



Oliver Townend misses out on the grand slam, but second place for the four-star debutant Cooley SRS bodes well for the future.

Britain for 13 years and no one should underestimate what it takes to build a life and a business far from home.

Although Jonelle wouldn't make a big noise about it, it is no small feat to win a four-star eight months after having a baby. She told *H&H* in an interview in February that Otis was a "welcome surprise"; she had been dragging her feet about starting a family due to the pair's eventing careers taking off.

"I was pregnant here last year and sitting on the sidelines incredibly frustrated," she said. "It's not that I wasn't hungry before, but I've come back even hungrier."

### GRAND SLAM CHALLENGE

AFTER his win at Kentucky the previous week, Oliver Townend came into Badminton as a live contender in the Rolex Grand Slam, the big money bonus which goes to any rider who can triumph at Burghley (which he won last autumn), Kentucky and Badminton consecutively.

Any rider in such a position must feel the pressure, but Oliver played it cool, saying on Thursday: "It doesn't bother me, quite honestly. I can't do anything to affect anyone else, so it's simple in my mind — it's about getting the

best out of my horses and I hope if we do that we'll be close."

Oliver is the first rider to have done two-thirds of a Rolex Grand Slam twice.

"I hope to God it's a better outcome this time," he added, referring to his dramatic fall at Kentucky 2010 after his 2009 Badminton and Burghley wins.

Although Oliver couldn't quite go all the way, the result did prove considerably better than last time, as he finished second on Cooley SRS — owned by Angela Hislop, who also owns Kentucky winner Cooley Master Class — and fifth on Ballaghmor Class, who belongs

to Angela, Karyn Shuter, and Val Ryan.

Both horses are only 11 and, while much was expected of last year's Burghley winner, the Ramiro B son Cooley SRS was a surprise star. He was a European team gold medalist last year, but had two run-outs across country there.

"They are both baby horses at this level, so this is good for the future," said Oliver. "The Rolex Grand Slam is a fantastic part of our sport. It's serious money to feel you've lost but, at the same time, second and fifth at Badminton isn't too bad."



Sam Griffiths and Paulank Brockagh, 15th, are equal fifth after dressage. 'Brocks' was the last mare to win here before this year



Relaxation and power: Ballaghmor Class, despite being inexperienced at the level, takes the lead under Oliver Townend with the best mark at Badminton since 2000

**PLACINGS AFTER DRESSAGE**  
**1st Oliver Townend on Ballaghmor Class (GBR)**  
**2nd Mark Todd on Kiltubrid Rhapsody (NZL)**  
**3rd Ros Canter on Allstar B (GBR)**

## Personal bests pour in

Ballaghmor Class looks the ultimate athlete as he improves on his Burghley test to lead, with the chasing pack tightly grouped

OLIVER TOWNEND swooped in to take the lead in the closing moments on Friday with a fabulous test on Ballaghmor Class (Thomas).

The Rolex Grand Slam contender absolutely nailed the accuracy, earning two nines for his riding. Thomas looked fit, lean and rangy, and responded with a perfectly pitched combination of relaxation and power.

"He's still a baby and mentally weak in some ways," said Oliver of the 11-year-old. "It's a lot to expect of a relatively young horse to breathe, relax and give you his whole mind and body and he did."

The rider had warned that at a horse's first four-star test tends to close down with the shock of the atmosphere, while the

second time he expects it and can be buzzy. But Ballaghmor Class delivered an improved test from his debut at the level at Burghley. Oliver was 9.6 penalties ahead of the pack and could have earned an even greater lead had he presented the grey with his nose a little further forward.

Behind Oliver, just 1.6 penalties covered second to equal 10th. The removal of the dressage co-efficient (see box, p33) was a big talking point — this scoring change condenses the marks closer together but, even when converted into "old money", this was the closest penalty margin from first to 10th since 2015.

Positive judging (see comment, above right) and the fact that

horses enjoyed the settled weather and better ground in the arena than the warm-up, led to 51% of the field delivering personal-best marks (with the scoring change taken into account). Oliver's 20.8 (79.25%) was the best Badminton mark since Andrew Hoy's on Darien Powers in 2000 (20.5 in current scoring).

Harry Meade was, perhaps, the most disappointed competitor, although he put on a smile. Away Cruising was spooked by the big screen and "didn't take one ear off it" throughout to land in equal 40th.

### TODD'S CHALLENGE

MARK TODD also nailed a mistake-free performance with another elegant grey, the floating

Kiltubrid Rhapsody. He slotted into second on 23.4. A lesson with Charlotte Dujardin had put the polish on work with Kiwi team trainer Isobel Wessels.

