TO SEE AND PURCHASE FURTHER IMAGES FROM THIS EVENT, VISIT: horseandhound.co.uk/galleries

Freelance rider and instructor David Britnell takes on the pros and leads from the first phase to win CIC2* section C, on his own Continuity

Continuity sets the standard

King West Rockingham, Northants
20-22 May
By Catherine Austen

EVENTING in Britain is so competitive that it is rare that one-horse riders win at international level. But David Britnell proved it is possible by taking CIC2* section C on his own Continuity in impressive fashion.

The pair led the dressage with a score of 44.2 and added nothing to that to hold their spot at the top of the leaderboard.

David, a 24-year-old freelance rider and instructor from Chesham, Bucks, bought the 12-year-old Contender gelding as a five-year-old.

"He was a failed showjumper and had a sarcoid, so we got him very cheaply," said David. "He's a very gentle horse who will try as hard as he can. But he's different at a competition – as he's got older and wiser, he has become sharp."

Despite some consistently good results, the pair had rarely showjumped clear until this season.

"I've had half a dozen lessons from John Whinnett, who has given me a system that works with this horse, and the difference is unreal," said David.

Second was Jodie Amos, giving Wise Crack a confidence-giving run after pulling up at Badminton. The pair finished on their dressage score of 45.9.

"The ground was perfect so we could have a good gallop, and it was nice to be able to experiment a bit with the dressage without too much pressure," said Jodie.

Kitty King took the other CIC2* section on Vendredi Biats, who is owned by Diana Bown, Sally Eyre, Sally Lloyd-Baker and Samantha Wilson.

The seven-year-old also led from the word go and finished on his dressage score of 37.5 to collect his fourth win from his past five runs.

"This was his first CIC2* – his first novice win was here last year, so he's come quite a long way," said Kitty. "He's had an amazing spring, and he'll have a bit of a break now.

"He did a lovely test – it was accurate and he's a good mover, but he felt a little spooky, although that actually gave him expression. And for a seven-year-old he made nothing of the cross-country. I hope he's my next really good horse."

Konito (by Kannan), who spends the winters hunting, takes CIC2* second under Carlos Parro

FIRST WIN

Harry Horgan

THE 19-year-old scored his first intermediate victory in section M on Noreway Harry.

"He's only seven and this is his second intermediate," said Harry. "We weren't expecting this, but he digs deep and tries hard. He's the yard favourite – Mr Relaxed."

Buckinghamshire-based Harry, whose father is the well-known equine vet Terry Horgan, left school last year and is riding full time.

"My parents are supporting me for two years," he said.

Pictures by Peter Nixon

equo Search for and enter more events at www.equoevents.com

Jodie Amos and Wise Crack are back on track after Badminton with CIC2* second

Runners-up – again on their dressage mark – were Carlos Parro and the Kannan-sired 15-year-old Konito.

"His owner [Fiona Edwards] hunts him in the winter with the North Shropshire and I play with him in the summer," said Carlos.

Mark Phillips' bold, flowing cross-country course jumped well, although a few had trouble with fence 7a. Some combinations struggled to keep a positive canter stride down a slope into tree-shaded water to the log in the middle. The ground was generally good, although the showjumping going became deep and holding on Sunday after heavy rain on Saturday night.

'A lovely brain'

IZZY TAYLOR won CIC* section A on Becky Roland and Claire Dyson's SFS Legacy, who was bred to showjump by Lisa Hales. The six-year-old only began his eventing career in March and has won three of his six runs.

"He has a lovely brain and is very on-side," said Izzy.

Roberto Scalisi and Rosalind Hayward's Topaze Du Plain topped CIC* section B.

Jodie Amos wasn't the only rider bouncing back from a disappointing Badminton. Louise Harwood and Whitson also retired across country there two weeks ago, but completed on their excellent dressage mark of 23.9 at Rockingham to take open intermediate section O comfortably.

"I got a late entry here to give him a nice run before the CCI4* at Luhmühlen," said Louise. "Adam Kemp has been helping me on the flat since the end of last year and it is paying off. I'm trying to ride Whitson more forward – he tends to work in really well and then go a bit flat in the arena."

Ibby Macpherson and Ballingowan Echo won open intermediate section P, adding a showjump down to their dressage of 23.9.

"He's a bit like a Labrador puppy, and is a pleasure in every way," said Ibby. "He did the best test he's ever done today, and was incredible across country."

Andrew Hoy and Cheeky Calimbo took the advanced intermediate.

"It was a last-minute entry after what happened at Belton [Andrew's saddle slipped badly towards the end of the cross-country when they were in a competitive position] – and was a bit of test of everything before the CIC3* at Luhmühlen," said Andrew. "He's the most difficult horse I've had to fit a saddle to, because he's shaped a bit like a greyhound, and I've added a stockman's breastplate.

"I didn't set out to get the time, just to have a good canter round, but he was picking the fences off in a really nice rhythm and I was two seconds under the time."

I OWE IT TO...

Pilates

IBBY MACPHERSON'S horses are in top form – as well as Ballingowan Echo's open intermediate win, Evantos K (pictured) was second in a CIC* – and she believes that Pilates, which she took up six weeks ago and does three times a week with Tina Sheridan, is helping.

"I'm more focused and more flexible in my body," she says. "It exposes your weaknesses as a rider, and I'm now more aware of my whole body on the ground and on a horse."

