



Evening – Dressage

Thursday 5th October

Charlotte Dujardin takes back the Dressage Future Elite Championship title

Day two at Horse of the Year Show held at the NEC in Birmingham is the day for dressage enthusiasts. Inviting forward eight of the most promising young dressage horses of Great Britain, the Championship showcases an Intermediate I Freestyle to music for eligible horses aged between eight and ten years old.

Under the experienced eyes of judges Stephen Clarke, Sandy Phillips and Andrew Gardner, spectators were treated to spectacular performances from some of Britain's most successful dressage riders.

But it was the queen of dressage, Charlotte Dujardin, who achieved the highest score of the night riding eight-year-old mare, Times Kismet. Having held the title for five consecutive years until her career break in 2022 to have her daughter Isobella, Charlotte was back to successfully win back her title scoring an impressive 83.75%.

This young mare, owned by Peter Bradshaw, has been ridden by Charlotte for the past four years. They have been steadily progressing through the stages and saw success winning the CDI4* Prix St Georges at CHIO Aachen in June this summer.

A promising young partnership for the future, Charlotte said: "I'm absolutely thrilled with my performance tonight. She's only eight-years-old and she's done a handful of shows. I always think this is such a good experience for the young horses here at HOYS. You can't re-create these arenas and this atmosphere, so I thought it would be good for her.

"We did Aachen and she won there, then we went to the nationals and she won there. They are both outdoor shows though, so it's great to see what they are like indoors. She just took it like a real pro and for me that's all you can ask.

"She's a very tall mare, and at four-years-old she was just all legs. We've been taking our time with her to build up her strength. She's like the super model of the dressage world. We didn't really know what we had until I started training her and her brain is brilliant. She just goes into the arena and takes it all in her stride like she's done it all before."

With big smiles all round and a relaxed composure, Charlotte added: "Being a mum has really opened my eyes. I love what I do and it is an incredible sport, but it is only a game and there is always another day. I have discovered another side to myself that I have never known before. The love I have for Isobella is so special and I think in some ways I enjoy riding more because I have taken the pressure off myself."

Judge Stephen Clarke spoke fondly of the mare after her test, saying: "Another top-quality horse, how lucky are we? To have this class as a stage to expose these young horses to an

indoor atmosphere like this is very important, and there was great talent on display here tonight.”

Reigning champion Becky Moody was back, this year riding James Bond scoring a respectable 77.84%. Third place went to Michael Eilberg riding MSJ Encore, who scored 74.96%.

Charlotte gave birth to her daughter Isabella in March this year, but returned to competition just nine weeks after that and has since helped Great Britain win Team Gold at the recent European championships in August. Charlotte believes Times Kismet has an exciting future ahead of her and is relishing the chance to compete at next year’s Summer Olympics in Paris.

Audio interview with Charlotte:

<https://www.lloydbell.co.uk/access2/index.php?d=1477&b=32807>