Two Irish in top 10

IT was great to see Aoife Clark spearheading the Irish effort after some recent tough times, with a fall and a yellow card at Burghley last year and the recent decision to return double CCI3* winner Fenyas Elegance to her owner.

She rode with sense and style all week to bring Henrietta, Duchess of Bedford's ex-racehorse Vaguely North into eighth.

She was chased home by Michael Ryan and Ballylynch Adventure in ninth. He added just 1.2 cross-country time faults to his 48th-placed dressage score.

There were five other Irish completions, including Joseph Murphy who took the Glentool Trophy for the biggest rise after dressage when he moved up from equal 70th to 25th on Sportsfield Othello.

1st William Fox-Pitt on Chilli Morning (GBR)

2nd Ingrid Klimke on Horseware Hale Bob (GER)

3rd Jock Paget on Clifton Lush (NZL)

Above left: Aoife Clark pilots Vaguely North into eighth, equalling her 2013 result here

Above right: Jock Paget clears the Sandhill Excelsior on Clifton Lush for third

here," declared William.

The Chilli story is that of the greatest eventing stalliion ever and we surely won't see his like again. Bred by Rainer Schicketanz and found in Germany by Nick Gauntlett as a potential London 2012 horse, the Phantomic son did his first four-star with Nick before the owner decided to see how the horse might go for a different rider. They chose Mary Kino, who soon suggested William try him, as he was such a big horse for her.

The match has already resulted in world and European individual bronze medals and now makes Chilli the first stallion to win a four-star — except for Windfall it's victory in the experimental short-format section at Kentucky in 2004 — and the first to win Badminton.

The only blip on William and Chilli's record is a stop at Kentucky 2013 and after that, William knew he had to let this alpha male feel he is the dominant partner at least some of the time. When he looks argumentative across country, it means all is going well.

"He's an exceptional horse and he is handicapped by being a stallion, which makes his life very difficult," said William. "He has a brilliant brain and every day he wants to work. I'm very proud of him. Nick deserves the credit — he did a fantastic job producing him for all those years."

Chilli is 15 now and will not compete again this year. He has his Olympic qualification and, in a plan agreed with British eventing performance manager Yogi Breisner, he will have a holiday and come out next year to do some CIC3*s and "see if we're still good enough" to be selected for Rio.

A three-way fight

UNTIL the last gasp, this was a battle royal between the three men who have dominated the national sport for a decade — William, Andrew Nicholson and Oliver Townend.

New Zealander Andrew was the dressage leader on Deborah Sellar's long-term campaigner Nereo, by Fines, and it seemed like he might be the first one to close it out since Lucinda Fredericks in 2007. If William's long gap between Badminton wins seems like an aberration, Andrew's lack of a single one in a record 35 completions is even more of a talking point.

After cross-country he said: "Normally Nereo's a good showjumper and I don't see why he should lose that ability overnight."

But somehow, it all went wrong on Sunday and Andrew sank to sixth.

"Life goes on, tomorrow is the next day," he said. "There's not much point being suicidal about it. A lot worse things happen to people."

Oliver hovered in third until Sunday on Paul Ridgeon's Armada — Nereo's full brother, who was produced by Andrew until he passed on the ride in 2012. The 16-year-old has supreme ability, but is very difficult and that the rider gets so much from him is down to a huge investment of time and thought. Dreams fell apart this year on the last day as he tumbled to 11th.

"We know he's tricky in the dressage and near impossible in the showjumping, but we won't stop trying with him, that's for sure," said Oliver after his cross-country.

Klimke and Paget rise to podium

THE last-day shuffle gave the podium places to Germany's Ingrid Klimke and another Kiwi, Jock Paget.

Ingrid was the only rider apart from William to finish on her dressage score, riding her own Horseware Hale Bob. The Helikon-sired Pau winner was so close to becoming the first German rider Badminton winner.

"I'm happy I won him so no one can sell him," said the 47-year-old, also second here in 2006 with Sleep Late.

Jock thought he had a better chance with the 2013 Badminton winner Clifton Promise, but it was Frances Stead and Lucy Allison's Clifton Lush who came third.

"When I saw the draw (with Promise early and Lush late) my initial reaction was that sucks, because Promise is my winner, but then I thought my second horse is a winner too, so this could be all right. I'm lucky," he said.

Lush, a little thoroughbred by Half Iced, had last year off injured and is an unlikely star.

