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Gatcombe Festival of British Eventing

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# Lush win for Paget

FESTIVAL OF BRITISH EVENTING  
PRESENTED BY BETA  
GATCOMBE PARK, GLOS  
2-4 August

By Catherine Austin

BADMINTON winner Jock Paget plucked another of British eventing's crown jewels when taking the British Eventing Open Championship with a consummate performance.

Riding Lucy Allison and Frances Stead's Clifton Lush, the 29-year-old New Zealander led the dressage on 37.3. He showjumped clear and came home with four cross-country time penalties after easing up in the final stages of the twisting track.

"I knew I had Bsec in hand over Andrew [Nicholson, second after dressage on Nereo], so I had planned to go into the time and the margin was too tight to be clever," said Jock. "After I had been going for 4min I heard that



Oliver Townend enjoys a fantastic round on Armada to finish 10sec inside the time and be crowned British national champion

something had happened to Andrew, so I knew I had 15sec over Oliver [Townend, third after dressage on Armada] and was able to cruise home from there."

He continued: "I really wanted this. I had some targets for the year — Badminton, which went to plan; Luhmühlen, which didn't as I had to withdraw after dressage; Aachen, where I made a mistake across country; Gatcombe, Burghley and Pau."

He plans to run both Clifton Lush and Badminton hero Clifton Promise at Burghley and is clearly the man Andrew Nicholson and

William Fox-Pitt have to beat. But the three also have a serious rival in Oliver Townend. He finished second on Paul Ridgdon's Armada, having flown round a heart-stopping 10sec inside the time to complete on his 43.1 dressage score.

"I couldn't believe it when I looked at my watch coming out of the water — I was a minute faster there than I'd ever been before at Gatcombe," he said.

Oliver described Armada, who has the gallop of a leopard and the heart of a lion, as "a freak-like horse".

## INFLUENTIAL SHOWJUMPING

GATCOMBE'S showjumping tracks are often influential, built big and situated in an undulating ring. Here are the stats:

- Open championship: 22 clears out of 47
- Intermediate championship: 17 clears out of 73
- Novice championship: 21 clears out of 61
- Advanced: 24 clears out of 64

Pictures by Peter Nixon

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Jock Paget rides a tactical round on Clifton Lush to add the British Open Championship to his Badminton win back in May



Emily King finishes third in the advanced on Brookleigh in high-class company



Andrew Hoy pilots Contendro son Cheeky Calimbo round the British open track for fourth place

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Oliver Townend on his ride on Armada

showjumping has been the chink in his armour recently, but Sam has high hopes of both Happy Times and 12th-placed Paulank Brockagh at Burghley.

Andrew Hoy and Cheeky Calimbo looked confident in fourth, adding a smattering of time-faults to their 44 dressage score. Andrew will aim the 11-year-old Contendro gelding at either Blenheim CCI3\* or Boekelo CCI3\* before tackling a four-star in 2014.

A new face in this illustrious company was that of 21-year-old Wills Goodhew. The Royal Agricultural College student made his debut in this class by leapfrogging from 32nd after dressage to fifth by adding nothing to his 54.4 dressage score. He rode his mother Pella's



Paul Tapner finishes third in the novice championships on the Mayhill nine-year-old Pioneer Milly

Treflan Quicksilver, on whom he was second in the CCI3\* at Blair last year.

"He's a big [17.2hh] horse with a long stride, but he isn't strong so you can keep pushing down to fences," Willis said. "He was pretty spot on to everything and a pleasure to ride."

Willis won the Worshipful Company of Saddlers' saddle for the best under-25 rider and the £1,000 Horse Trials Support Group bursary, which he plans to spend training with Angela Tucker.

Andrew Nicholson finished sixth on Rosemary and Mark Barlow's Avebury.

The Kiwi, who has been on fantastic form since he won the open here two years ago on Nereo, had a mixed weekend.

Of his three rides in this class, first Viscount George threw in the towel with two stops at the brightly coloured mushroom at the top of the park bowl.

Then Andrew clouted his left arm on the flagpole attached to the boat that formed the second element of the Exuey China Water Complex at 22ab when riding a stylish round on Avebury.

Finally, the magnificent Nereo picked up only the third cross-country jumping penalty of his nine-year career when stopping at 22a, the drop into the water. It looked as if one of them had an extremely rare moment of indecision and Nereo put down at the base of the fence rather than picking his legs up.

