

## Mosser Monopolizes In Final Phase

Bonnie Mosser bested them all in Sunday's show jumping phase to earn impressive come-from-behind victories in both the CCI\*\*\* and advanced division horse trial.

"The dressage has always been good enough," she said of the 9-year-old gray gelding Merloch, whose double-clear show jumping round in the CCI\*\*\* earned quite a response from the crowd. "Show jumping-wise he's usually been either no rails or one rail."

Merloch, who Mosser bought for a student in New Zealand four years ago, is a relatively new ride for the Unionville, Pa. trainer. The pair, in fourth place going into the final phase, clinched the win after leaders Will Coleman and Icarus dropped two rails and had 2 time faults. Second- and third-placed riders Stephen Bradley and Mara Dean also had a rail apiece, but were content with the outcome.

"It was just fun to have From back," said Bradley of his mount, who pulled a tendon before Jersey Fresh last year. "I'm absolutely thrilled. He was happy to get through a course again. He was good in all three phases." The pair maintained their second place status, while Dean kept her third.

"This is really a turning point. It's been a bumpy road and I feel like we've finally smoothed it out," said Dean, alluding to her mount's own health problems and cross-country issues. "I can't be more excited."

Before the CCI\*\*\* victory, Mosser had captured her first win of the day aboard Close The Deal. The pair topped the advanced horse trial division, which served as a mandatory outing for American and Canadian Pan Am Games hopefuls. Mosser and Close The Deal entered the stadium phase in third place and moved up after adding just 4 jumping faults to finish on a score of 47.

"He's got a bit of a red-headed streak in him," said Mosser of the chestnut gelding. "He can be a bit hot, especially in dressage. But he's powerful, and he jumps off the ground great."

Yesterday's leaders Jonathan Holling and Lion King II dropped down to second place after rails fell from three fences, bringing their three-day total to 49.9. Holling was slightly disappointed with his disorganized stadium round, after the pair posted the fastest clean cross-country round yesterday. "He wasn't tired," said Holling. "Honestly I wish I had a really good explanation. He felt great in the warm-up, felt great when I took him out this morning. We'll go back and figure it out."

Canadian young rider Waylon Roberts and his mount Paleface took down just one rail to finish third in the division with a score of 52.2. The 18-year-old said that he was "very serious" about attending the Pan Am Games this summer. "I don't know when [the Canadian selection committee] will tell us who's going," he said casually. "They're being indecisive about when they're going to decide."

U.S. riders hope to learn the selectors' final decisions by tomorrow (Monday) night. After today's wins in the CCI\*\*\* and the advanced division, and with three three-star horses ready to compete, this could be 44-year-old Mosser's chance to earn a red jacket.

In view of the Pan Am selection process, horses who did not run cross-country yesterday were still permitted to participate in the show jumping.

Up Spirit and Clark Montgomery topped the CCI\*\* division with a score of 55.6. The pair entered the stadium round with a two-rail lead, which they took advantage of, winning the competition by a mere .6 point. Montgomery's second mount Raconteur finished fifth and earned the award for being closest to optimum time on cross-country.

Buck Davidson and Ballynoecastle RM and Jessica Kiener aboard My Boy Bobby entered the stadium round tied for second place. Both competitors jumped impressive double-clear rounds, retaining yesterday's scores of 56.2. But Davidson and 9-year-old Ballynoecastle earned the red ribbon ahead of Kiener, as his cross-country time was closer to the optimum.

Unfortunately earlier in the day, three horses failed the final horse inspection and were not able to complete the show jumping phase. CCI\*\*\* horses Rather Well (Karl Slezak) and Tumble Dry (Jenna Schildmier), as well as Diana Smith's CCI\*\* horse One 2 One, were all spun from the jog.