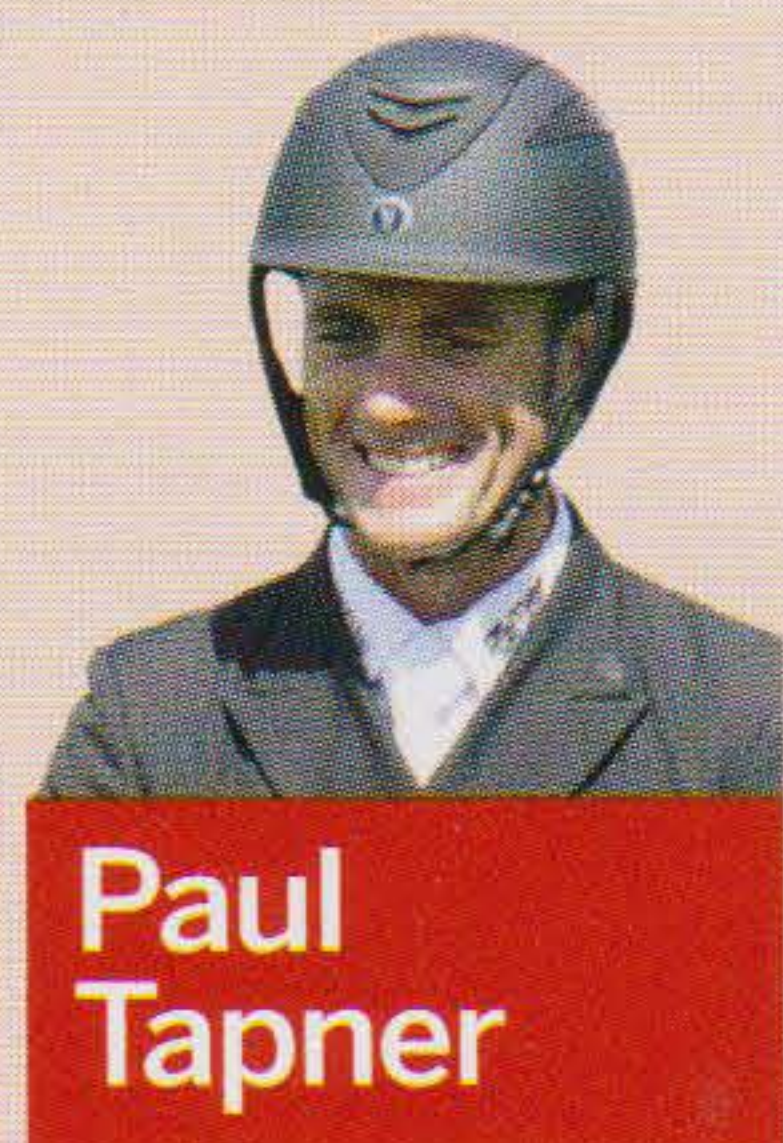


# The moment

June 2007: Salperton Park, Glos



“I was very committed to jumping the fence — I just didn't manage to get him to come with me!”



Paul Tapner

**THIS** photo of me and Cheers Woody at Salperton novice regional final is on my wall of horrors — my tackroom door. It is covered in similar photos of crashes or near misses, to remind myself how ludicrous my job is.

Woody was in second place after dressage and showjumping going into the cross-country.

But at this combination he chested the second arrowhead at speed, bounced off out to the left and sent me flying.

I was very committed to jumping the fence — I just didn't manage to get him to come with me!

He cantered off down the cross-country course then pulled up. I did a forward dive roll on to the ground, got straight back on to my feet and started running after the horse to catch him. I climbed back on and finished the course.

I was riding a heap of horses that day, which meant I was pressed for time, so I knew I had to get straight back to the lorry park.

Another horse I had to ride in the same class, Carry On Joseph, was in the lead so I was pretty keen to get on him and win, which we did.

Cheers Woody's owners saw me finish the cross-country course in

fine style and with seemingly no delay to when I had started.

So when I told them, "Sorry, but I fell off", they thought that I was joking.

It wasn't until I got back from riding my next horse to find them cracking open the champagne to celebrate me qualifying their horse for the Gatcombe novice national championships, that I had to explain to them: "No, I really did fall off."

Even then it took me some time to convince them that it was a fairly spectacular fall — so I had to buy the photo to show them. **H&H**