



Townend takes tally



'An extraordinary achievement': Oliver Townend increases his Burnham Market haul with wins in both CC14*-S sections, on Ballaghmor Class (pictured) and Cillinabradren Evo

respectively was 0.4 of a cross-country time-fault on Ballaghmor Class.

"It's an extraordinary achievement," said organiser and course-designer Alec Lochore.

Oliver said: "Both horses are better than they have ever been. What impressed me the most was the way they both felt across country — on the bridle and with their ears pricked every step of the way. Not once did I have to squeeze, let alone push."

Both cross-country rounds looked effortless; the grey 12-year-old Ballaghmor Class and the year-older black Cillinabradren Evo negotiating each question immaculately and powering away without ever needing top gear. It was the perfect Badminton preparation and the world number one has sent out a clear warning shot to his rivals for the top spot there.

Explaining his outstanding success rate at Burnham Market, Oliver said: "It's the first event of the year I set out to be really competitive at. The ground here is very honest; you know what you're getting and it's very consistent going. When you've been to an event for many years you have a good feel for how the horses will come out of it, and they always come out of this well."

"It comes at the perfect time of year and sets them up for their big five-star [previously four-star] runs," he added.

Four penalties behind Ballaghmor Class in section B was the Ellicott's Zagreb, who completed on his dressage score of 26.2 with Alex Bragg.

"We couldn't make it to Belton so this was a significant run to see how he felt, and he felt fresh as a daisy after the cross-country," said Alex, who also heads to Badminton. "I actually gave him 20 minutes' work after it to make sure the stamina was there and that he was responding well to me, and he felt so good he could have

The world number one extends his extraordinary record at this event with a double in the showcase classes

Barefoot Retreats Burnham Market (1), Norfolk

OLIVER TOWNEND utterly dominated the principal CC14*-S (previously CIC*) classes at Burnham Market once more with victories in both sections,

By CATHERINE AUSTEN

stretching his phenomenal record here — one which must surely stand alone in equestrian sport — to 12 wins since 2007. Neither victory ever looked

in doubt. He led section B from start to finish with Karyn Shuter, Angela Hislop and Val Ryan's Ballaghmor Class, and matched that feat in section C aboard Sally-Anne Egginton's Cillinabradren Evo. All that he added to his dressage scores of 21.8 and 21.3

'HE COULD BE A DRESSAGE HORSE'

OLIVER TOWNEND'S dressage test in CC14*-S section B on Cillinabradren Evo was, said Les Smith, a member of the ground jury and the judge at B, one of the best he has ever judged at this level.

THE JUDGE'S VIEW

"It was fabulous — the best I have seen the horse go. He was more open in the neck, and very good in his hindlegs. He could be a pure dressage horse," he said.

