressage lead with a faultless cross-country round and goes on to win the CCI***, despite two showjumps down on Merlots Magic

The home side's Sarah Ennis tops the CCI*** on the much-admired BLM Diamond Delux



country meant she held on to victory by 0.4pen.

"I know it's [showjumping] not his best phase, but I was hoping he'd be a little sharper," said Vittoria. "When he didn't feel terribly sharp, I perhaps rode a bit defensively."

She thought the Welton Chardonnay half-brother to the stallion Up With The Lark a couple of years ago, when she was short of rides beyond novice level.

"The reason I could afford him was because of his poor showjumping record," said

Vittoria. "He has improved a lot, though."

Vittoria came to pick up Merlots Magic's CCI*** qualification — mission accomplished — and filled the lorry up to make the trip worthwhile. River Vally Robert — who was at BE100 level a month ago — was fourth in the CCI*, and Vittoria's Hong Kong Olympics partner Rock Model was third after dressage in the CCI***.

But she withdrew "Bug" before cross-country as she didn't think he felt quite right.

"And he's already paid for himself by winning the Castlemartyr Dressage Challenge [invitational dressage class] and €1,000 on Tuesday," she said with a grin.

"I'm thrilled I came — it's a lovely, relaxed event in a wonderful setting. The courses were nice and flowing — even if there were a lot of banks and a lot of brush fences."

Oliver Townend, second and third in the CCI** on Skyhills Cavalier and DHI Bandit King — both of their dressage scores of 48 and 48.3 — said: "The Fell family do a tremendous job here. Every effort has been made to make things as comfortable as possible for the horses."

"The cross-country track has a real old-fashioned feel and it would do everybody good to come here twice a year — it makes you think and ride."

With few portables and a lot of natural fences such as banks, ditches, hedges and walls, the Ballindenisk tracks — designed by identical twins Andrew and Peter Fell — are imaginative and bold, demanding positive riding.

A brush into water at a fence 6 and a narrow hedge on a curving line to a corner at 12ab caused the majority of problems in the one-star. And a double of walls crossing the avenue and original offset ditch-brush skinned out some three-star riders out. H&H

First win Ciaran Glynn

"I've been second any number of times, but this is my first international win," said Ciaran Glynn after landing the Castlemartyr Resort CCI** on Craic.

For good measure, he was also second on Killossery Jupiter Rising. Craic, a son of Snurge, who ran five times for Jojo O'Neill, is now owned by Gerry Leahy and will now head to Benelux.

"He was like a wild bull at his first event, but it's amazing how quickly he settled to eventing — he's a really intelligent horse," said Ciaran, 29, who is due to marry his fiancée Emily Fleming this weekend.



Craic: from wild bull to winner

Results

JOHNSON & PERROTT LAND ROVER BALLINDENISK CCI*** — 1. BLM Diamond Delux (S Ennis) RL 45.20, 2.04, 2.2; 2. Lowhill Blackout (K O'Sullivan) RL 52.0, 0.52; 3. Butterfly Boy (C van Rijckevorsel) BEL 52.4, 2.0-54.4.
CIC*** — 1. Imperial Master (O Townend) GBR 40.0, 0.0, 0.2; 2. ODT Sonas Roviato (O Townend) 43.5, 0.0-43.5; 3. Sugar Brown Babe (S Ennis) 45.0, 0.5-50.
Merlots Magic (Panizzon) ITA 39.0, 0.8-47.6; 2. Skyhills Cavalier (O Townend) 48.0, 0.8-48.3; 3. DHI Bandit King (O Townend) 48.3, 0.0-58.3.
CIC** — 1. Craic (C Glynn) RL 51.0, 0.0-51.5; 2. Killossery Jupiter Rising (C Glynn) RL 41.2, 0.0-52.6; 3. Jell Breaker (B Morrison) RL 51.7, 0.41-53.1.
CCI* — 1. Buzzy Bee Du Langwater (C van Rijckevorsel) SWI 41.0, 0.0-51.9; 2. Rural Dean (C van Rijckevorsel) 46.7, 0.0-46.7; 3. Moximus Orietas (A Holden) RL 44.0, 0.8-44.8.
CCI* — 1. Porsche Bertram (G Guglielmi) ITA 49.0, 0.0-49.2; Capital Con (O Nolan) RL 57.9, 0.0-57.9; 2. Really Rich (S Roman) RL 50.6, 0.0-50.6.