



Throughout the winter, many British Showjumping members have one aim – qualifying for the Royal International Horse Show and experiencing the thrill of riding into the hallowed Hickstead International Arena. For a select few, living the dream goes to the ultimate – taking the winning lap of honour.

Two exciting young stallions came to the fore in the senior winter finals.

The Old Lodge's Super Trooper De Ness robustly defended his Russells Catering Winter B and C Championship with rider Nicky Boulter, and for the second consecutive year, the striking black stallion landed the title.

Drawn first on Old Lodge's Ja Waher, Nicky had set a fast target, but the competition was hot, and they lay in fourth as Nicky entered the ring the second time on Super Trooper De Ness. Setting sail at the gallop, however, she wiped almost two seconds from the leading time for victory.

Nicky has steadily produced this Vigo D'Arsoilles son since his purchase at Addington's 2007 Brightwells Sale. Building on their successful 2009 season, where they also gained the HOYS seven and eight-year-old titles, the eight-year-old has been aimed at carefully selected county shows this year and looks to have a glittering International career ahead of him.

"He's simply the best I've ever ridden," said Nicky about the handsome Trooper, who is proving popular as a sire, with several attractive foals on the floor this time.

Final draws had the added advantage here, where every one of the five national finals was won from the desired last-to-go place.

Going last in the British Showjumping Business Partnership Winter Novice jump-off, which again fielded seven, paid handsomely for Greg Taylor. Riding for Jackie Kemp, the Scottish young rider eased Dutchman 38 into victory by half a second.

Sired by Emile Faurie's grand prix ride Dream of Heidelberg, this licensed and performance-tested stallion was bred in Germany for dressage and only started showjumping as a six-year-old, but this appears to be his forte. Greg, 19, took on the ride in September and qualified for both HOYS Tri-Zone Newcomers and Horse and Hound Foxhunter finals.

"He had a bit of a 'look' in the arena in the first round, but was great in the jump-off" said Greg, who finds the seven-year-old easily adjustable and athletic.

### Winning Wards gain rewards!

Ward was the byword in the small pony championships as Emily Ward clinched the 128cm title and Darby Ward (no relation) added yet another major title to her ever-increasing tally on super-pony More Than Milton.

Darby had the advantage of an early round on Oakhurst In The Spotlight after taking two through to the six-pony 138cm jump-off, but her early lead on the spotty nine-year-old pony was fractionally reduced by Kerstin Deakin on The Agent. However, with supreme confidence on her 2009 HOYS winner More Than Milton, Darby wiped four sec away to wrest the Hickstead crown.

"They are so awesomely scopey, I don't worry about the height" said Darby, who reckons More Than Milton – known as 'Steel' at home – is now at his very best.



Greg Taylor & Dutchman 38

It was a busy week for Emily Ward, 11, who had two ponies in the 128cm final and three working hunter ponies at Hickstead. Victory came in the 128cm as Rockingham Shadow – last year's champion with Christie Prichard – outpaced all in the 10 pony jump-off with three sec in hand over closest competitor Faye Adams and Martha's Darling.

Emily occasionally benefits from training with the great Michael Whitaker, as dad Nick owns several of Michael's horses, and also has dressage lessons with step-mum Kelly.

She was denied a win in the showing ring, but Emily did stand in the line-up. Noble Tureen Lass was third in the Working Hunter Pony Nursery Stakes, while Pontsarn Sidan claimed sixth in the 122cm Mountain and Moorland Working Hunter Pony.

Millie Allen wasn't due to ride in the Oakley JC championship, but when best friend Amy Inglis was selected to ride for Britain in the Pony European Championships, which clashed dates with Hickstead, Millie was first choice to take the reins on Herbie's Double Trouble.



British Showjumping International Ambassador Harvey Smith

And that decision was fully justified when Millie guided her catch ride into the top spot in the seven pony decider with over three seconds to spare from nearest rival Harriet Rawson-Smith and Never Tell.

Millie has been riding on a crest of a wave this summer. She was named British Showjumping's Performance of the Month for May following her Bonheiden children-on-horses victory with Trueleeva – followed by her team gold and individual silver medals at the European Championships.