Andrew also fell with Quimbo in Saturday's advanced section and a third place in the intermediate championship on Tesoo is unlikely to have been enough to make the drive home a chatty one. His rivals will just have been relieved that he is human after all.

Beanie Sturgis headed the girls' team in the open, whipping round the cross-country inside the time to finish on her 55 dressage mark on Lebowski for seventh place. Aoife Clark chased her in eighth on the nine-year-old

## British open champion Clifton Lush

IN 2007 Clifton Lush fell in the field and broke nine thoracic vertebrae — in other words, his withers. He was not allowed to lie down or roll for six months and, Jock says, is 2in shorter than before his accident.

"He has no wither now and there's not a lot in front of you when you get on, but he's this little horse who just pins his ears back and goes for it," said Jock.

The 13-year-old New Zealand thoroughbred was evented by Joe Meyer until 2011 and completed Luhmühlen and Pau CCI4\*s.

Jock took over in 2011 and won Bramham's CIC3\* on him. They were third in the British open here at Gatcombe and then fifth at Burghley — a result they repeated in 2012. Clifton Lush finished 14th behind his stablemate Clifton Promise at Badminton this year.

"For him to win this is very special because he's been knocking on the door for a long time and deserves one," said Jock.



Fernhill Adventure takes second in the novice final, the jewel in the crown of a great weekend for Aoife Clark

Tom McEwen, ran in the advanced class. Lucy was eighth on Simon Porloe and Tom jumped a steady double clear on Diesel. William Fox-Pitt and Lionheart are heading for Hartpury this weekend.



Andrew Nicholson finishes third in the intermediate championships on Tesoo, another Spanish-bred star

A fifth intermediate title WILLIAM FOX-PITT won the Smith & Williamson British Intermediate Championship for the fifth time. Following in the footsteps of Mr Beluga (1997), Tamarillo (2000), Tom Cruise II (2003) and Macchiato (2006) comes Carol Gee and Catherine Witt's Fernhill Pimms.

The pair led the dressage on 23.9, were faultless in the showjumping ring and quick enough cross-country for 3.6 time-faults.

Fernhill Pimms, an Ard VDL Douglas nine-year-old, was ridden by Portugal's Duarte Seabra until this season.



Bettina Hoy collects her first Gatcombe title with victory in the novice championships on Seigneur Medicoct

"I haven't had him very long and it hasn't been completely plain sailing," said William. "We had an unexplained limp at Tattersalls [he was second after dressage in the CCI2\* and ran past a log fence], but he's been very good in his runs since. I came here with more confidence — and he was superb."

"He's a confident, bonny little person, very clever, and I really enjoy riding him. This was a big step up and he made it feel easy."

Oliver Townend was second again on Angela Hislop's smart Ramiro B eight-year-old Cooley Master Class. They were the fastest of the section with two time-faults across country — and had two time-faults in the showjumping.

Andrew Nicholson and his own and Philip Channer's seven-year-old Tesoo were third.

Sara Squires finished fourth on Francine Fenley's thoroughbred stallion Sula Blue, who is by the National Hunt sire Sula Bula out of an Ascertain mare.

Fifth was Pippa Funnell on Jaroslav Hatla's Second Supreme, with Amy Crerar sixth. Amy is on a roll — she and Fernhill Rockstar were part of the silver medal-winning British team at the recent European CCI2\* Championships in Austria (report, 1 August).

"The easiest horse I've had" "THIS could be my Rio horse," said Bettina Hoy (see box, above right) after she won the British Eventing Novice Championship on Gerd Horst's Seignur Medicoct.

She headed the dressage with the seven-year-old on a mark of 26.2 and had enough breathing space for 2.4 time-faults across country after showjumping clear.

"He's by far the easiest horse I have ever had," she said. "He goes in one bit for all three phases; I go to events on my own with him —

he's just so well behaved." Aoife Clark had an excellent run — she brought four horses to Gatcombe and all finished in the top 10. Her best placing was second in the novice final on the seven-year-old Fernhill Adventure, who just tipped a rail

showjumping and was 15sec over the cross-country time allowed for a score of 31.8.

Round off the weekend, her groom Hollie Bradshaw was awarded the groom's prize.

The next three riders finished on their dressage scores. Paul Tapner was third on Pioneer Milly with 33.3, Carlos Paro took fourth for Brazil on 34.4 with Summon Up Theblood and Angus Smales ended up fifth on A Bit Much.

