

# EQVALAN GOLD

## Rider of the Month

This month's rider of the month, is Brett Parbery who led the Australian dressage team to victory in the Regional Olympic qualifier, riding Carolyn Lieutenant's Victory Salute...

Like everyone else, Brett had a non-lead up to the competition:

"No competitions, and I really need shows. My horse and I need ring match practice..."

*And yet the test at SIEC was probably your best test?*

"We are getting better. Come March, the horse will have been 12 months in Grand Prix and he is getting more confirmed, stronger. His head is coping with it better – he's a big, soft horse mentally and over-sensitive sometimes, so his head is coping better with Grand Prix work. If we'd had shows to go to coming in, I think we could have done even better. I think we could have done a more polished test, there were little things in there – I was trying to work out what he was thinking because some of the things he did were very uncharacteristic."

*Watching you warm up in piaffe, I thought, gee that must feel good to have the piaffe going so well...*

"Yeah, this horse can really piaffe and passage. If I don't ride him right, then we don't get it, but if I ride him right, if I concentrate, then he's fantastic."

*You had a little whoops going into your passage transition...*

"And that is a transition we always get. It was like Heath with his passage / canter, we always get that transition – but I took it too cheap, I was thinking about how I was going to ride the next piaffe, how I was going to come through the corner, and just missed the walk / passage. I must have given a confused aid... As soon as I felt him go to canter, I thought 'oh, oh' and just backed off and he knew the transition then. It was almost like I over confused him, as soon as I backed off and let him make up his own mind, he knew what he was supposed to do. They

get to know that transition and I should have left him alone, but I tried to add something, a big one... too much."



*He has never had equine influenza?*

"He's never been sick, we are very lucky we didn't get it and the EFA to their credit, got on to us really quickly with vaccines."

*So now you are off to Europe?*

"We've officially gone into quarantine today – Donna Carrera and Victory Salute. We fly out on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, provided we have the quarantine in place. I'll spend a few days in Holland at a friend's place, to rest the horse, then to Hubertus Schmidt, to join Mary Hanna who is already training there. I had a couple of lessons with Hubertus Schmidt last year, and I found him brilliant, found that he liked the horse, and everything we did with the horse, made him better, so I thought he was the obvious choice. The other thing is that I relate well to a guy like Hubertus, he's a farmer who loves riding horses, I grew up on a farm, I'm a country boy, that style suits me better than the prima donna atmosphere. I'm most comfortable in that sort of environment..."

"We'll go in March, the selection show is on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, how we go there will determine how long we'll be away."

*That's a pretty big commitment, is it hard to handle when you have just set up your own business?*

"My wife Mel will run the stable. We'll reduce the numbers to a manage-

able amount. She'll ride a few horses. Victory Salute's owner, Carolyn Lieutenant is contributing, we've got a grant from the EFA, and we've been saving – I've been doing clinics every weekend. And because I've been doing clinics in Singapore, I can come home, do a clinic in Singapore on the way, come to Australia, do some clinics, back to Singapore, another clinic, then back to Europe. I think I'll do that at least once, maybe twice. Hopefully Hubertus will have some work for me – if not with him, just down at the local riding school. I don't care if I have to stack supermarket shelves, but I want to be living on Euros, not spending Australian dollars in Europe..."

*How much more do you think you can get out of the horse?*

"Mr Schüle, the German judge, said to me, you get this horse in Europe and he is a 70% horse, and I think we can get there. I think we can do it. If anyone can unlock it, Hubertus is the one, it's a challenge, I can't wait."

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



# Brett Parbery