

battle at WEG



outings to make sure we are right on target."

Izzy Taylor, who made her senior squad debut at the Europeans last year, has been selected on her Tattersalls CCI3* winner Allercombe Ellie.

Perhaps the most surprising call-up is for Oliver Townend on the relatively unknown Black Tie II, after the pair finished fourth at Luhmühlen.



Tina Cook and De Novo News have made the squad

"It was just a huge turn of fate," Oliver told *H&H*.

The 13-year-old Black Tie — owned by Karyn Shuter — was originally meant to run at Saumur, but was rerouted to "have a go" at Luhmühlen.

There was speculation that Oliver would be selected on this year's Badminton runner-up Armada.

"Armada is very consistent now," Oliver said. "But I have two horses that are great at that level so I am not worried. I am just glad that I am going."

Oliver last represented Britain at the 2009 Europeans.

"I have sold a lot of good horses who could have potentially been team horses since then," he said.

The BEF will not announce the reserves until after the nominated entry date (21 July).

Comment

Surprises and balance

Pippa Roome
H&H eventing editor



I'm surprised not to see either Harry Meade or Gemma Tattersall named — it's funny to have no squad debutants when this looked like a year for new faces. That said, four of the six horses will be at their first championship, so maybe the selectors felt they needed to balance that with rider experience.

I wonder if part of the clue is in the quote from chef de mission Will Connell, which was on the press release. He emphasised that achieving qualification for 2016 — that is, finishing in the top six teams at WEG — is the "primary objective of the selection policy". Maybe this meant the selectors thought they should go for known riders, rather than take risks.

Also, don't forget that in the past decade there has only been one year when the British have not had to call on a reserve. Harry and Gemma have both tweeted they are reserves and, while no one wants those selected to suffer injury, statistically there is a 90% chance that one of them will go to WEG.

Looking ahead, Germany will definitely be favourites, their efforts spearheaded by Michael Jung. New Zealand are also strong; Australia and the USA have good chances, as does France. The Netherlands and Belgium could be the dark horses.