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Oliver in a class of his own with brilliant double



■ Action from the Burnham Market Horse Trials.

EQUESTRIANISM

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Reigning British national champion Oliver Townend was unbeatable at the EQ Life Burnham Market Horse Trials, scooping both sections of the CIC** class.

Karyn Shuter's Black Tie II, a stunning black New Zealand thoroughbred which Townend described as "sexy", stormed into the lead after a double clear and a very fast run across-country in section B.

"It is beyond all our beliefs that he could win a 3* - he had raced 14 times before making the transition to eventing so we just took it how it came and he has shown he is the ultimate trier," said Townend.

In section C, the Badminton-bound Armada defeated all to take top honours, again after performing one of the fastest cross-country rounds of the day. The iconic 17hh chestnut continues his fantastic form under Townend, after winning the advanced at Burgham last month.

"I was cruising-around in third gear and we still only came home with 1.2 time penalties," he said. "If I'm brave enough to just sit there he produces an amazing smooth round and I hardly need to touch the reins."

The Germans proved they are still a force to be reckoned with in the CIC** when 23-year-old student Josephine Schnauer clinched victory on Leslie Ann 2.

Schnauer, in her last year of University studying economics in Germany, has been in England training with German team trainer Christopher Bartle for her semester holidays. Leslie Ann, the only accidental daughter of William Fox-Pitt's



■ Above, Nana Dalton on Elite Syncopation. Right, Caroline Jefferies on Coolcroman Ruby.
Pictures: MATTHEW USHER

Olympic horse Lionheart, performed a great double clear to take the lead from Brit, Gemma Tattersall.

Norfolk's riders also put in sterling performances in the CIC** with a very chuffed Amy Martin taking 12th on her own Sparky Reflection. A double clear and only 3.2 time faults on the ex-racehorse moved the duo up the rankings and gave Amy the best placed British under 25 award.

"I'm so pleased with him, he was ace," she said. "He came to us straight out of the field and just off the track and has excelled himself."

Amy is in her third and final year at Bath University studying sports science, but says she has no plans as to what to do next.

She said: "I really don't know if I'm heading for a career in something, I quite like the idea of re-training racehorses for eventing, but I haven't told mum yet."

Felicity Attew-Baker, from Holt, also put in a great performance with her own The Wedding Horse, adding just 11.6 time faults to their dressage score of 57.9. This round successfully qualifies them for Houghton CCI** in May where they will compete next.

CIC**: 1 Josephine Schnauer (Leslie Ann 2), 2 Andrew Nicholson (Cillnabradren Evo), 3 Josephine Schnauer (Collen P 2).
CIC** Section B: 1 Oliver Townend (Black Tie II), 2 Nicola Wilson (Beltane Queen), 3 Craig Nicolai (Just Ironie).
CIC** Section C: 1 Oliver Townend (Armada), 2 Paul Tapner (Indian Mill), 3 Mark Todd (NZB Campino)

