

The silver section winner and overall second combination in the Elementary 59 were **Frances Morrissey** and her 17hh-plus Swarovski x Riccio eight-year-old Samba Spring on 70.78%. Frances said: "Heinz did quite well as a Novice horse, but that was because he's big and moves well, but it's only this year that I've started to feel that I've got a connected horse."

"We had a good score in the qualifier and Sally Andrews wouldn't throw marks at you, if she didn't think you'd earned them but I know what I get at home so I was disappointed with myself. I knew there were a few little mistakes and I felt it was 10 per cent below what we can do. It need to get him to the test in the right way so that I can show that to the judge."

Doing your homework is the way to success. **Lucy Durrant**, assistant head teacher at Thornton Heath Junior Girls School, also had her work marked by Sally Andrews who placed her fourth in her Elementary qualifier class overall and first in the bronze section with 66.72%.

Lucy rides a 14.2hh cob called There's Something About Mary. Lucy commented: "That was the best score at Elementary that we've had so far. We spent two years doing Prelim and Novice but last October I decided it was time to move on so we've been doing the more difficult stuff at home training with Kerry Mackin."



Remembering her test homework, Lucy said: "I kept Mary thinking forward right from the start and that paid off. I ensured that my leg yield was on a good line. I also tried to be really accurate riding the movements and to ride 'in the moment', not thinking about what was coming up next but paying attention to the 'now'. Kerry always says to me that I must make it good quality. There's no point in continuing a movement if it's not good quality it's better to correct it. I had the confidence that day to say, okay if something goes wrong, that's what I'll do"

med: "We don't feel the need to rush. We are starting to see some lovely work. After doing the regionals at Novice Bailey will probably step up to Medium. We don't take him out a lot he doesn't need to go to shows"

Sam concluded: "What we have discovered is that moving up from ponies for a child is a big transition and we wanted to do it properly. We bought a good horse and we're having a professional ride him to give him confidence. Morgann rides him at home but she's tied up with exams at the moment. Our plans are that Josh will continue to have the ride professionally and as and when Morgann wants to get more involved he's there ready for her."



Frances Morrissey: "Although I'm a professional freelance rider, I'm an amateur in terms of competing and 'Heinz' is my only competition horse."

When you're a one-horse person you put everything into them and you can forget that they don't ask to do it.

"We have our plans and our ambitions and perhaps we don't ask ourselves as often as we should, 'perhaps the horse needs a holiday?'"

"Last October Heinz had a stress fracture in his near fore from being kicked and it forced me to give him two months off followed by six months hacking. I got him fit trotting up hills like a real hunter. When he back into the school in February he was stronger and his ability to lengthen and shorten his frame and to collect in canter had improved. He's starting to be able to connect his brain to his back legs and move as one horse"

"I've worked on Mary being much more uphill and I've become able to adjust the speed, going in different gears within a gait — and adjusting my seat so that in my canter I can take it right back and forward. Most of the problems are mine. She is very quick to pick things up."

Top-scorer in the Novices were Josh Hill and the Bretton Woods eight-year-old, Bailey B, who scored 76.88% and 72.41% in the non-qualifier and qualifier tests. Sam Bloquet who bought Bailey as an eventual ride for her daughter Morgann, commented: "Bailey got a nine for canter. He's really coming into his own now and he seems so happy. It's taken a year to get him where we want him to be. We found him in Germany at a top auction and I think it's fair to say that he was produced to sell. Josh has been very patient with him. He's worked on his strength and using himself correctly. He is very expressive, but he doesn't need to be doing that all the time and Josh rarely does any medium trot at home."

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