"If you saw him at home or in the warm-up you'd weak straight past, but when you take him in the arena he can do everything," said Jock. "Warming up you think he's going to hunt every fence down. It's unsettling, but when you go in he is such a professional."

Another New Zealander took fourth when Diane Brunsden and Peter Cattell's 11-year-old Leonidas II fulfilled his promise for Mark Todd, while Bettina Hoy was the second German in the top echelons with fifth on her own Designer 10.

"I've been based with Willa Newton since April. Thanks go to the Newtons for a great base and putting me in the right frame of mind," said Bettina.

Wilson on the up again

NICOL A WILSON was seventh on One Two Many, who belongs to Gerry and Mary Kemp and Janine Shewan. This promising horse was produced by Bill Levett, joining Nicola in 2013.

"He's enjoyed every minute," said Nicola, who must be a shoe-in for the Blair Europeans with this horse or Annie Clover, eighth at Kentucky.

The Yorkshire rider was also fourth on Valerie and Ann Robson's coloured mare Beltane Queen.

After Armada (11th), Pippa Funnell was the next best Brit on Roger and Denise Lincoln's Redesigned in 12th.

"He's very dear to my heart, but he owes the owners and me a good result," said Pippa after her dressage on "Red", who flipped her off on both his four-star runs last year. "He's the most relaxed horse to do, but he can turn into a monster. I hope he doesn't do that on Saturday."

Gemma Tattersall, 16th, is another Brit who should have secured her Blair spot, despite showjumping disapointment on Arctic Soul.

Ireland (see box, p39) and Australia were also in the money — Sam Griffiths completed the top 10 on 2014 winner Paulank Brockagh, who picked up the best mare Beaufort Embryo Transfer Centre prize.

Pictures by www.horseandhound.co.uk, Peter Neave and Jon Stroud Media

Pictures by Lucy Herrod

WORKAHOLIC WETTSTEIN

NICOLAS WETTSTEIN, who finished his first Badminton in 56th place on Nadeville De Merze, was born in Switzerland but now rides for Ecuador, his ex-wife's nation.

"I went there and loved the country — there's more sun than Switzerland!" he said. "When I got the opportunity to ride for Ecuador I wanted to develop the sport there. They have some young riders and I now train them, going there six times a year. We aim to have a team at this year's Pan American Games."

The 34-year-old describes himself as a workaholic — he competes four horses, manages a stable of 40 horses and works full time for pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, being responsible for sales in French-speaking Switzerland.

Nicolas' ride Nadeville De Merze exploded in the dressage at the World Equestrian Games last year, but here he looked remarkably calm.

"I gallop him a lot," he said, by way of explanation.

Below: Germany's Bettina Hoy rides with the best of her determination and talent to bring Designer 10 home in fifth place

DRESSAGE

PLACINGS AFTER DRESSAGE

1st Andrew Nicholson on Nereo (NZL)

2nd William Fox-Pitt on Chilli Morning (GBR)

3rd Oliver Townend on Armada (GBR)

Nereo hangs on to lead

An early 37.8 from Andrew Nicholson and Nereo is unchallenged across the dressage days

IT is eight years since a Thursday dressage leader has held their advantage at the close of play (see box, p46). But Mark Todd pointed out in his *H&H* column (7 May) that this year many riders had their best horse drawn first and so it played out, with Andrew Nicholson — the 12th starter — holding on until the bitter end.

Andrew scored 37.8 with Nereo, collecting five nines. Highlights included the extended paces — a masterclass in riding a fit horse for the most possible marks.

"Nereo's very switched on, but knows to be calm," said Andrew. "Avebury (triple Burghley winner who missed Badminton after an early-season injury) is the sort who could go early and get a good score, while Nereo has to work for his marks — but I felt he was judged fairly today."

The judges were not entirely in agreement — while Christian Landolt (C) and Sue Baxter (H) placed Andrew first, David Lee (B) put him equal sixth. Some of David's flying-change marking was also out on a limb, with Andrew garnering a seven for the first one from him but four and 4.5 from the others.

Jock Paget was second on Thursday with Clifton Promise, on 41.2.

"That was one of his best tests," he said. "Every foot was where I wanted it."

By Friday night, Promise sat sixth, one place behind his stablemate Clifton Lush (40.8), returning from 18 months off injured.

The youngest rider, 20-year-old German Niklas Bschorer was Thursday's surprise sensation at his first Badminton, scoring 42.1 with Tom Tom Go 3 for eventual eighth.

