



# Trials and tribulations

**Izzy Taylor** reflects on an eventful Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials, a win at Tattersalls and a victorious turn at Ballindenisk

**WOW, WHAT AN** amazing couple of months ... where to begin? Well winning the CCI3\* at Tattersalls International Horse Trials on Allercombe Ellie, owned by Susan Holroyd, on her dressage mark of 41 seems a good place to start! It was a thrilling week, she was a class act from start to finish and I'm still smiling! Then of course there's Badminton. It was, as everyone has commented, a true 4\* course and a contest that kept spectators on the edge of their seats from the start of the cross country to the finish of the show jumping.

My two amazing rides were KBIS Briarlands Matilda, finishing 17th, and Thistledown Poposki, who finished 18th, both on the same score. I am so proud of both of them. 'Matilda', being only 15.2hh, was one the smallest horses in the field this year, and has the heart of a lion. For 'Pop' this was a massive ask; he's not the biggest, flashiest mover and tries so hard – he's a good horse and has always gone well, but this course was a big question for him! So emotions were high behind the scenes as Lady Anne Whitley, who owns 'Pop', is also related to my Grandmother Jane Whitley, who was second at Badminton – no pressure then!

I wasn't daunted by our position as pathfinders for the new course. I'd walked

the course several times with Yogi Breisner. 'Matilda' and I set off with steely determination – I was on a mission to ensure we completed the course. We stayed clear until the final test; she was just so unlucky to slip after landing the huge log at the ISH Studbrook Huntsman's Close (fences 22 and 23) and so ran out at the first corner. She didn't do anything wrong, it was a proper old-fashioned cross country track and as tough a ride as I've ever had.

Hearing the trials and tribulations of the course were interesting as 'Pop' hadn't actually done a 4\* track yet and that afternoon we were about to attempt one of the biggest 4\* tracks for quite some time. He was just awesome, so genuine the whole way round, barely anything phased him.

I am immensely proud to have been the only rider to complete on both their horses for what was a thrilling Badminton 2014 – one that we shall all remember for a

variety of reasons.

Prior to Badminton we'd not long returned from Ballindenisk as a member of the CICO3\* winning GBR Nations Cup team with Rosalind Canter, Lucy Wiegiersma and Nicky Roncoroni. Individually I was placed second in the CICO3\* on Frances Carter and Susan Holroyd's Allercombe Ellie. 'Ellie' is really nice to ride and Aaron Millar, who rode her previously, has done a great job with her. Her strength is her brain – she lets you ride her and that's half the battle. We were just getting to know each other and Ballindenisk, which has a lovely, galloping track without anything too fiddly, was perfect for that. We unfortunately were brought down with a bump (quite literally) at Chatsworth in the water, so subsequent cross country schooling set us up for Tattersalls, which we won.

KBIS Starburst was also a star (no pun intended) in Ballindenisk – he was placed fourth in his first CCI2\*, finishing on his dressage mark of 51.4.

Eventing has a habit of bringing you back down to earth with a bump. When the lows come they hit you like a train, and just before Badminton, I had to sideline KBIS Starchaser, KBIS Starlet and Dax Van Ternieuebeke for different reasons, which is heartbreaking for both Owners and those that look after them, although they will at different times return to Eventing. I also withdrew most of my horses from Burnham Market as I felt the ground was too hard, thinking I'd run them at Withington, but that got cancelled due to wet weather! I've had two dunkings at water fences post Badminton – one of which was at Aston-le-Walls, the KBIS Dew Pond Complex; honestly, I wasn't trying to provide my sponsors with maximum publicity!

Closing the article on an Eventing high if I may – Orlando achieved third place at Chatsworth CIC3\*. Fingers crossed by the next issue I will have appointed a new yard manager, our summer working pupils will have arrived and, dare I say it, the sun will be shining ... Signing off for now. 🐾



Izzy Taylor on Allercombe Ellie at Ballindenisk

RADKA PREISLER PHOTOGRAPHY