

Rozzie Ryan



Rider of the Month

Rozzie Ryan takes our Eqvalan Rider of the Month Award with a series of stunning performances on two horses... dominating the small tour with her stallion, Jive Magic and forcing her way into Games Team contention with Donna Carrera...

Tactlessly I reminded Rozzie that it had been a while since she was knocking on the door for Olympic team selection, not since she just – and controversially – missed out for Sydney...

"Thanks for reminding me, Chris (she is laughing) – I have had a very frustrating time. I've had various horses that have got to Grand Prix and fallen by the wayside, which is very sad. There was Kaleb, then Legend. It has been far too long."

You don't ever lose the focus, you are determined to get to the top again?

"Absolutely. I wouldn't keep competing if I didn't. Sometimes I sort of wish I didn't want to, but I really really love competitions. I think my favourite place is actually in the competition arena. I think you benefit so much from competing, it keeps you very realistic about how you are going with your training."

Your last almost Olympic horse was a complicated gelding – Excellent – now you are trying to get there with a complicated mare – Donna – what does that say about you?

"I must be complicated I think! I don't know. I have questioned that at times. I found Legend was nearly my perfect competition horse... nearly perfect temperament for me, so I was very sad when he didn't keep going at Grand Prix. Maybe he wasn't complicated enough? I do think a lot of the top horses are a bit complicated. It is also just not that easy to produce horses to Grand Prix and then keep them there. Otherwise there would be more horses and riders at Grand Prix. Maybe I'm just a slow producer... I think it is probably tougher than people realise to produce them to Grand Prix. And when you get there, you learn a lot about managing and keeping them going at that level."

What has been the trick with Donna – she has always looked a bit difficult in the past and now she is going so well?

"She's a very sensitive soul. She is a princess, and I don't think she liked me very much to start with. I don't know if she likes anyone as far as work is concerned, I just don't think she was easily convinced that work was a good idea. I always used to think she was just one of those ladies who wanted to do lunch and look beautiful. She has really mellowed with age. I think a lot of the Warmbloods are much better as teenagers. She has just become a much softer personality. I think part of her problem was that she was so defensive about everything, and as she becomes more and more confident, she improves..."

Are you starting to feel a little confident about your chances of going to Hong Kong next year?

"I think we've both still got improving to do, and I think that is the exciting thing about her – she is definitely still improving, she has got more to show. Even just in the past few days

schooling at home, I've suddenly felt there's more there and she wants to offer more. If she makes as much improvement this year as she has made in the last year, then definitely she is going to be looked at, for sure."

The other horse, Jive Magic, is a rather different person?

"He is just the most beautiful person! He's still kind of immature and gangly, even though he is not a youngster any more. He's maybe not the sharpest tool in the shed, but he's one of the nicest personalities you could imagine. He's just been a little bit slower than I hoped – but we did have more than our share of accidents along the way."

Is it special that you've had him right from the start?

"It's fantastic! I've had him since he was six weeks old. I saw him when

he was still on his mother in a cow paddock in Holland. He really wasn't the most beautiful yearling, people found it hard to say polite things about him actually – now when you see him, and I think he is an amazing horse, and I am very excited and lucky that he is as good as he is. I think he is going to be another one, worth waiting for..."

Last time you lined up for an Olympic place, you had Heath nicely tucked off in the eventing training camp – now he's very much part of the dressage scene too... are you friendly rivals?

"I think we are both naturally very competitive, neither of us particularly likes being beaten but we've got a good thing going. If I have to be beaten by someone, then it doesn't upset me being beaten by Heath.... Much."

Each Eqvalan Gold Rider of the month receives 6 syringes of Eqvalan Gold in recognition of their achievement.



Jive Magic



Donna Carrera