"He's like a pony in the stable — he's sneaky, always undoing your zip and playing around," said Niklas.

Flora Harris was the best Brit on Thursday with the talented but tricky Amazing VIII. Her 43.6 gave her 13th.

"She's not a horse you can work into the ground or dominate — it's a case of having her connected and straight," said Flora. "Andrew Fletcher, my dressage trainer, has given me skills to train horses, not just ride tests."

Chilli's changes

THE most anticipated test was William Fox-Pitt's, late on Friday. But while Chilli Morning produced some beautiful work, he jogged coming out of the extended walk and was late behind in the first two flying changes — scoring fours from Sue and Christian, but a seven and eight from David.

"Not good enough!" said William ruefully as he took second on 39. "He's usually solid in the changes, but horses are not machines. He hasn't even had a jog walking round the park, so it's annoying he chose the arena for his first break."

Oliver Townend was thrilled with Armada, who relaxed for the first time here for third on 39.6.

"He's an old man now, so hopefully he's calming down," said Oliver.

Germany's Ingrid Klimke took fourth on Horseware Hale Bob, whose only mistakes were in the mid-test walk tour. He hunted as a young horse, and was distracted by hearing hounds.

Paul Tapner was disappointed with pathfinder Kilronan, who was second after dressage last year but plaifed in the halts for equal 27th. But he landed seventh on Badminton debutant Indian Mill, a thoroughbred from Northern Ireland's Scarvagh House Stud — also responsible for Calico Joe, who slotted into 12th with Andrew Nicholson.

Bettina Hoy was ninth on Designer 10, who "tried so hard" as he is not a natural dressage star, while Aoife Clark and Vaguely North did a four-star personal best (42.9) for 15th.

Tina Cook claimed 11th on De Novo News, who was distracted in walk by seeing himself on screen.

"I don't know why he was so vain!" said Tina, who trialled a double bridle to flatter his "big head and weak neck".

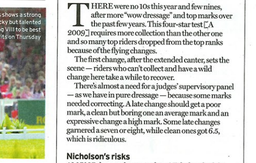
Above: Oliver Townend scores two sevens and a 7.5 for this flying change with Armada

Below: Germany's Niklas Bschorer, 20, lies eighth after the dressage on Tom Tom Go 3

Pictures by Peter Neave

Thursday's leaders at Badminton over the years

Year	Thursday's leaders	Placing after Friday dressage
2015	Andrew Nicholson (NZL)	First
2014	Paul Tapner/Kilronan (AUS)	Second
2013	Christopher Burton/ Holstein Park Leilani (AUS)	Ninth
2012	Event cancelled	
2011	Laura Collett/Rayef (GBR)	Third
2010	Ruth Edge/Two Theme (GBR)	Second
2009	Emily Baldwin/Drivetime (GBR)	Fourth
2008	Clayton Fredericks/Nullabor (AUS)	Fifth
2007	Lucinda Fredericks/Headley Britannia (AUS)	First



Flora Harris's shows a strong test on the tricky but talented mare Amazing VIII to lay best of the Brits on Thursday

Bill Levett and Shamondale Titan, who Carl Hester picked as the best mover, are equal 15th

COMMENT

Carl Hester

'Some marks needed correcting'

THERE were no 10s this year and few nines, after more "wow dressage" and top marks over the past few years. This four-star test [A 2009,] requires more collection than the other one and so many top riders dropped from the top ranks because of the flying changes.

The first change, after the extended canter, sets the scene — riders who can't collect and have no wild change here take a whole to recover.

There's almost a need for a judges' supervisory panel — as we have in pure dressage — because some marks needed correcting. A late change should get a poor mark, a clean but boring one an average mark and an expressive change a high mark. Some late changes garnered a seven or eight, while clean ones got 6.5, which is ridiculous.

Nicholson's risks

AMONG the top players Andrew Nicholson had the ridesibility factor — he took risks, as he does across country, and it paid off. William Fox-Pitt's Chilli Morning has more lightness and he could have led without the mistakes in the changes. And it was great to see Oliver Townend's ride Armada finally become submissive without losing his sparkle.

Ingrid Klimke was impressive as Horseware Hale Bob is not the best mover. Young riders should aspire to emulate her softness and good position. I felt Jock Paget was slightly underranked on Clifton Lush, but to be fifth and sixth was quite something.

