

**31** riders in the BE100 championship finished on their dressage score

# Talented Boy is just that

**MITSUBISHI MOTORS GRASSROOTS CHAMPIONSHIP, BADMINTON, GLOS**  
20-21 April

By Ellie Hughes

JUST six days after winning the Petplan Equine Area Festival novice open title at the Winter Dressage Championships, single mother Kelly Turner went on to lift the Mitsubishi Motors Grassroots BE100 crown at Badminton, finishing on a dressage score of 25.8 with her own Talented Boy.

"It's been a fantastic week. I usually get really nervous on the big occasions, but today was the first time I was able to keep my nerves under control," said Kelly, who confessed, when prompted, that keeping in a positive frame of mind and sticking to superstitions was the key. "I'm wearing the same pair of old socks with holes that I wore last week at Hartpury."

Kelly has owned the now 11-year-old Talented Boy — known as "Amigo" — since he was four.

"I owe much of my success to my father Michael Turner, who has helped me over the years," said Kelly, who is also trained by Gill Watson, Nicola McGivern and Nick Turner.

The top five BE100 combinations all completed on their dressage scores, including

runner-up Kathy Emery and The Witham Widget, who also competed at these championships last year.

"We didn't do so well 12 months ago — she couldn't cope with the atmosphere of the international-sized arena and totally flipped her lid," explained Kathy, who set about reconstructing a 20 x 60 arena, complete with white boards and flowers, at home. "It seems to have worked as she was totally settled this year."

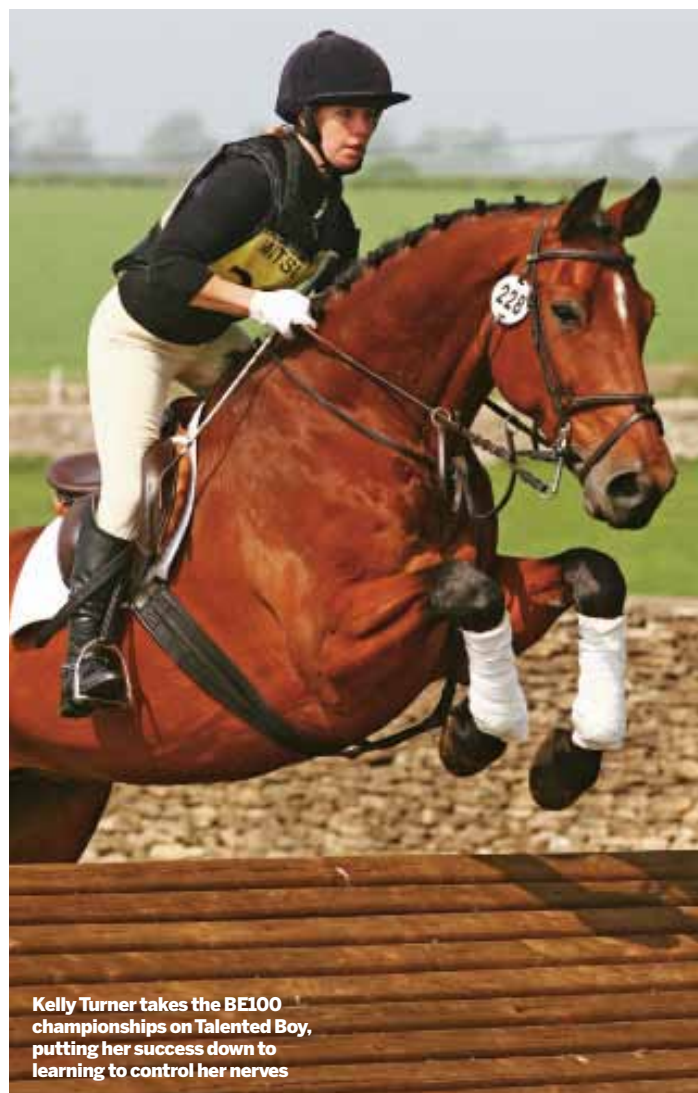
Third-placed Lucyanna Westaway took a break from revising for her A levels at Hurstwood College, Surrey, to compete at Badminton with Raindance III. It was a case of second-time lucky for Lucyanna, who qualified for this final last year, but had to withdraw 10 days before after Raindance sustained a stress fracture.

"He was off for five months, which meant we missed most of the season," she said.

## Alexandra's Diamond sparkles

PART-time nurse Alexandra Farrar-Fry was cream of the crop in the BE90 championship with Mariam Haque's six-year-old Diamond Trefoil, a horse who wasn't destined for eventing.

"When he came to me we weren't sure of his potential, but he has taken to eventing brilliantly," said Alexandra, whose



Kelly Turner takes the BE100 championships on Talented Boy, putting her success down to learning to control her nerves

introduction to the sport came through default.

"I had always shown working hunter ponies and I decided to have a go at an event with one of my 15-handers — that's how it started," she explained.

The pair led from the front, completing on their dressage score of 26.

"There was a lot more pressure being in the lead after the dressage as I was so anxious not to throw it away, but I enjoyed every minute of the cross-country course," said Alexandra.

Runner-up Frances Davies — a 52-year-old corporate financier — groomed for Lucinda Green's horse, Killaire, when he won Badminton in 1979.

"I remember every moment of that experience and, although this is obviously a totally different situation, being back at Badminton has been so exciting," she said.

Frances and Dark Pretender finished on a total of 30.5, 1.5 penalties ahead of third-placed Caroline Bridge (Leonardas 103), who competed in the same class here last year.

"The mixture of emotions you experience at the start of the cross-country is incredible — it's



Caroline Bridge takes third in the BE90 class on six-year-old Leonardas 103

## TALKING POINT

**Should stopwatches be allowed at the Grassroots Championships?**

IRISH rider Sam Watson, who turned his attentions to journalism at Badminton after he was forced to withdraw his horse Horseware Bushman from the main event, questioned whether — given that 16 riders across the two Grassroots sections were penalised for going too fast across the country — stopwatches should be allowed for the championship.

"Last year, the conditions were wet and the course rode a lot

slower than this time around. It can be difficult to judge pace in these instances and, given that this competition is the pinnacle of the season for many riders, I wonder whether it would be fairer to allow watches just for Badminton," he said.

When asked for a show of hands, all six riders in the post-event press conference agreed.

"When there is so much at stake, I think that allowing stopwatches would be a good move just for the championship," said BE90 winner Alexandra Farrar-Fry.