

Brilliant Townend sweeps the board



Oliver Townend does a one-two in the CIC2*, winning on Note Worthy

Andrews Bowen and Rookery Park Stud, Somerford Park (2), Cheshire

19-21 August
By Jo Prestwich

OLIVER TOWNEND was in phenomenal form at Somerford Park, blitzing the Andrews Bowen CIC2*. He not only won, but also filled three of the following four places.

His winning ride was Andrew Cawthray's Note Worthy, a horse he originally had as a youngster before selling him to Tim Boland in 2011.

"Tim took him over to Australia and competed him to three-star level," said Oliver. "The horse came back up here in 2014 and we bought him back when Tim returned home. He's heading for Blenheim now and assuming all goes well, he'll move up to four-star next year. He's a machine of a horse and he has the potential to go right to the top."

Of the 71 starters in the two-star, just five finished on a clean sheet and three of those were Oliver's, including MHS King Joules in second. Since rolling a couple of poles in the showjumping at Bramham the horse has had a change of bridle.

"This was a great opportunity to showjump after the cross-country," said Oliver. "He's a different horse with the pelham and now he's heading to Burghley."

Oliver was quick to give credit to the organisers.

"It's a top-class event, with a top-class track," he said. "It's also the top end of difficulty for a two-star, so the perfect warm-up for the upcoming autumn three-days."

It was a thought echoed by third-placed Elizabeth Power, who also finished on her dressage score.

"It's a beautifully built course and the going was fab," she said. "There are few tracks like this at home in Ireland to progress horses, so it was well worth the trip."

Her ride, the former point-to-pointer Mind Me, comes from the family of L'Escargot, who beat Red Rum into second in the 1975 Grand National. His last outing secured him a win in the national championships at Tattersalls and he is now heading for a two-star at Ballindenisk.

Dancer's 'a fancy mover'

JONELLE PRICE led throughout to win open intermediate (O) section J with the Marley and Me Syndicate's San Remo gelding Cloud Dancer II. The nine-year-old won the eight- and nine-year-old CIC3* last year at Blenheim and is heading up to Blair this week.

"He's a winning machine," said Jonelle. "He's a fancy mover and this level is easy for him and was really just in preparation for Blair."

Jonelle and Jacky Green bought Cloud Dancer II from Retreat Farm as a four-year-old as a bit of a project.

"He wasn't at all my type," said Jonelle. "In fact, I wouldn't have even brought him out of the stable, but Jacky was adamant she wasn't leaving without him. The idea was to get him to one-star and put him on the market. I ended up putting a syndicate together and he's just brilliant."

Somerford is the second event Jonelle has been to since arriving back from the Olympics, and it was another Rio rider, Shane Rose, who won the second OI section with his home-bred thoroughbred gelding Shanghai Joe. Shane was also placed fifth behind Jonelle with Virgil II and both horses now head to Burghley. Lizzy Taylor gained some