Titan was the best mover

I would take Bill Levett's Shamondale Titan as a horse for the future. He was the best mover and his springy trot, with a clear moment of suspension, deserved better marks. He could be mistake-free and show better self-carriage he could score in the 20s, something we see too rarely for a whole.

The young German Niklas Bschorer is a lovely rider and it was nice to see Louisa Milne Home hit the 40s with King Elder after steady improvement each year. Paul Tapner is a top rider — both his horses were between leg and hand and Indian Mill showed lots of potential. Let's hope Laura Collett's Grand Manoeuvre can fulfill his promise and also Flora Harris' Amazing VIII, who showed the best combination in extended trot.

The take-home message? Flying changes have returned as a weakness in eventing dressage, having improved since they were first introduced. The placing of them is difficult in this test and I'm not sure if it's the best arrangement for fit horses, who have to deal with quite a difference between the warm-up and competition atmosphere. **H&H**

PLACINGS AFTER CROSS-COUNTRY

1st Andrew Nicholson on Nereo (NZL)

2nd William Fox-Pitt on Chilli Morning (GBR)

3rd Oliver Townend on Armada (GBR)

France's Pascal Leroy steers Minos De Petra through the corners at the Irish Sport Horse Huntsmans Close on the way to 17th place

The course hits just the right note, with enough excitement and excellent pictures, as the top guns produce fault-free rounds

THE riders agreed with the pre-event publicity that Giuseppe della Chiesa had softened the course from his 2014 creation, which returned cross-country to its rightful influence but decimated the field. More let-up fences had appeared and the course was less intense in the Vicarage Vee area.

Ground was a huge factor last year, which looked unlikely this time, and the track is kinder on horses running anticlockwise.

"The pulls up to Huntsmans Close and The Quarry at the end are tiring going clockwise (as last year)," said Andrew Nicholson. "This way you can have a tired horse at eight minutes and not get into too much difficulty."

Some competitors lamented the loss of traditional feature fences — the Vicarage Vee was missing — while the big question was whether the track would now prove too soft. Honestly, who'd be a course-designer?

'I ran over the steward's toes'

EARLY indications suggested the test would be too easy. Eleven of the first 12 riders recorded clears, despite Nicola Wilson and One Two Many contending with a steward on their line at the Gatehouse New Pond (fence 20).

"I shouted: 'Excuse me, excuse me,' then luckily he took a stride back and I ran over his toes," joked Nicola, who is one of the poliest riders around — how many would say "excuse me" in this situation?

Jock Paget and Clifton Promise's 6.4 time-faults cost him four places to drop to 10th. The first pairs inside the time were Ireland's Joseph Murphy on Sportsfield Othello, who moved up from equal 70th to 28th, and New Zealand's Jonelle Price with Classic Moet, who rose 35 places to 25th.

Mark Todd said he took a few too many pulls on the turn between the World Horse Welfare Garden Gates (fence 23ab), but his 1.2 time-faults

Ingrid Klimke (in neoprene) becomes the first German to win Badminton, but settles for second with a brilliant all-round performance on Pau winner Horseware Hale Bob

Pictures by Peter Neave and Lucy Herrod

INFLUENTIAL FENCE

THE Mirage Pond (fence 18abc) caught out nine combinations. The straight route consisted of three angled hedges, one before and two after the pond. The first distance could be ridden on five or six strides, but many of those who put six strides in struggled to make the single stride between parts b and c — and lots who chipped in two here ran out at part c.

Those who were successful on six and two included Ingrid Klimke (Horseware Hale Bob) and Pascal Leroy (Minos De Petra).

Among the victims, Dee Hankey had a run-out and was then eliminated for jumping the wrong side of a flag — but didn't realise and continued to come through the finish on Chequers Playboy — while Joseph Murphy walked off course after three run-outs at part c on Electric Cruise. Louise Harwood was left ruing taking advice after her drive-by on Mr Potts.

"I stupidly spoke to someone in front I went out who told me it was riding better on six than five," she said. "That made me a bit backward — I should have gone with my original plan of going on five and one strides."

Michael Ryan and Ballylynch Adventure, who finished ninth, clear element b of the Mirage Pond

with Sligo Lucky vailer, while New Zealand's Caroline Powell came down jumping into the New Pond on Onwards And Upwards.

'Fortune favours the brave'

On the upside, Aoife Clark had a "dream ride" with Vaguely North. She made an unpanelised circle at the oxers and her 4.8 time-faults dropped her a place to 11th.

