



'Clever and feisty'
Spring Ambition lands
the open intermediate
on a clean sheet
with Ros Canter

Canter strolls to four-timer

A European gold medallist prolongs her run of form over a track that is built like a 'mini Blenheim or Bramham'

Keysoe (3), The College EC, Beds

By CATHERINE AUSTEN

THAT'S what gold does for a girl. A week after playing her part in Britain's win at the European Championships, Ros Canter took four horses to Keysoe on the Friday of the event and came home with four red rosettes.

"Confidence does great things!" she said. "But it shows what a great team I have at home and how hard everyone has worked while I was away."

Her victories included all three intermediate classes. She took the open intermediate on Ian Scott's

home-bred eight-year-old Spring Ambition, whom Ros has ridden since she broke the Handel II mare in. The pair finished on their dressage score of 25.9.

"She's very cool — a 15.2hh half-pony who is clever and careful, but quite feisty," said Ros. "She tries to tell me what to do every day of the week."

Ros said that showjumping is Spring Ambition's strength, and she jumped one of just 16 clears across all three sections

in that phase. There were plenty of cricket scores and some eliminations.

"The course walked quite nicely, but you had to think about each distance and ride them accurately and carefully," she said.

Dag Albert led the dressage with 23.2 on Chablis Grand Cru, but a rail down meant he had to settle for second place.

Ros won intermediate section D on another mare, the seven-year-old Mermus R Diamonds. Her owner Richard Coney was part of Britain's silver medal-winning team at the junior

Europeans this summer, and he will eventually take over the ride on Mermus R Diamonds.

Her leading dressage mark of 26.1, clear showjumping and 5.2 cross-country time-faults left her half a mark ahead of DG Maradona and Mary Edmundson.

Ros said: "She's a giver who improves every time she runs."

IMP SCOOPS NARROW WIN

ROS' third intermediate victory came aboard Trevor Holliday's Monarch's Little Imp. The 11-year-old took section E by 0.6 of a penalty from Isabella Castle and Trelotte, scoring 34.6 in the dressage, again showjumping clear and adding 1.6 time-faults round Angus Smales' cross-country track.

"He's a machine across country and great fun to ride," she said. "His biggest weakness is that he tries too hard — 120% all day, every day. I was particularly pleased with his showjumping."

Michael Winter was in pole position after dressage with the only sub-30 mark of the class — 28.4 — on Shannondale Arlo, but a second-phase score of 24 dropped them down the order.

Ros praised Angus Smales' courses, saying: "I was really impressed. They made you want to ride forward. The questions were quite kind, but they were so well built that it was like jumping round Blenheim or Bramham at intermediate height."

Organiser Simon Hunter said: "With Angus and [course-builder] Dominic Moore, we've got the severity, the rhythm and the flow of the tracks spot-on. We've done a lot of work on the ground and have learnt how to manage it. All three of our events this year have been run on good ground, although we were lucky with the weather for this one."

Simon says he is "gently evolving" the event, and would love to hold a CIC* and CIC2* if the opportunity arose. **H&H**