"He's a big, flashy sort and has a brilliant temperament; nothing seems to bother him. But it's taken time for him to get the strength to carry himself properly and it's only in the past month that I've felt him coming to it," said Mark of the 11-year-old.

Thursday's leader Ros Canter held on to third on 23.9. Allstar B is a more a workmanlike-type than the leading duo, but he boasts long-term correct training and a super temperament.

"He's more noise-sensitive after the prize-givings last year at Badminton and the Europeans,

pulling at the beginning, he wore himself out," she said, after the second fastest round of the day (4.4 time-faults) put her eighth.

Mark Todd said the ground was little different for his second ride compared to his first, but Oliver described the going as "terrible" by the time he went on overnight leader Ballaghmor Class, saying it was impossible to find fresh ground.

"There wasn't much air [as it was hot weather] and it was a mix of the worst possible conditions. He puts in too much effort at the jumps at this stage in his career and that's very energy-sapping

— he's trying to give everything a foot and jumping out of four inches of tacky ground. But he dug deep and kept jumping," said Oliver, whose efforts to get the horse home resulted in an official warning for overuse of the whip (see page 32).

Eighteen seconds over the 11min 49sec optimum time landed him on an identical score to Jonelle, but she took the lead by virtue of being closer to the optimum time. With Oliver's horses second and fifth, the grand slam story was very much still alive as the competition heated feverishly for the final phase.



Keep the rhythm and give him a bit of space and he does the rest" — Toledo De Kerker helps Tom McEwen to a flawless showjumping round to finish seventh

**FINAL PLACINGS**  
**1st Jonelle Price on Classic Moet (NZL)**  
**2nd Oliver Townend on Cooley SRS (GBR)**  
**3rd Ros Canter on Allstar B (GBR)**

## 'Cool as ice' pair deliver

Jonelle Price achieves a rare fault-free round to win, while Oliver Townend's fifth-placed horse moves up to second

THERE was only one showjumping clear inside the time for the morning session over Kelvin Bywater's course, which Gemma Tattersall described as the most difficult of the past five years.

"There are lots of turnbacks and S-bends, and the oxers are as square and wide as possible, followed by short distances," she said.

The ground was also on the soft side, although the main arena held up amazingly.

Imogen Murray — who had twisted her ankle the previous evening running to watch Oliver's round on Ballaghmor Class — rose five places to 11th after having just the orange plank at fence five down with Ivar Gooden.

The first afternoon clear came from Oliver Townend, jumping

out of order on fifth-placed Cooley SRS. With his score of 33.1 in the bag, the pressure was on.

Tom McEwen also delivered a clear with Toledo De Kerker, which earned him a rise from 13th overnight to seventh.

"All you've got to do is keep the rhythm and give him a bit of space and he does the rest — he's phenomenal," he said.

Paulank Brockagh has not had a fence down at Badminton since 2015, but 14 faults dropped her from 11th to 15th.

"I'm pretty disappointed, perhaps she's feeling the exertions of yesterday in the mud," said Sam Griffiths of the 15-year-old.

Padraig McCarthy jumped out of order as Mr Chunky needed reshoeing, but it was worth the wait when he delivered a clear

with three time-faults to move up from ninth to eighth.

Gemma Tattersall managed the keen Arctic Soul skilfully for a fault-free performance and a leap from eighth to fourth.

"I can't explain how happy I am," she said. "I had prepared myself to have one down at least, but he's a seriously cool horse."

Lauren Kieffer's single pole dropped her two places to ninth.

"Veronica feels like a million dollars. Jumping on grass isn't her favourite thing or something we do a lot at home," said the US rider.

Kiltubrid Rhapsody knocked the upright over the water tray at 11, which was on a very short five strides from the preceding oxer, but held on to sixth.

"He jumps his socks off," said Mark Todd, who had earlier had



Padraig McCarthy and Mr Chunky move up a place to finish eighth

MITSUBISHI MOTORS BADMINTON HORSE TRIALS 2018

Final position	Horse and rider	Dressage	Cross-country		Showjumping		Total
			Jumping	Time	Jumping	Time	
1	Classic Moet (Jonelle Price, NZL)	27.6	-	0.4	-	-	28
2	Cooley SRS (Oliver Townend, GBR)	25.9	-	7.2	-	-	33.1
3	Allstar B (Rosalind Canter, GBR)	23.9	-	6.4	4	-	34.3
4	Arctic Soul (Gemma Tattersall, GBR)	30.8	-	4.4	-	-	35.2
5	Ballaghmor Class (Oliver Townend, GBR)	20.8	-	7.2	8	-	36
6	Kiltubrid Rhapsody (Mark Todd, NZL)	23.4	-	10	4	-	37.4
7	Tom McEwen (Toledo De Kerker, GBR)	22.4	-	-	-	-	-