Bettina Hoy was receiving texts from team trainer Hans Melzer, who was at the German national championships at Marbach, and also heeded performance manager Christopher Bartle's advice: "Fortune favours the brave." She made it happen on the inexperienced Designer 10 to finish four seconds over the time and rise a place to eighth.

"I haven't been that fast for ages!" she exclaimed.

Three horses finished bang on the optimum time — Ringwood Sky Boy (up from 30th to 12th with Tim Price), Clifton Lush (who held fifth for Jock Paget) and Arctic Soul, to the relief of Gemma Tattersall, who bounded up 21 places to 13th.

"I had unfinished business from last year," she said, referring to being eliminated for missing a flag in Huntsmans Close.

Ingrid Klimke had a couple of hairy moments, but she rode in her customary free style and Horseware Hale Bob ran with it for a clear in the time. She retained fourth.

"It was wonderful, although I nearly had to jump a car," she said, explaining a vehicle was blocking the track.

Armada did some leaping approaching fences, but he and Oliver Townend seem to have an understanding where the rider allows him to make some decisions and he responds by letting Oliver make others.

"The younger riders are missing out on riding moderate horses round gaff tracks and learning to kick and squeeze. When you come here and ride a good horse it feels relaxing," he said, as he kept third.

In the closing stages, Paul Tapner piloted Indian Mill to a fault-free clear to move up a place to sixth, while Andrew Nicholson matched this on Calico Joe, who rose five ranks to seventh position.

He said: "Joe's terrified of coming across the field from the stables, then he doesn't want to cross the footbridge he's been using all week, but once he's out of the start box, he's a Ferrari."

He was followed by Chilli Morning, who gave William Fox-Pitt a "magic" ride to finish well under the 11min 27sec optimum while easing down.

"He is feisty, so while it's not

'He can turn into a monster,' said Pippa Funnell of Redesigned — but this year the horse let her ride him for 12th place

Pictures by Peter Neave

SHOWJUMPING

'It's in the lap of the gods'

An influential showjumping track shuffles the leaderboard, as William Fox-Pitt and Chilli Morning hold their nerve

FIVE were withdrawn before the final trot-up, including Flora Harris' Amazing VIII — who had looked unlevel walking away from the finish on Saturday — Izzy Taylor's KBIS Brialands Matilda, who had an overreach, and Jock Paget's Clifton Promise, who was feeling his 17 years and did not work off his stiffness as quickly as usual.

Kelvin Bywater's 13-fence showjumping track, which included a couple of 180° turnbacks, yielded only seven clears inside the time.

Four faults apiece from Sam Griffiths (Paulank Brockagh) and Aoife Clark (Vaguely North) propelled them into the top 10.

"He has struggled with this phase and I've been working with Robert Snaddon, a showjumper based near Aston-le-Walls," said Aoife. "Robert's helped me today — 'Jimmy' isn't an easy horse to start jumping on as he's not the most inspiring, but we take our time warming up until he's ready to jump a big fence."

Clears from Nicola Wilson (One Two Many) and Michael Ryan (Ballylynch Adventure) raised them more than 10 places each to seventh and ninth.

Paul Tapner's horses zoomed in opposite directions on the leaderboard. Kilronan performed far better than last year, when four down lost him the title, and just took the back bar off the oxer over the water to put fence eight. He rose from 22nd to 13th.

Paul said: "It was a relief when I saw the line of oxer to treble — it's been the horse's weakness, so we've spent the past few weeks practising it."

Indian Mill had four down, falling from sixth to 14th.

"It could have been worse — he's a young horse [10] and mentally and physically tired," said Paul.

Andrew Nicholson's first ride Calico Joe has a poor showjumping record and five down dropped him from seventh to 22nd. And Ringwood Sky Boy's three down, and associated slip from 12th to 15th under Tim Price, was no big surprise.

The atmosphere got to Arctic Soul in the dressage, he said.

"He gets tense in his neck, then he gets tight in his back and has the fences down behind," said a disappointed Gemma Tattersall, who also lost three places to wind up 16th.

'Almost a pure showjumper'

MARK TODD had a single time-fault to rocket up five places to fourth with Leonidas II. "He could almost have been a pure showjumper, he's got so much power and scope," he said.

Bettina Hoy was "a bit ambitious" in the four-stride line to the spread at fence 11 and had it down, but she moved from eighth to fifth on Designer 10.

