

'This bodes well for the future': Oliver Townend finishes third, securing Team GBR's Nations Cup win, on the nine-year-old Cooley SRS



Townend leads Brits to easy victory

Boekelo, Netherlands
6-9 October
By Pippa Rooome

BRITAIN scored an imperious victory at the final eventing Nations Cup of 2016, finishing 36.2 marks ahead of their nearest rivals.

Oliver Townend spearheaded with third on Angela Hislop's Ramiro B son Cooley SRS, who won Ballindenisken CCI3* last year.

"It's a top event and he's only nine, so this bodes well for the future," said Oliver.

Laura Collett claimed fifth on her dressage score with the precociously talented Mr Bass, last year's seven-year-old world champion, who belongs to his

rider, Keith and Louise Scott and Nick and Lyn How.

Izzy Taylor scooped seventh on Patricia Turner's leggy Trevidden, a ride she gained a month ago when previous jockey Simon Grieve suffered an injury.

"He wants to do what you ask and that's the majority of it," she said.

Laura and Izzy have been the backbone of Britain's Nations Cup squad this year – Izzy has started in six legs and Laura in five, with both riding four different horses and recording four counting scores. Team GBR finished second overall to Germany in the series (see box, right).

Britain also had Sarah Bullimore in ninth on her 2015

Europeans horse Lilly Corinne.

"She can be feisty, but she was rideable here, which you really needed round this track," said Sarah.



Izzy Taylor and Trevidden, whom she's been riding just one month, finish seventh

Böhe springs a surprise
GERMANY'S Stephanie Böhe was the surprise individual winner when she kept a clean sheet to move up from seventh.

The 23-year-old recently claimed Waregem CIC3* with her ride of three seasons, Insa Kristina Weddige's 14-year-old Haytom, by Heraldik, but few would have expected her to repeat that here.

"This event has so many good riders and I was just happy to ride here and be in the German team. To win is a dream," she said.

Stephanie runs her own 10-horse yard from her trainer Andreas Dibowski's base and it was a case of pupil beats teacher when Andreas took the runner-up spot. His 2013 European team gold medalist FRH Butts Avedon was coming back from an injury that prevented him from contesting an Olympic team place.

A huge field

THIS Dutch event must attract the world's biggest CCI3* field and is one of very few horse trials now to run just one class. This year, 94 horses started the dressage in front of the ground jury: the USA's Wayne Quarles, Hungary's Sándor Fülöp and the Netherlands' Ciska van



Bella Innes Ker takes the lead after the dressage phase on 42, riding Carolyn

Meggelen-Peek. Twelve teams contested the Nations Cup.

There were some judging inconsistencies – for example, the USA's Lauren Kieffer (Meadowbrook's Scarlett) was placed first by Wayne but 35th by Sándor.

The leader was 22-year-old Brit Bella Innes Ker, riding her mother the Duchess of Roxburghe's Carolyn. The pair were young rider team gold medalists last year.

Their consistent test, which was helped by some tips from British eventing team dressage trainer Tracie Robinson, earned them a score of 42, including four nines.

"Carolyn is a complete princess – it's her way or no way, so you have to work with her," said Bella.

Lauren Kieffer held second, with Paul Tapner third on Bonza King Of Rouges. Paul led a strong Aussie assault for the Nations Cup lead, with Germany second and Britain third. Oliver Townend was Britain's best team performer in ninth on Cooley SRS and also held eighth on MHS King Joules, although he was disappointed with his score of 44.1.

"He's had a better mark so it's frustrating to feel as if you're going backwards, but at the same time we've improved him no end and I'm happy with his progress," he said.

Team GBR's strong start
HUGE crowds thronged the

cross-country track and enjoyed the hospitality tents lining the route. The first riders to tackle British designer Sue Benson's track showed this would not be a dressage competition and just under half the starters managed jumping clears.

Oliver got Britain off to a good start by finishing six seconds over the time on Cooley SRS.

"He has straightness and experience beyond his years," he said.

The Australians had a less promising Kick-off when Paul Tapner fell at the step out of the first water, which offered multiple mix and match options. New Zealand's Dan Jocelyn opted for the popular bounce route out and recorded the first



Germany's Stephanie Böhe, 23, finishes on a clean sheet to win on Haytom

TALKING POINT

Why didn't Britain win the Nations Cup series?

BRITAIN led the series by five points going into Boekelo but confusingly, despite winning this leg, finished second overall.

This is because nations can only count results from seven out of nine legs and Britain already had seven results on the board. By winning, they added 45 points (dropping the 55 points for sixth in Fontainebleau and counting the 100 points for the Boekelo win) for a total of 600.

Germany only had six results in the series before Boekelo so could add the full points for their finish here. By taking fourth, they acquired 70 points to finish on 620.

clear in the time with Gatcombe CIC2* winner Beaucomber.

He was followed by the home side's Alice Naber-Lozeman, who was also fault-free on Coral Estate Harry Belafonte, eventually eighth and Dutch national champion.

Germany's first team member Anna Siemer's round ended in an overnight stay in hospital for observation when she fell from Chloe 21 at the corner at fence 17b.

Bella Innes Ker had a beautifully smooth round, but took the time to make sure of the fences as well as choosing one long route, declining to take on the corner off a difficult