

Oliver Townend takes section D on Ballaghmor Class as he prepares to tackle a three-star on the horse



Townend is in the money

Upton House, Oxon
13-15 July
By Catherine Austen

OLIVER TOWNEND'S bank account looked a little healthier after winning both open intermediate sections at Upton House – each carrying a first prize of £1,000, sponsored by Lyneham Heath Equestrian and Lepe Partners. "I wasn't aware that there was big money on offer until the day after the competition, but it was a very nice surprise," said Oliver.

He took section D on Angela Hislop and Karyn Shuter's Ballaghmor Class, and section E with Kathleen Wilkinson and Rachel Wood's ODT Ghareeb. The former, a nine-year-old by Courage II, is heading for Blenheim's eight- and nine-year-old CIC3*, while 12-year-old ODT Ghareeb, who has finished in the top 10 in both his three-star runs this year,

will tackle Blair's CC13*.

"It was a good run for both from a fitness point of view, as the track used Upton's terrain, and I had two super runs on them," said Oliver. "Ballaghmor Class is sharp and has run away

with a couple of people, but I think he is potentially a very good horse. He's taken a while to produce, but he is more than ready to step up to three-star now.

"ODT Ghareeb is definitely

a character. He's very spooky and a bit nervous about some things while being confident about others. He gets himself in quite a tangle about things – flying changes have been a weak point until recently – but he's very comfortable with me, and naturally quite careful."

It was very tight at the top of section D. Oliver and Ballaghmor Class completed on 31.1, while second-placed Ben Way (Galley Light) and Sara Squires, third with Sula Blue, both finished on 31.4.

Louise Harwood and Whitson were only 0.5 of a penalty behind Oliver and ODT Ghareeb in section E.

Virage steps up in style
KITTY KING won intermediate section A aboard Ben Walden's Virage Des Falaises. The French-bred Anglo-Arab seven-year-old is a new ride for Kitty and was stepping up to intermediate for the first time.



Section B goes to Matt Heath and his new ride Sportsfield Lord Livesey