Clifton Lush had this fence down too, which eventually gave him and Jock Paget a rise of two places to third. And once Ingrid Klimke, fourth overnight, had jumped a secure clear on Horseware Hale Bob the pressure was squarely on the top trio.

Armada was another sadly replicating his form; 16 faults dropped him to 11th.

Nicola Wilson showjumps clear on Minos De Petra and finish seventh on One Two Many

FINAL PLACINGS

1st William Fox-Pitt on Chilli Morning (GBR)

2nd Ingrid Klimke on Horseware Hale Bob (GER)

3rd Jock Paget on Clifton Lush (NZL)

Last year's winner Paulank Brockagh is the top mare in 10th place with Sam Griffiths

Pictures by Peter Neave

Picture by Jon Stroud Media

AIMING FOR A RECORD

SARAH STRETTON finished 50th on Skip On (below) and said that this third completion would be the horse's final Badminton.

The rider has a specific plan for the 16-year-old — she wants to do two more Burghleys with him. That would mean taking his total completions to seven and a new record this autumn (he is one of six horses with six finishes) and then to eight in 2016.

"That's why I won't bring him to Badminton next year, to save him for Burghley," she said. "Also, I want him to finish his career fit and sound, so my best friend Alice Brennan, who groms for me at all the events, can play with him at the lower levels."

"You can only do so much — ultimately that's why I have the ride on Armada," said Oliver Townend.

Then it was William Fox-Pitt's turn, after a "long, painful morning".

"I looked at Ingrid when I was warming up and even she looked nervous, so I thought, 'We're all the same,'" he said afterwards.

Chilli Morning looked keen a couple of times, but William rode him with the utmost tact for the clear.

Andrew Nicholson's fate lay in his hands, but the long-awaited title was not to be. There were gasps when Nereo blundered through the Rolex Grand Slam upright at fence two, and he lowered two more rails to finish sixth. "Perhaps I was a bit casual to the first," said Andrew. "I had to squeeze him a bit to get there and that panicked him, so he wasn't looking at the second. Then he feels he's done something wrong and gets strong."

Whatever the reason, the New Zealander had handed the trophy to his old foe. "It's in the lap of the gods when you're lying second," said William. "I can't believe it."

Picture by Jon Stroud Media

COMMENT

Mark Phillips

'How can we balance safety with influence?'

WHAT a difference there was between William Fox-Pitt's first Badminton win in 2004 on Tamarillo and this year's victory. Eleven years ago he was a minute over the time in the wet — and one of the fastest. This year in the sun William produced a truly classic round on Chilli Morning to be inside the time.

It was such a contrast from 12 months ago. Last year in the wind and rain, the time was impossible to make over a good but overly intense course, and only 35 completed. This year, with a plethora of let-up three-star fences, 62 of the 78 starters finished. There were 14 inside the time — I had predicted 15-20, but a further seven were within four seconds of the time, so I was not far out.

Actually, overnight rain had softened the ground just enough to make it slower for the early horses. It was noticeable how much better horses finished towards the end of the day.

Four-star course-design is not easy. I've been sick to the stomach trying to get it right for 25 years [see news, p10-11]. What Giuseppe della Chiesa did was understandable — a swing from the too difficult to the too easy. He can now build on this year's test and bring the cross-country back to a more central role.

I felt sorry for Hugh Thomas, Badminton director and now retired course-designer. Riders lambasted him two years ago for making the course too soft when he probably had Badminton's strongest field ever. This track was easier, but the riders strangely quiet, probably with relief after last year. It has to be said, though, that we were back to a principally dressage and showjumping competition.

Klimke's challenges

WHILE William thrilled the home crowd with his 54th three-day event win, you had to feel for Ingrid Klimke. Many thought she was hardly marked in the dressage; Horseware Hale Bob lost a shoe in the start box and she had centimetres to spare as she approached The Lake for the first time as two cars blocked the course. She scraped through between the back of a car and the people on the string, still managed to be within the time and jumped clear on Sunday.

That is all for the future though. For now we celebrate a great Badminton win for William. He claimed £80,000, but many celebrated with him as after six years, once again we had a British winner. **H&H**

Balancing safety and influence

THE scores were so tight that one fence covered the top five places, and the top 20 all had to jump clear to guarantee holding their place. Edge-of-the-seat stuff for TV and the packed stadium! But diehards will want the cross-country to have more influence.

