

Showjumping

There's no stopping versatile Arlette II

**ARENA UK PREMIER,
GRANTHAM, LINCS**
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By Kerry Bowness

MARK BUNTING claimed the top prize in the winter grades A and B points qualifier by setting an early pace on Arlette II. The 10-year-old bay mare, owned by Mark's father William, took on the task with ease to claim victory in her first attempt at the class this season.

"She jumped in the final last year and finished third," said Mark, who won the grand prix at Solihull the week before (showjumping, 4 March).

Arlette had shown her promise on the second day of the show in the Cushionbed 1.40m, in which she and Mark finished equal first with Keith Shore (Stranger). An early draw in the winter A and B grand prix meant the pairing had to produce a hard target for others to follow.

A white oxer off a corner and a late double on course-designer Di Boddy's first-round track fell numerous times. But 13 of the 31 starters remained clear.

Andrew Davies (Wonderful Melody Van De Helle) was the first over the shortened course and recorded a fast enough clear for eventual second place.

Mark and Arlette came two later and gained a 1.3sec advantage to take the lead. Keith Shore and Stranger followed immediately,

'She's really handy and can cope with any type of class': Mark Bunting and Arlette II are back in the winner's enclosure for the second consecutive week



taking third place. And, despite four clears from the remaining eight combinations, the top trio remained unchanged.

"The first fence [the white oxer from round one] was difficult because you had to turn into it," said Mark. "And there were no real options to take on the course, you just had to be the fastest across the floor. Arlette is always good when it comes to speed."

Arlette — a former Horse &

Hound Foxhunter, six-year-old and seven-year-old finalist — has been with Mark since she was four years old and has had international success during her career.

"She's really handy and can cope with any type of class," said Mark.

Crippen surprised with treble
SIMON CRIPPEN came away from Arena UK with three qualifying tickets for the British

Open and Hickstead after claiming both winter grade C passes and the top spot in the winter B and C qualifier.

With 88 starters in the winter grade C class, Simon was pleasantly surprised at his result.

"When there are almost 90 in a class and only two qualifying places, you don't expect to be taking both," he said.

In the 38-horse jump-off, rider after rider faulted trying to catch Michael Jones' fast starting round on Valieta. Some then opted for safer steadier clears, but Simon knew the 17hh Voss, a son of Voltaire, had the scope to turn back to fences.

"I have to keep him in front of the bridle. Then it feels as though he could jump a house," said Simon. "I've only had him two months and he's beginning to get softer and really jumping."

Simon moved into first place with Allo Brake's stallion, a former ride of Stuart Harvey, with another ride left to come.

Nobody had bettered either his or Michael's times as his turn

If the boot fits...

JOE WHITAKER and Shearwater Upanda took the £500 first prize in the accumulator, during which only four riders recorded a maximum 44 points.

"It was a big course. After fence five it seemed to get massive," said Joe, who has ridden Kathy Tansey and Linda Montgomery's nine-year-old No Limit mare for two years. "The joker [a set of planks, pictured right] must have been 1.60m."

Shearwater Upanda, who was produced by Neil Fiddes, is benefiting from the use of Veredus piaffe shield overreach boots, which have prevented her from recurrent self-injury.

"She's got a big chest and jumps wide with her front legs. She kept striking her elbows with her shoes," said Joe. "The padding and shape of the boots, combined with the use of a fluffy sheepskin girth cover, seem to have stopped that from happening."



Shearwater Upanda's unique jumping style works for Joe Whitaker



George Whitaker (Tubana) lands the World Class development programme young riders class



Simon Crippen heads to the British Open with new ride 17th Voss after claiming the top winter grade C ticket



Keith Shore and Voyager III qualify for the Blue Chip Dynamic B and C in first place

Sally McSharry's Tubana. Tubana's turning ability enabled George to gain precious time early on over the jump-off track and he headed the class by 3sec from Yazmin Pinchen (Zodiac Z).

George has ridden the nine-year-old chestnut mare since November and will now build on his partnership with her. This win takes some pressure off gaining enough points to qualify for the final after he could not jump in it last year.

"I qualified Kairouan Rouge, but he was injured just before the final," said George. "As it's horse-rider combinations that qualify, I couldn't jump in it."

Renewed confidence between horse and rider enabled Melissa Gair and Bowes Calvaro to head the Halsall Electrical 1.25m qualifier.

"He scared himself last year landing on a back bar, I was inexperienced and he was young," said Melissa. "We've worked on it and now we trust each other."

Keith Shore and Voyager III headed the Blue Chip Dynamic B and C qualifier here.

