

Day one of the International Horse Trials at Burnham Market, Rosie Rollinson on Mr Sylvester Valentine.

Pictures: IAN BURT



Esterhuizen on Totem.



Esther Anderson on Eldorado II.

World's star riders start the action at Burnham Market

EQUESTRIANISM

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The bacon.co.uk Burnham Market International Horse Trials are well under way, as some of the world's greatest equestrian riders flocked to Sussex Farm in west Norfolk for a chance to win the prestigious CIC*** prize.

Those at the top of the leaderboard in the CIC*** Section B on the first day of competition included eventing legend, Pippa Funnell. Competing on her own and Mrs Carol Toliver's Billy the Biz, the combination competed against an extremely tough starting line-up.

Pippa used all her experience to perform a cool and professional test to put them well up the leaderboard on a score of 37.1. Oliver Townsend also performed a smooth test to put himself near the front with a score of 35.8.

Yesterday's competition also held the lower classes, where local riders took the opportunity to ride round a world-class course.

Eighteen-year-old Isabella Stagg, from Ipswich, was amongst those who made an impressive job of Alec Lochore's challenging BE100 course

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Annie Bellamy on Grafik III on day one of the Burnham International Horse Trials.

taking the win in section C. Aboard her own seven-year-old Hanoverian mare, Quite A Compliment, known as Holly at home, Isabella performed a polished test to score 22.5 with only 1.2 time faults to add.

Despite coming home clear, the round wasn't without its hairy moments as Isabella explained: "At the corner 1 saw a bad stride so we tripped over it, but Holly was honest

enough to keep going and got me out of trouble."

The combination, who have been together for just over a year, were competing in their third BE event together and hope to capitalise on their win here to secure themselves Badminton Grassroots qualification. The 15-year-old Woodbridge rider, Pip Taylor, also claimed a win in BE100 Section E on her own Sherkin Island.

Willia Newton claimed section F, while well-known New Zealand event

rider, Caroline Powell, took section D. Noah Brook, from Huddersfield, took the win in Novice section G, while Alex Postolowsky claimed section H on Miss Judy Bradwell's Akolien.

The world-class competition continues today, as the rest of the international riders complete their dressage tests ready for the jumping showdown tomorrow.

Sixteen nationalities are expected to compete over the weekend as well as some of the GB Olympic team.