Having said that, Saturday was a good day for the sport with a lot of horses finishing with a smile. But eventing continues to struggle with juggling safety and risk management with a more influential cross-country. I believe there will be more minimal requirements for four-stars in the future. I can easily see four-star fields being reduced to 70 or even 60 of the best. Five or six hours of cross-country is too long for many people and certainly for live TV.

I'm also a supporter of perhaps two penalties for knocking down a flag, although I think the five proposed by the FEI is too many. Designers would then, in fairness to the competitors, have to use fewer super-skinnies, which horses tend to jump in an ugly way. The pictures would also be better with fewer flags falling.

That is all for the future though. For now we celebrate a great Badminton win for William. He claimed £80,000, but many celebrated with him as after six years, once again we had a British winner. **H&H**

Bettina Hoy commandeers a skewbald pony for the parade, while Oliver Townend rode a police horse and William Fox-Pitt borrowed a grey hunter for the occasion

William Fox-Pitt with his wife Alice and children Chloe, Thomas, Emily and Oliver

Olivia Wilmot and Cool Dancer undergo the obligatory fault check after the dressage

Overall: final scoreboard

MITSUBISHI MOTORS BADMINTON HORSE TRIALS 2015

Final position	Horse and rider	Dressage	Cross-country	Jumping	Showjumping	Jumping	Total
1	Chilli Morning (William Fox-Pitt, GBR)	39	-	-	-	-	39
2	Horseware Hale Bob (Ingrid Klimke, GER)	40.2	-	-	-	-	40.2
3	Clifton Lush (Jock Paget, NZL)	40.8	-	-	4	-	44.8
4	Leonidas II (Mark Todd, NZL)	45.8	-	1.2	-	-	48
5	Designer 10 (Bettina Hoy, GER)	42.8	-	1.6	4	-	48.4
6	Nereo (Andrew Nicholson, NZL)	37.8	-	-	12	-	49.8
7	One Two Many (Nicola Wilson, GBR)	47	-	4	-	-	51
8	Vaguely North (Aoife Clark, IRL)	42.9	-	4.8	4	-	51.7
9	Ballylynch Adventure (Michael Ryan, IRL)	52.1	-	1.2	-	-	53.3
10	Paulank Brockagh (Sam Griffiths, AUS)	48.2	-	1.6	4	-	53.8
11	Armada (Oliver Townend, GBR)	39.6	-	-	16	-	55.6
12	Redesigned (Pippa Funnell, GBR)	46	-	4.4	4	2	56.4
13	Kilronan (Paul Tapner, AUS)	47.8	-	5.6	4	-	57.4
14	Indian Mill (Paul Tapner, AUS)	41.9	-	-	16	-	57.9
15	Ringwood Sky Boy (Tim Price, NZL)	48.1	-	-	12	-	60.1
16	Arctic Soul (Gemma Tattersall, GBR)	48.6	-	-	12	-	60.6
17	Minos De Petra (Pascal Leroy, FRA)	46.6	-	2.8	12	-	61.4
18	Shamondale Titan (Bill Levett, AUS)	45.8	-	8	8	-	61.8
19	Bellane Queen (Nicola Wilson, GBR)	50.9	-	1.2	8	2	62.1
20	Classic Moet (Jonelle Price, NZL)	54.9	-	-	8	-	62.9
21	Keyflow NOP (Tim Lips, NED)	51	-	8.4	4	-	63.4
22	Calico Joe (Andrew Nicholson, NZL)	43.5	-	-	20	-	63.5
23	Second Supreme (Pippa Funnell, GBR)	55.8	-	-	8	-	63.8
24	Boleybawn Ace (Andrew Heffernan, NED)	47.2	-	16.8	-	-	64
25	Sportfield Othello (Joseph Murphy, IRL)	58.4	-	-	8	-	66.4
26	Out Of Africa Two (Charlotte Agnew, GBR)	54.4	-	7.6	4	-	66.4
27	TS Jamaimo (Christopher Burton, AUS)	47.7	20	-	-	-	67.7
28	Grand Manoeuvre (Laura Collett, GBR)	46.2	-	14.4	8	-	68.6
29	Revo Du Rouet (Sarah Bullmore, GBR)	54.4	-	10.8	4	-	69.2
30	Euro Prince (Clare Abbott, IRL)	52	-	13.2	4	-	69.2
31	King Elder (Louisa Milne Home, GBR)	47.8	-	24	-	-	71.8
32	Gallery Light (Ben Way, GBR)	58.4	-	6.8	8	-	73.2
33	Rumour Has It (Merel Blaas, NED)	58.5	-	6.8	8	-	73.3
34	Horsegate Buckshaw (Sam Watson, IRL)	53.6	-	16	4	-	73.6
35	The Deputy (Jonelle Price, NZL)	48.3	-	1.2	24	1	74.5
36	Wil Limbo (Georgie Spence, GBR)	51.9	23.2	-	-	-	76.1
37	Tubber Rebel (Dag Albert, SWE)	59	-	13.6	4	-	76.6
38	Lets Dance (Jeanette Brakewell, GBR)	47.8	-	18	12	-	77.8
39	Grass Valley (Gabriel Silva Cary, BRA)	64.2	-	10	4	-	78.2
40	Portersize Juut A Jiff (Camilla Spairs, IRL)	49.8	20	4.4	4	-	78.2
41	Olisa (Mark Todd, NZL)	52.7	-	18	8	-	78.7
42	Thistledown Peppet (Izzy Taylor, GBR)	52.8	-	6	20	-	78.8
43	Greenlawn Sky High (Emily Llewellyn, GBR)	49.6	-	25.6	4	-	79.2
44	Ballyfarris Flight (Louisa Lockwood, GBR)	59.6	-	16.4	4	-	80
45	September Blue (Elizabeth Power, IRL)	53.2	-	-	28	-	82.8
46	Xam (Harry Dennis, GBR)	56.9	-	10	16	1	83.9
47	Finbar VIII (Hannah Bale, GBR)	57.2	-	12	16	-	85.2
48	Ashi (Alexander Peternell, RSA)	59.8	-	28	-	3	90.8
49	Gingersnack (Paul Sims, GBR)	56.2	-	15.6	24	1	96.8
50	Skip On (Sarah Stretton, GBR)	56.1	-	30.8	8	-	96.9
51	Hasty Imp (Francis Whittington, GBR)	48.8	20	24	12	-	104.8
52	Absolut Opposition (Nana Dalton, GBR)	51.8	20	24.4	8	1	105.2
53	Mr Pettis (Louisa Harwood, GBR)	54.4	20	25.8	12	2	115.2
54	Mutrys Emer (Ben Hobday, GBR)	57.1	-	36.8	28	3	124.9
55	Landino (Rose Carnegie, GBR)	54.2	20	42.8	12	-	129
56	Nadeville Merze (Nicolas Wettstein, ECU)	54.8	40	53.2	8	2	158
57	Wie Donna's Nilaumeed (Laurence Hunt, GBR)	60.8	20	66.8	16	2	165.6