The ride on Voyager, out of Charlotte Platt's Paulien and by Atlantic Z, is shared with owner Simon Houghton's daughter, Kate, who hunts and showjumps him.

"He'll mostly be competed by Kate now," said Keith. "He's qualified for two Blue Chip finals, but I'll have to wait and see if I'll be going to them."

Leading rider



Ellen Whitaker picks up the keys to her new car

THROUGHOUT the show a leading horse-rider combination table ran, with points given for placings. The prize was the use of a SsangYong Kyrone 4x4 car for a year.

Three wins in the High Offley Stud 1.30m classes on Royal Rose II for Ellen Whitaker, who was also first and second with CS Online and Equimax Ocolado in the 1.40m open, secured the keys.

Ellen gained the bonus prize just in time as Jodi Streeter's stallion is now up for sale.

Points

Ellen Whitaker (Royal Rose II) 40
 Mark Bunting (Ariette II) 24
 Simon Crippen (Voss) 21
 Steven Whitaker (Ugo V) 20
 Keith Shore (Stranger) 20
 Melissa Gair (Bowes Calvaro) 20

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Simon Crippen on the impressive son of Voltaire who he's been riding for two months

came with Jenny Bingham's Louis Latour, a ride bought from one of Simon's pupils, Kim Ashley.

"Having a good lead with Voss meant I could have a real crack again," said Simon.

He completed his round 0.21sec faster than Michael to take the second ticket.

Simon just missed out on claiming both tickets in the winter grades B and C final, too, when Bruce Menzies and reigning Horse & Hound Foxhunter champion Sultan V split his winning ride Ondine Du Logis from Voss in third.

"This was Ondine Du Logis' first show back after a few months' break," said Simon of Judy Ross's eight-year-old mare. "She's grade B now and ready to go on and do bigger things. I'll do some trials with her this summer and hopefully take her abroad."

Whitaker tops young riders

HALF of the 34-strong field in the World Class development programme young riders jumped before the first of 10 clear rounds was produced. It was the last of those, George Whitaker, 17, who emerged victorious with

Results

Tri-Zone newcomers.—1, Kossan Lad (K Short); 2, Zorlando (V Bevan); 3, Forever Cruising (L Redfeam). **1.10m.**—1, Ginellie II (R Hill); 2, Bowes Calvaro (M Gair); 3, Torlanda (M Boddy). **Horse & Hound Foxhunter.**—1, Savoy (T Whitaker); 2, Cappuccino V (S Whitaker); 3, Casal George (A Thompson). **1.20m.**—1, Tornado III (R Hopkinson); 2, Little Magic (K Doyle); 3, Capello II (J Dimmock). **High Offley Stud 1.30m.**—1, Royal Rose II (E Whitaker); 2, Ugo IV (S Whitaker); 3, Little Tinker II (M Jones). **1.40m.**—1 & 2, CS Online & Equimax Ocolado (E Whitaker); 3, Tino II (V Bevan). **27 Feb: Horse & Hound Foxhunter/**

grade C.—1, Ullaballoo VI (S Revell); 2, Little Magic; 3, Diaghilev (A Edwards). **BS Business Partnership winter grade C.**—1 & 2, Voss & Louis Latour (S Crippen); 3, Valieta (M Jones). **High Offley Stud 1.30m.**—1, Utara II (F McSharry); 2, Ugo IV (S Whitaker); 3, Bowes Calvaro (M Gair). **Cusionbed 1.40m.**—1eq, Stranger (K Shore) & Ariette II (M Bunting); 3, Opportunity B (H Tredwell). **28 Feb: Halsall Electrical 1.25m.**—1, Bowes Calvaro (M Gair); 2, Ginellie; 3, Tornado III. **High Offley Stud 1.30m.**—1, Royal Rose II; 2, Alana Van De Lambroekhoeve (J Andrews); 3, Raymond III (M Cartnell). **winter grade B&C.**—1 & 3,

Ondine Du Logis & Voss (S Crippen); 2, Sultan V (B Menzies). **accumulator.**—1, Shearwater Upana (J Whitaker); 2, Camielo (J McGlory); 3, Wokando (K Doyle). **WCDD yr.**—1, Tubana (G Whitaker); 2, Zodiac Z (Y Pinchen). **1 Mar: High Offley Stud 1.30m.**—1, Royal Rose II; 2, Sir Graditz (A Davies); 3, Univeau (P Miller). **Blue Chip Dynamic B&C.**—1, Voyager III (K Shore); 2, Handels Kosmos (T Newman); 3, KBIS Yorkshire Business (T Fletcher). **winter A&B grand prix.**—1, Ariette II; 2, Wonderful Melody Van De Helle (A Davies); 3, Stranger (K Shore).