Austin O'Connor and Kilpatrick Knight were sixth.

An easy advanced win WILLIAM FOX-PITT managed to go wrong in his dressage test on Christopher Stone's Chilli



Sara Squires takes fourth in the intermediate on the stallion Sula Blue



All weathers: the King family at prize-giving (left), while crowds enjoy the sun (below)



Young rider Dani Evans sticks on as Raphael II plunges into the water



What a view: looking down to Gatcombe



Helping British Open champions Andrew Nicholson and Nereo give up their title with a stop

## First Gatcombe win Bettina Hoy

SHE'S been European champion and has multiple championship medals but, despite having been based at Gatcombe for well over a decade, her novice championship victory on Seigneur Medicoct was her first at the event.

Bettina's best placing previously was second in the open championship on Watermill Stream in 1999.

"It's very special riding here — I know every stone," she said.

Bettina bought Seigneur Medicoct, who is by the thoroughbred sire Seigneur D'Alley out of a Trakehner mare, late in his five-year-old year, from a showjumping yard.

"I saw him trot one circle and thought that if he had a half-decent jump, I'd have to have him," she said.



Sam Griffiths' ride Happy Times looks to be coming back to his best with third in the British open

William Fox-Pitt tops the intermediate final with Fernhill Pimms: 'A confident, bonny little person'



We're flying: Wills Goodhew, 21, lifts the under-25 prizes in the British open with fifth on Treflan Quicksilver

He's by far the easiest horse I have ever had. He goes in one bit for all three phases. I go to events on my own with him — he's just so well behaved

Bettina Hoy on British novice champion Seigneur Medicoct

Morning in the advanced section and still win.

"I'd already done the test twice — I just got carried away!" said William. "He scored a Carl Hester-like 24.8."

Eight time-faults across country couldn't keep them off the top spot.

The chestnut stallion is entered for Burghley and William is hoping to be able to wipe their retirement in Kentucky this spring from the slate.

"He's better when he feels like he is in charge and I have to go with the flow a bit," he said. "This was a good track to ride him round, as I haven't ridden him on [such undulating] terrain and it will be good experience before Burghley."

Oliver Townend proved the

weekend's perennial bridesmaid, taking second place for the third time. He rode ODT Ghareeb, whom he described as "very green at this level".

Oliver said: "I really like him, but he is quite spooky still. His flying changes really are flying, with lots of squealing and messing about. He has all the attributes of a top horse, though."

The nine-year-old is by the recently deceased thoroughbred Ghareeb.

"I saw Ghareeb in the flesh and he was a very small-boned blood horse — but all the ones I've seen by him are elephants," said Oliver. "But they seem to have the quality and class to cope with their size."

Emily King took third, riding with maturity and poise beyond her 17 years. She and Brookleigh jumped a double clear with 5.6 time-faults to end on 37, one mark ahead of Tom McEwen and Dry Old Party.

Despite plenty of rain throughout Saturday and Sunday, Gatcombe's free-draining turf held up well.

"It was amazing how good the ground was, given the rain, the terrain and the amount of horses who had been round it," said Jock Paget, who was the final rider of the weekend on the cross-country with Clifton Lush. H&H

## Results

FESTIVAL OF BRITISH EVENTING, PRESENTED BY BETA  
British Open Ch CCI3\* — 1, Clifton Lush (J Paget) 37.3, 4, Cooley 3.2, Armada (O Townend) 43.1, 0.0=43.1, 3, Happy Times (S Griffiths) 43.8, 4.0=43.2, 2, British Int Ch — 1, Fernhill Pimms (W Fox-Pitt) 23.9, 0, 3.0=27.2, 2, Cooley Master Class (O Townend) 25.1, 2.0=27.3, Tesoo (A Nicholson) 30.0, 3.0=33.0, 2, British Nov Ch — 1, Seigneur Medicoct (B Hoy) 26.2, 0.0=26.2, 2, Fernhill Adventure (A Clark) 27.4, 0.0=27.4, 3, Pioneer Milly (P Tapner) 33.3, 0.0=33.3, 4, Chilli Morning (W Fox-Pitt) 24.8, 0.0=24.8, 2, ODT Ghareeb (O Townend) 32.7, 1.6=34.3, 3, Brookleigh (E King) 31.4, 0.0=31.4