

Townend showcases another rising star

The Burghley winner follows up at Blenheim with an “exceptional” Irish-bred mare and Piggy March has a round to remember

TWO weeks after his Burghley win with the great Ballaghmor Class, Oliver Townend showed that he has another rising star grey in his string by taking victory in the young horse CC14*-S with the stunning mare Cooley Rosalent.

The pair headed into the cross-country with a one-second advantage over Piggy March and Brookfield Future News. They would be the only two combinations to make the cross-country time, turning those provisional places into their final standings.

This eight- and nine-year-old class has a history of serving as a stepping stone to five-star greatness. Oxford a fitting venue, then, to hold the championship for these bright stars of the future. Analytics firm EquiRatings has counted 23 graduates who have gone on to win a five-star, including five former winners of this class.

Paul Ridgeon's grey looked full of confidence as she devoured David Evans's cross-country track, ears pinned forward, crossing the finish line smack on the optimum time of 6min 54sec to win on her dressage score of 24.7.

“We’ve always thought she was exceptional,” said Oliver, who has had the mare since she was four years old and credited Richard Sheane and Georgina Phillips at Cooley Farm for “finding another one for us”.

“I’ve been lucky enough to produce her. But in all honesty, most people could have produced her, because she’s very straightforward,



“We’ve always thought she was exceptional” – Cooley Rosalent proves Oliver Townend correct as they claim the young horse CC14*-S honours

FINAL PLACINGS

1st Oliver Townend (GBR)
on Cooley Rosalent
2nd Piggy March (GBR)
on Brookfield Future News
3rd Tim Price (NZL)
on Jarillo



Jarillo is both careful and brave, taking third with Tim Price

exceptionally talented and finds everything very easy.”

The nine-year-old mare, by Valent, is out of thoroughbred race mare Bellanay Jewel and is a full sibling to Irish rider Clare Abbott's 2021 eventing Europeans ride Jewelent. Both were bred by the Rosbothams in Ireland.

“SECOND TO NONE”

OLIVER and Cooley Rosalent arrived at Blenheim with an exceptional record, having finished in the top seven in 12 of their 15 international starts. This includes two wins and silver at the six-year-old world championship in 2020.

She stepped up to five-star at Luhmühlen in June and Oliver explained that her trip to Germany was always part of a wider plan with her development in mind.

“We wanted to know how she coped with it, and what we needed to do from a management and educational point of view for the future,” said Oliver. “That mileage has been absolutely second to none.”

Piggy and the eight-year-old Brookfield Future News were drawn early, making light work of the course to finish five seconds inside the optimum time. But as with the CC14*-L, this would not be a quiet cross-country day.

The CC14*-S course layout meant that the first water complex came up much earlier

than in the long-format class, with the brush oxer to shoulder brush (fence 8ab) causing plenty of problems. The young horses took a different route through the second water (fence 10abc) – a dew pond at the top of the hill – with many green moments. In total, 10 pairs had problems at the first water, and 18 at the second.

These influential questions proved no bother to Brookfield Future News, owned by Alison Swinburn and John and Chloe Perry, who showed maturity beyond his years to give Piggy a

“You have no idea what this horse has underneath the bonnet”

PIGGY MARCH ON RUNNER-UP BROOKFIELD FUTURE NEWS

round to remember.

“He was bl**dy brilliant,” said Piggy. “I’m so excited because he was everything that I thought he was, from

the age of six years old.

“I’ve said all along to people, ‘You have no idea what this has underneath the bonnet’. He was amazing at Le Lion last year; I know he’s a five-star horse.”

“It’s exactly what we all do this for – days or a moment like that, where you give the owners a hug and we’re all buzzing, because he’s a horse they’ve done the journey with and that we’ve always believed in.”

New Zealand’s Tim Price had three exciting prospects in this class. Flashy chestnut Jarillo, owned by Clifton Eventers, Shaun and Lucy Allison, and Rachel and James Good, took home the Prices’ highest result in third.

“It’s quite rare for such a careful horse to be so brave across country. Today was a big test with a lot of different things,” said Tim. “He’s done one CC14*-S short before in Ireland, but this was definitely a step along and he dealt with it all really well.”

LEFT THEIR LUCK AT FENCE ONE

THE dressage scores were so tightly bunched that any showjumping faults or cross-country time-penalties were hugely influential – and clear rounds were well rewarded.

Dressage leaders Tom McEwen and MHS Brown Jack’s Blenheim 2023 journey came to a forced end ahead of cross-country.



Caroline Harris steers D.Day safely through the rain for fourth