

Townend takes £1k prize

Oliver Townend dominates ahead of Kentucky and Badminton, as eventing finally runs in the sun

By JO PRESTWICH

Istanbul BBQ Chester Kelsall Hill (1), Cheshire

OLIVER TOWNEND'S ride Cillnabradren Evo lost a front shoe across country, but still ran out the victor in the £1,000-to-the-winner advanced intermediate (AI). The 12-year-

Oliver Townend claims the AI on Cillnabradren Evo, adding nothing to their leading dressage score



old, owned by Sally-Anne Egginton, lost the shoe dropping down Kelsall's signature bank towards the end of the course. However, he was reshed in time to jump clear in the showjumping which ran after the cross-country, with the top 10 in reverse order.

"He's a very reliable showjumper, in fact I've never had a rail on him," said Oliver. "He missed last year after picking up an injury. He had a pipe opener at Gatcombe back in March, but that was so long ago it was like first time out with him again."

Oliver also won the open intermediate (OI) with Paul and Diana Ridgeon's Ulises, and took third in the AI with the Badminton-bound Ballaghmor Class and seconds at intermediate and OI level with Sweeps Crystal Cruise and Tregildur.

"I was super-happy with Ulises," said Oliver. "In fact, I was happy with all of them. They've gone as well as they could have done and as I'm flying to Kentucky on Monday, I'm glad to know I can still see a stride at speed."

Oliver is a regular at the Cheshire event and rode 10 over the weekend.

"It's the best event of this level in the country and the only thing that would improve it would be the addition of an advanced, a two-star and a three-star," he said.