

# Double delight takes while to sink in for Townend

HIS spectacular win at the Land Rover Burghley Horse Trials at the weekend hasn't sunk in yet and Oliver Townend sounds as if he is still in shock.

Winning Badminton with Flint Curtis had given him enough to celebrate but to follow this with victory at Burghley with Carousel Quest left him almost lost for words and has put the Yorkshire rider firmly at the top of his class.

"It's the first time I've gone to Burghley with a fighting chance of winning. He's such a top class horse, it's just a matter of pressing the right buttons," said Oliver. "He always tries his best and he could cope with everything."

"He can be a bit fragile at times, both physically and mentally, but on a good day he is unbeatable."

Huddersfield-born Oliver, 26, has been riding the horse for a year and he paid tribute to Cressida Clague-Reading who originally produced him.

"She applied the buttons, all I had to do was push them," he added.

"It just went our way all week. The dressage was good. I was a bit slow on the cross-country, but in the end it didn't matter."

He finished eight penalties ahead of the 49 riders who completed and was close to tears as



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he completed the showjumping and knew he had won.

He took home the Land Rover Perpetual Trophy and £55,000 in prize money, a welcome boost since he bought his farm at Ellesmere in Shropshire in November.

The same month he won the biggest-ever eventing prize in this country – £100,000 – riding Flint Curtis in the inaugural Express Eventing International Cup.

His Burghley win keeps him ahead in the HSBC FEI Classics rankings which finishes at Etoilles de Pau in France next month and also puts him in the running for a Rolex Grand Slam in Lexington, Kentucky next May, which are worth £91,000 and £213,000 respectively.



**DOUBLE DELIGHT:** Huddersfield-born Oliver Townend celebrates after winning the Burghley Horse Trials, adding to his Badminton success earlier this year.

This weekend he will be competing at Blair Horse Trials riding the nine-year-old ODT Master Rose and then his attention will be firmly focussed on the HSBC FEI European Championships at Fontainebleau at the end of this month where he will be in the British team riding Flint Curtis.

After that, says Oliver, it might be just about time to organise "a bit of a do" to celebrate his dual Badminton-Burghley win.

**WATCH** jockeys schooling over hurdles and fences, see race-

horses being re-trained and watch the South Yorkshire Mounted Police in action.

These are just some of the events which will be on show when the Northern Racing College at Doncaster holds its annual Open Day on Sunday.

The charity event is the college's biggest fund-raiser of the year and is organised by the Friends of the Northern Racing College.

The day will also include pony racing and Arabian racing, the

Grove Hunt Pony Club mounted games and a chance to meet the John Smith's People's Race riders from this year's race.

There will be practical demonstrations as well from an equine dentist and a farrier and advice from an equine nutritionist.

Prizes for a silent auction include a trip to the Coolmore Stud in Ireland, a private tour of Sheikh Mohammed's Dalham Hall Stud at Newmarket and a visit to Alan King's Barbury Castle stables in Wiltshire.