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**THE FIRST SPRING** in our step was KBIS Starchaser, Dax Van Ternieuebeke, Little Maestro and KBIS Starburst being selected on to the World Class Equine pathway, shortly followed by my selection to represent Great Britain in the Squad for the FEI Nations Cup series. After the success of last year I am over the moon to be asked back on to the team. It's a privilege as it's supported by the UK Sport Lottery funded World Class Programme, which gives us great access to trainers and a general support network.

Another quite literal spring out of the ground was the 12-stable American Barn, which we easily filled with the addition of five new rides for the 2014 season – one established Eventer and four youngsters. We warmly welcomed them and their Owners to the yard, along with four new team members.

So let me introduce Allercombe Ellie, 'Ellie' an Advanced/CIC3\* horse owned by Susan Holroyd. 'Ellie' has settled into the yard really well, she has taken everything in her stride and is a pleasure to ride. Our first outing was Oasby Open Intermediate where she came third, followed by winning her OI section at Lincolnshire on her dressage mark of 28.2. Fingers crossed our partnership continues to flourish.

I am also delighted to welcome Extreme II (Dennis), owned by Mr and Mrs T Price who run Addington Manor Equestrian Centre. 'Dennis' gave me two solid BE100 rides at Lincolnshire and enjoyed ninth place at Oasby. He joins the 2014 first season Eventing line-up for me, along with KL

# Spring has sprung!

After a long and very wet winter, spring has finally arrived, the clocks have changed and since the last diary it's been all go on the yard – we have quite literally sprung into action!

OMAR. 'Omar' is a homebred stallion from the Kington Langley Stud, which Bob Livock owns and runs. He's quite a stunner and has had two BE100 top 10 placings already, so is one to watch! Meadle Maverick (Maverick) was an orphan and has had to overcome a lot at a young age. He is a huge personality on the yard and quite a character. He created quite an emotional first outing at Oasby, being placed fourth in his BE100 class.

Last but by no means least I welcome to the yard Springpower (Finn), owned by Jeremy and Andrea Brereton. 'Finn' has settled into the yard really well, enjoying the stable by the tack room. He likes to keep an eye on us all and is quite a personality! If he can master Eventing as quickly as opening and shutting the tack room door we will be on the winning podium in no time.

While finalising all the Event plans for the first quarter of the season, I received the news that I'd been selected as one of the team of four riders for the British CICO squad to represent Great Britain at Fontainebleau, France for the first leg of the 2014 FEI

Nations Cup Series, 20-23 March. Dax Van Ternieuebeke (Pluto) was such a star in France – we finished best Brit with an individual place of 13th and the team finished in third place. I often refer to him as the mighty Pluts, which he lived up to on this trip. He was originally bought as a hunter, but it was decided he was too smart and naughty for the hunting field. Clearly he was up for the very challenging Fontainebleau competition, which proved a pretty testing few days, with show jumping and cross country courses up to height with the time tight over strong tracks.

The first UK Event of the season at Isleham wasn't quite the flying start that I'd hoped for, although KBIS Starchaser redeemed my day with a seventh place in the OI. Two days of driving back and forth to Oasby in Lincolnshire were well worth it – a better second outing of the season for Team Taylor with seven top 10 placings. The highlight was Orlando winning his OI class, which was a great present for the Daltons who own a third share of Orlando, as they had just become grandparents to Florence. Will and Georgie Dalton are the very proud parents.

Lincolnshire was clearly a good omen and Team Taylor were on track with six out of 10 horses in the top 10. KBIS Stardust won his first Intermediate Event of the season, Allercombe Ellie won her OI class and KBIS Briarlands Matilda produced a solid performance to be placed fifth.

As this magazine goes to print we are counting down to Ballindenisk – wish me luck for the CICO3\* with Thistledown Poposki and Allercombe Ellie, while KBIS Starburst and It's Chico head to the CCI2\* and Merrywell Charlie Douglas the CIC2\*.

There will be lots to report in the next issue: the Team Taylor Easter egg hunt to keep Lily and Freddie happy, Lexington and the Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials, so I hope I can make all Team Taylor Owners proud as the season continues. 🐾

Izzy and Pluto