'He made nothing of the cross-country': Kitty King has high hopes for CIC2* section D winner Vendredi Biats

Intermediate sections went to Lucy Jackson (Mister O) and Harry Horgan (Noreway Harry, see box, above).

The Robert Loomes & Co handmade watch, awarded to the rider in the advanced intermediate or open intermediate closest to the optimum time across country, went to Bill Levett for his ride on Improvise, who finished fifth in the advanced intermediate. H&H

RESULTS

CIC2* sec C.– 1, Continuity (D Britnell) 44.2,0,0=44.2; 2, Wise Crack (J Amos) 45.9,0,0=45.9; 3, Hilldown Prophet (M Jackson) 48.9,0,0=48.9. **CIC2* sec D.**– 1, Vendredi Biats (K King) 37.5,0,0=37.5; 2, Konito (C Parro) 41,0,0=41; 3, Eisfee (D Doel) 41.6,0,0.8=42.4. **CIC* sec A.**– 1, Legacy (I Taylor) 43.9,0,0=43.9; 2, Evantos K (I Macpherson) 44.8,0,0=44.8; 3, Lawa (A Hawker) 43.5,0,2=45.5. **CIC* sec B.**– 1, Topaze Du Plain (R Scalisi) 42.7,0,0=42.7; 2, Kilcannon Watervalley Wizard (S How) 26.4,0,4.4=30.8; 3, Virage Des Falaises (K King) 43.4,0,0=43.4. **A1.**– 1, Cheeky Calimbo (A Hoy) 27.5,0,0=27.5; 2, Borough Pennyz (V Panizzon) 30.1,0,0=30.1; 3, Chequers Play The Game (V Panizzon) 29,0,1.2=30.2. **OI sec O.**– 1, Whitson (L Harwood) 23.9,0,0=23.9; 2, Fernhill By Night (E Halliday-Sharp) 25,0,2.4=27.4; 3, Borough Free Flight (V Panizzon) 23.9,4,0.8=28.70. **sec P.**– 1, Ballingowan Echo (I Macpherson) 23.9,4,0=27.9; 2, Sam I Am III (P Sims) 30.5,0,0.4=30.9; 3, Wasting Light (A Clark) 33,0,2.4=35.4. **Int sec M.**– 1, Noreway Harry (H Horgan) 29.6,0,4.4=34; 2, My Clover Bay (O Holloway) 34.3,0,1.6=35.9; 3, Cyber Rocket (G Strang) 30.5,0,5.6=36.1. **sec N.**– 1, Mister O (L Jackson) 27.3,0,4.8=32.1; 2, No Excuse (R Canter) 26.4,0,8.8=35.2; 3, Kiljarron Kontender (M Heath) 30.4,4=38. **ONc.**– 1, PSH Mirage (L Joynson) 24.8,0,3.6=28.4; 2, GI Master Caster (H Woodhead) 28.8,0,0=28.8; 3, Farrells Cavalier (N Gwynne) 29.3,0,0=29.3. **nov sec J.**– 1, Sir Papillon (L Collett) 29.5,0,0=29.5; 2, Ballinteskin Rado (A Smales) 29.8,0,0=29.8; 3, Royal Fury (H Coy) 30.3,0,0.4=30.7. **sec K.**– 1, Global Royal Luxor (E Philp) 25,0,0.4=25.4; 2, Bazaars Inca (R Canter) 23.5,0,2=25.5; 3, Monkeying Around (I Taylor) 27,0,0=27. **sec L.**– 1, Cupido III (E Philp) 25,0,0=25; 2, Eires Rock II (L Kemplay) 30,0,1.2=31.2; 3, Peaky Blinder (T Rusbridge) 32.5,0,1.6=34.1. **sec R.**– 1, Pro Joe (G Ugolotti) 26.5,0,0=26.5; 2, Fleurelle (I Taylor) 27,0,0=27; 3, Painted Moon II (L Norton) 28.8,0,2=30.8. **sec S.**– 1, Euro Power (K Roddy) 25,0,4.8=29.8; 2, Marquerite Bart (H Woodhead) 30.8,0,0=30.8; 3, Kilbahy Catch Up (I Taylor) 27,4,0=31. **ONu18.**– 1, Chilli Chap (C Warde-Aldam) 29.3,0,1.2=30.5; 2, Fursten Jubilee (E Hatfton) 31.3,0,1.2=32.5; 3, Red Jazz (L Robinson) 33,0,0=33. **BE100 sec F.**– 1, JJ Malone (A Parker) 27.5,0,0=27.5; 2, Ballyrush Harry (S Parkes) 29,0,0=29; 3, Luxus I Do (M Kyle) 25.3,4,0=29.3. **sec G.**– 1, Don Onyx (E Eltham) 25,0,0=25; 2, Jolie Lark (V Turnbull) 25,0,0=25; 3, Dawn Chorus (J Hales) 21.3,0,4.8=26.1. **sec H.**– 1, Mile Hill Boy (R Jones) 22,0,0=22; 2, Alatlive Surprise (J Cooke) 22,0,0=22; 3, Cooley Enno (C Bacon) 21,0,2.4=23.4. **sec I.**– 1, Orlanda Bloom (D Alderson) 25,0,0=25; 2, Penhills Bit Of French (S Gardner) 26.5,0,0=26.5; 3, Zafirahs Symphony (H Bates) 27,0,0=27.

Great deals on print and iPad subscriptions at www.horseandhoundsubs.co.uk/subs