

# Amy delighted to test herself against the best

**Y**oung rider Amy Martin, from Gunton, competed against some of the best riders in the world at the Bacon.co.uk Burnham Market International Horse Trials coming a very respectable 19th.

Competing in the extremely competitive CIC\*\* class, Martin and her own Sparky's Reflection scored 52.4 in the dressage, had one down in the showjumping and completed a professional clear cross-country with just 11.6 time penalties to add.

Due to poor weather conditions the weekend before the event, several high profile events such as Gatcombe had to cancel with competitors transferring their entries to Burnham. As a result, the field in both international classes had some of the best riders in the world, including world number one William Fox-Pitt.

Despite the talented competition, 22-year-old Martin proved she was the consummate professional and, aboard her "very chilled" ex-racehorse Sparky, showed that amateurs can be as competitive as the pros.

"We competed last year in the same class and came 12th, but considering the competition this year I think we did proportionally better," she said.

Martin is currently studying Sport Science at Bath University and is in the midst of final year dissertations and exams, "I have to hand in my dissertation in a week so it's all been a bit hectic," she said. "On the way to Burnham I was studying, but despite the stress I really enjoy living two lives; it's a treat to be able to ride at this level as well as go to uni."

While studying in Bath, Martin keeps her horse with World Equestrian Games athlete Harry Mead.

"In between lectures I drive to Harry's and ride, then come back to uni," she said. "I was taught by his



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■ Amy Martin and Sparky, who performed so well against tough opposition at the Burnham Market International Horse Trials.

father, Richard, before he died so we have become good friends and he is really supportive."

Martin is aiming for Belton 2\* and with all going well hopes to complete the advanced at Little Downham in early summer. The former north

Norfolk pony club rider has also been long listed for the 2\* European eventing team, designed to give amateurs a chance to compete at an international championships, with the hope of being selected for the championships, which are being held in Holland in August.