

HIGH FLYING SCORES GIVE ADELINDE GOLD – AND LAURA BRONZE

A new star was born for The Netherlands when Adelinde Cornelisson set a record score and earned herself her first individual dressage medal when winning the gold for the Grand Prix Special at the Alltech FEI European Dressage Championships at Windsor Castle.

In a close and exciting competition, Adelinde headed her team compatriot Edward Gal and Moorlands Totilas and, in an thrilling day for the home crowd, Laura Bechtolsheimer not only gained the first British European dressage medal for 16 years – since Emile Faurie and Virtu at Lipica in 1993 - but set new heights in becoming the first ever British dressage rider to score over 80%.

Adelinde and the Dutch-bred Parzival, the ultimate combination of thirty, had to produce the ride of their lives after Edward and his super star black stallion, even with a few mistakes, had already returned a new record score.

“I had no idea what the others had scored – I just went in the arena to ride my own test,” said Adelinde, who gave up a teaching career just two years ago to become a full-time rider. The result was, however, a surprise. “I read the wrong score and thought I was second – it was not until Edward told me I had beaten him that I knew I had won.”

Edward and Totilas, now a licensed KWPN stallion on the strength of his performance, gained the individual silver medal after a test of breath-taking movements – the combination recorded 32 tens from the five judges – but some mistakes also.

“He got a little bit backward and there was some tension in the walk and the one-time changes,” said Edward. “But he is only nine-years-old and I know he can do better and there is more to come yet.”

Twenty-four-year old Laura and the 14-year-old Danish bred Mistral Hojris had the difficult task of following the flamboyant Dutch combination into the arena for their test. Both kept their cool to produce their best test ever at a time that mattered most.

“I knew I had a talented horse – he is the most genuine horse I have ever ridden – and I knew I had a chance of doing well but to pull it off is something else,” said Laura. “Hojris gave me his all and to be a part of these Championships and do well, especially here in Britain, is very special.”

After a more relaxed test from Salinero, defending champion Anky Van Grunsven took fourth place ahead of young Austrian rider Victoria Max-Theurer – at 23 the youngest rider in the class – and her homebred stallion Augustin in fifth, while German young rider Matthias Alexander Rath and Sterntaler took sixth.

“Never have we seen such a high standard of dressage,” said Stephen Clarke, President of the Ground Jury. “To see the performances today was just outstanding, and the competition was wide open, which can only be good for the sport.

“All the riders did a fantastic job which is why we love the job that we do – we love being able to give tens. Today we saw performances that made the hair stand up on the back of your neck – and that was not just from the top three riders.”