

# Townend Powers through

Masterful riding by Oliver Townend lands him and Power Drive the victory in the CIC2\*



Oliver Townend comes out best in a very tight tussle in the CIC2\*. **Melanie Scott** watches the action at Floors Castle

**O**LIVER TOWNEND was the man to beat at Floors Castle (15-17 May) when he topped the Cazenove CIC2\* with Power Drive.

Power Drive led after dressage, on 37.6, Nicola Wilson (Ngong Hills) came closest to him on 38.3, with Emily Parker third 0.3 of a penalty adrift on Treefers.

When Power Drive and Ngong Hills each made a showjumping mistake, Emily's clear took the lead.

Riders were treated to new courses that ran anticlockwise. The CIC2\* track had several questions near the start, and some big fences at the new water complex halfway round. There was plenty to think about with an oxer at the course's highest point, before turning downhill to another big oxer, over a hanging log into the water, then a corner on four strides.

Despite the horse's inexperience at this level, Oliver coaxed a masterful clear from Power Drive to return to the top after Emily's 3.6 time-penalties (see box, opposite page).

Nicola was the only rider who could

beat Oliver, riding Bulana, whose showjumping clear had propelled her above stablemate Ngong Hills. But when the mare left a leg coming into the water Nicola quickly opted for the alternative, meaning she finished two seconds over the time, allowing Oliver victory by 0.1 of a penalty.

"It's a serious course – it's a good two-and-a-half-star in places. If they jump round here then they're ready for anything," said Oliver, who will aim the eight-year-old at Hoptonun CCI2\*.

Nicola was pleased with second (Bulana) and fourth (Ngong Hills) places. "Bulana will be aimed at Bramham now," she said.

**Consolation for Postolowsky**  
MAKING amends after missing a fence on in the CIC2\*, Alex Postolowsky was thrilled to win the Arpal CIC\* with Judy Bradwell's Akolien after leading from the start. She also won the Burghley young event horse four-year-old qualifier with Graepa Nera.

Ridire Dorcha finished on his 38.9 dressage mark for second with Oliver Townend. This is the Limerick seven-

## TALKING POINT

FOUR new tracks greeted riders across the board, with Ian Stark in charge of the novice to international classes and Angus Smales looking after the BE100 and BE90 classes.

Ian, who was also in charge at Chatsworth, had a busy few days – driving to Chatsworth on Thursday morning before getting the train back to the Borders that evening. Straight after the CIC2\* prize-giving he was on a train again back to Derbyshire.

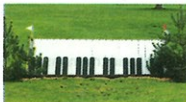
"It's been great fun to design a whole new course. I built big, bold fences with decent lines," explained Ian.

"We changed as much as we could, but next year I have plans to extend the distance and go further past the water."

The CIC2\* rode well with very few mistakes, but the piano keys at fence 3 in the CIC\* caused three retirements and an elimination.

The white fence with open ditch was approached from a blind summit and horses looked surprised to find a fence down the steep approach.

"I thought it was a big question," said winner Alex Postolowsky. Oliver Townend agreed, saying: "It was the only fence on the course I didn't like."



## AGAINST THE ODDS

EMILY PARKER was delighted with third in the CIC2\* with her "Pony Club pony" Treefers (below) after he missed the 2014 season.

"He tweaked a front leg at home and was off for the year," explained Emily, a former individual European young rider champion.

"He's like a pet, completely spoilt and so cheeky – he knows he's special. He was a bit wild today and nearly ran down the Duchess of Roxburghe in the showjumping warm-up," added Emily, who is aiming for Houghton CIC3\*.

Jamie Atkinson's third-placed OI ride Celtic Fortune also missed last season after tweaking a suspensory ligament.

"He's come back so much stronger in his top line and his flat work has improved, too. He was a little fresh and made the course feel easy," added Jamie, who will aim the 12-year-old at Bramham CIC3\* and ultimately Burghley.



year-old's first season, having previously showjumped to 1.30m.

"He's top class – I'd hope to qualify for the Le Lion d'Angers seven-year-old championships," said Oliver. "It's a big ask – he's green but genuine, and he's careful."

After six weeks of training with Blyth Tait, Jason Wood was delighted with third on the Causeway.

"He's jumped three double clears since then," said Jason.

Ruth Edge headed a competitive open intermediate with The Winter King.

"I thought the changes gave the competition a real international feel. The courses encouraged you to ride in the right rhythm," said Ruth. "He will be aimed at Hoptonun CIC3\* and Camphire CIC3\*."

Will Murray was second with Cause Celebre, with Jamie Atkinson and Celtic Fortune third (see box, above). **IK&I**