Eliminated first here inspection – The Lion (Matthew Heath, GER);
Withdrawn before cross-country – King Temptress (Mary King, GBR); Cadoly Luxury (Tom Crisp, GBR); 55.6; El Grado (Nick Gauntlett, GBR); 58.4;
Retired cross-country – Mittbyne Corola (Andrew Heffernan, NED); 49; Fernhill Highlight (Francis Whittington, GBR); 48.2; Tom Tom Go 3 (Niklas Bschorer, GER); 42.1; The Highland Prince (Michael Owen, GBR); 51; Stile Familia (Giovanni Ligabotti, ITA); 52.3; Happy Times (Sam Griffiths, AUS); 47.5.
Eliminated on cross-country – Lanfranco (Andrew Hoy, AUS); 63.7; Lord Of The Owls (Julie Tew, GBR); 51.3; Just Ironic (Craig Nicola, NZL); 62.4; Chequers Playboy (Dee Hankey, GBR); 50.7; Cool Dancer (Olivia Wilmot, GBR); 54.1; De Novo News (Tina Cook, GBR); 47.1; Cadoly Luxury (Tom Crisp, GBR); 55.6; El Grado (Nick Gauntlett, GBR); 58.4.
Withdrawn after cross-country – Clifton Promise (Jock Paget, NZL); 41.2; 6.4; Lebowski (Beanie Sturgis, GBR); 59.8; 30.2; Amazing VIII (Flora Harris, GBR); 43.6; 20.7; 12; Willy De Luxy (Jackson, NZL); 45.7; 51.0; 4; KBIS Brialands Matilda (Izzy Taylor, GBR); 51.9; 0.0.

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