



Paul Tapner puts problems at Chatsworth behind him by winning the CIC*** on Stormhill Michael



Matthew Wright takes third in CCI** section B on Dark Crusader, who he said was 'awesome' across country

across country, young rider Tom McEwen, 20, on Private Rudolf. But Tom hit two showjumps on the eight-year-old, who was ridden by Stephen Way last season, and dropped to seventh.

"I'm gutted for Tom," said Pippa immediately after his round. "He's been to stay with us for a winter and I was willing him to win."

Her eventual score of 50 gave her 1.3pen over runner-up Sam Griffiths, who rode Dinah Posford and Jules Carter's Touchdown mare Paulank Brockagh.

"She's a big, strong mare who's brave and careful — I've got high hopes for her," said the Australian. "She feels like a Badminton horse."

Matthew Wright stayed on his dressage mark of 51.9 to rise 10 places to third on Dark Crusader.

He was great — he's about as daft as me. I think it was probably the making of him

Matthew Wright on hunting Dark Crusader

"It's a pity the showjumping wasn't two holes bigger!" joked Matthew, who won Houghton's eventers' grand prix on the horse.

Previously competed by his owner Peter Laidlaw, Dark Crusader came to Matthew to hunt last winter.

"He was great — he's about as daft as me," said Matthew. "I think it was probably the making of him. He's just coming on to my wavelength now and is getting confident — he was awesome" >>

COURSE CHAT

THE Billy Stud's progeny are spreading round the globe — American-based British eventer Leslie Law has just bought Billy Beware's full-brother, Billy Buck.

PIPPA FUNNELL wasn't the only rider to complete a Houghton double. Ginnie Turnbull won both the four- and five-year-old Burghley young event horse classes, on Freckleton Mythago and Ardcore.

HOUGHTON has a natural hazard not found at other three-day events — a 1,000-strong herd of mostly white fallow deer. After an unfortunate incident one year when they galloped across the track and

spooked a horse whose rider fell off, the Houghton gamekeepers are now employed in monitoring their progress and keeping them away from the course during the event.

"The keepers also help Joe [Weller, who builds the course] take down and put up 4,000m of string each day as we can't keep it up overnight," said event organiser Alec Lochore.

HOUGHTON is owned and lived in by the Marquess of Cholmondeley. But it nearly passed out of the family's hands in the 19th century — it was offered by a grateful nation to the Duke of Wellington after his victory at Waterloo. He declined it.



Sam Griffiths finishes second to Pippa in CCI** section B on Paulank Brockagh: 'She feels like a Badminton horse'



Sarah Cohen stays on her dressage score for second in CCI** section C, riding Irish Jester

across country yesterday." Sam Penn and Sophie Bunch's Seven O Seven shot up from 22nd after dressage to fourth on 53.6, while Adrian Little was fifth on David Broadhurst's Millie Monday.

Uchin's 'ready for a big win'

THE other CCI** gave 19-year-old Dani Evans a first three-day event win. Riding her regular junior team partner Uchin, Dani led from pillar to post and finished on her 41.1 dressage mark.

"He's so special," she said. "We've done everything together — made mistakes, won medals — and he's so ready for a big win." Dani was unfazed by having to showjump clear to win.

"You couldn't ask for a better horse to jump on the last day. I have 100 per cent belief in him," she said.

Dani, like third-placed Gina Ruck, is aiming for a place at the young rider European Championships at Blair Castle this summer. The girls were split by their more experienced compatriot, Sarah Cohen, on Irish Jester, who was having his first three-day run since Blair in 2008.

"I was pregnant and then little niggly things kept stopping him getting to one," explained Sarah. "But he has come back in great form — he's a brilliant horse, so easy, and hopefully his problems are out of the way now."

Angela Tucker, who produced the Slyguff Joker 12-year-old and part-owns him with Sarah's husband Miles and Billy and Nick Harding, couldn't be at Houghton as she was judging at Tattersalls.

Sarah finished on her dressage score of 43.3 and Gina Ruck was

1.5pen behind her — also with a clean sheet — on Vipa Priba.

"He was wicked!" she exclaimed.

John-Paul Sheffield was fourth with Riverside James, now 16, and Nicola Wilson was fifth on her mother Mary's Annie Clover, who rolled a pole to drop from third.

A first for the Billy Stud

PIPPA FUNNELL'S other victory 24hr earlier was actually a first three-day win for the Billy Stud, courtesy of the "little black bomber", 15.2hh Billy Black Jack. They led throughout, ending on their classy dressage score of 37.8.

Less than a mark behind them, on 38.5, were Emilie Chandler and Coopers Law, also second to the winners at Chatsworth. It continues Emilie's excellent run of form so far this season.

Sally Williams, who part-owns Coopers Law with her aunt Nicola Dixon, said: "You know when Emilie brings your horse to an event that she has covered every angle. She's very thorough."

Coopers Law's dam, Miss Cooper, has scanned in-foal again to Coopers Law's sire, Mill Law.

A fence down by Kiltleay Brief dropped Piggy French to fourth, while a clear elevated Jeanette Brakewell and the attractive seven-year-old Walentino stallion Wesuvio, owned by Maria Delves and Alison Walton, to third place. Coral Keen (Zoe) was fifth.

Setting up for Luhmühlen

PAUL TAPNER and Stormhill Michael's final run before Luhmühlen CCI**** was far more positive than their previous outing at Chatsworth, where they had



Dani Evans, 19, scores her first three-day win by taking CCI** section C on her three-times junior squad partner Uchin

He's so special. We've done everything together — made mistakes, won medals — and he's so ready for a big win

Dani Evans on her CCI** winner Uchin

two uncharacteristic stops. This time they took the CIC*** by nine marks, adding just 7.2 time-faults to their 43 dressage score.

"We had a lot of work to do after Chatsworth, but we've ironed out the problems," said a relieved Paul. "It would have been pretty disappointing if we hadn't won here, to be honest."

Paul was also seventh on his other ride, Wickstead Didgeridoo, who was at his first three-star run. Second were another pair Paul

will meet at Luhmühlen — German rider Dirk Schrade and Hop And Skip, who were the fastest with 2.4 time-penalties.

"This is only my third competition on the horse," said Dirk, who was paying a first visit to Houghton. "He's a very nice pony — a little bit cheeky, but in a good way. He's a great little jumper and I'm excited about him."

Also putting a bad Chatsworth behind them were Julian Stillier and Chapel Amble in third,

Houghton in numbers

	STARTERS	CROSS-COUNTRY STARTERS	CROSS-COUNTRY JUMPING CLEARS
CCI*	100	94	59
CCI**	123	118	50
CCI**	43	37	21