

## Klimke scores on home soil

'One of the best in the world': SAP Hale Bob OLD stretches his unbeaten international run to four as he lands the CIC3\* ERM with Ingrid Klimke



The European champions live up to their favourites billing to take the second leg of this year's Event Rider Masters

Wiesbaden, Germany

By EMILY BEVAN

INGRID KLIMKE and SAP Hale Bob OLD (Bobby) came into the Event Rider Masters (ERM) at Wiesbaden as the red-hot favourites and didn't disappoint,

leading the 25-strong field from the outset to claim their first ERM victory.

This marked a fourth

straight international win for the combination, following on from their triumphs in the CIC03\* at Aachen, the European Championships in Strzegom and the CIC2\* in Kreuth.

"The whole competition went



Oliver Townend and his 2016 ERM star Cillinbradden Evo maintain second throughout

the way I wished it to so I couldn't be happier," said the German rider. "He couldn't have gone better and to get the win on home soil is really something special."

Oliver Townend and Cillinbradden Evo, who were so successful in this series in 2016, occupied second place throughout the two days of competition, while Julia Krajewski and Samourai Du Thot climbed one place after each phase to finish eventual third.

"He was unbelievable in all three phases and I couldn't be more pleased with him," said Oliver. "To be that close to what I believe is one of the best event horses in the world at the moment is a fantastic achievement."

Oliver and Sally-Anne Egginton's Cillinbradden Evo won the Gatcombe and Blair Castle legs of the ERM series in 2016, but the horse didn't compete last year due to a minor leg injury.

"He's the right make and model for these classes — his flatwork is always improving, he's incredibly reliable and he really suits these shorter courses," added Oliver, who is set to contest the CIC3\* in Baborówko, Poland, before the next ERM leg in Arville, Belgium (23-24 June), with the 12-year-old.

### BIG CROWDS

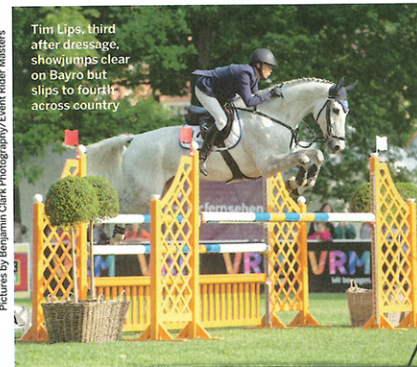
INGRID and Bobby lived up to the hype by producing a well-executed dressage test for 22.2, pipping long-time leaders Oliver and Cillinbradden Evo by 0.6 of a penalty. The chasing pack, which was led by Dutch national champion Tim Lips with the 12-year-old KWPN gelding Bayro

on 27.7, were tightly bunched with just two poles separating the third to 15th-placed competitors.

An influential showjumping phase followed in the imposing main arena in Schlosspark, a public park in the city of Wiesbaden which is also the home of the stunning Biebrich Palace.

The annual four-day horse show always attracts big crowds and this year was no exception as eventing fans, including many children, lined the main arena and the cross-country course in their droves.

Just six combinations achieved fault-free rounds in the showjumping, with many falling foul of the tight optimum time. The top three after the dressage all jumped clear to keep their places but notable casualties included Jonelle Price and Cloud Dancer, who dropped from fourth to 17th after accumulating 14 penalties,



Pictures by Benjamin Clark Photography/Event Rider Masters

Tim Lips, third after dressage, showjumps clear on Bayro but slips to fourth across country

Tim Price and Cekatinka speed round for one of only two clears inside the time, moving them up to fifth



Sam Griffiths with Happy Times, who slid 10 places to 20th after amassing 12 faults, and last year's winners Sarah Cohen and Treason, whose 14-fault round dropped them out of the top 20.

As with the showjumping, the optimum time on the cross-country proved hard to attain. Just two combinations — Tim Price with Cekatinka, eventual fifth, and Ludwig Svennerstål on El Kazir SP, who climbed an

impressive 15 places after dressage to seventh by completing on their first-phase score — achieved the feat around Rüdiger Schwarz's twisty, tight track.

"It was a good mix of technical questions and forward flying fences and you had to ride fast from the beginning to have a chance of getting the time," said Ingrid of the cross-country course, the final seven fences of which were in the main arena.

The course caused relatively few problems with only two pairings failing to complete. Jonelle Price and Cloud Dancer were one of them — luck just wasn't on their side this weekend as they notched up two refusals at the angled hedges, followed by a third at a corner to incur elimination. The other

was Sweden's Malin Jersson with Allan V, who retired after problems at the trakehner.

Five seconds over the optimum time for Oliver and Cillinbradden Evo gave them a final finishing score of 25.2, while Ingrid and SAP Hale Bob OLD strided the clock four seconds over to retain their spot at the head of the leaderboard with a score of 23.8.

"He speeds up, slows down, turns and is always looking for the next fence. He knows his job so well," said Ingrid, who has been riding the 14-year-old since he was five. "It was fantastic fun and a wonderful competition."

It was a welcome reversal of fortunes in ERM competition for Ingrid, who came to grief while in the lead on SAP Escada FRH last year. The pair uncharacteristically glanced off twice at the penultimate cross-country fence to end their chance of victory.

Julia Krajewski leapfrogged Tim Lips to take the remaining

podium spot thanks to a speedy cross-country round aboard Samourai Du Thot for just 0.8 of a penalty. The Olympic team silver medallist finished second last year in the same competition aboard Chipmunk FRH.

"Wiesbaden is one of my favourite shows, I just love it here," said the German. "Sam" also loves it as he likes all the crowds standing close and all the attention. He is nippy and doesn't have a big stride, so this track is made for him."

Tim Price holds the lead in the ERM series on 36 points, with Chatsworth winner Piggy French and Ingrid Klimke tied for second place on 30. H&H

### RESULTS

**CIC3\* ERM** — 1. SAP Hale Bob OLD (I Klimke) GER 22.2.0.1.6=23.8.2; 2. Cillinbradden Evo (O Townend) GBR 22.8.0.2.4=25.2; 3. Samourai Du Thot (J Krajewski) GER 28.3.0.0.8=29.1



Third-placed Julia Krajewski and Samourai Du Thot perform in front of Biebrich Palace