

CLARK MONTGOMERY made his third visit to Belton Park a winning one, taking the 106-strong Lycetts CIC3*, run as the Grantham Cup, with Holly and William Becker's Loughan Glen (19 April). The horse was retired on the cross-country at Badminton last year when he tired, and a winter focusing on fitness and jumping has clearly paid dividends.

Second after dressage, the son of Limerick snatched victory from the first-phase leaders, Bill Levett and another Limerick offspring, Shannondale Titan, after the latter lowered a very costly showjump and finished the final phase a second slower.

"We kept him going all winter and he's come out this season feeling much stronger and more experienced," said Clark, who also felt the benefit of adding a burr to the left side of Loughan Glen's bit after the gelding ducked out on that side at both Boekelo last year and Weston Park last week.

"I loved the course and it was a great track to get horses galloping before a three-day," he added.

The pair's three-day of choice this spring is Luhmühlen.

"I'm going for Olympic qualification and although he needs a challenge, I wanted to opt for something slightly softer than Badminton," Clark admitted.

While Shannondale Titan enjoyed his final outing before heading to Badminton, there was no rest for his jockey, who hot-footed it home straight after his round ahead of flying to Kentucky the following morning.

Kitty King was best of the Brits with Persimmon in third, in an international top 10 that boasted riders from six countries. She also finished 16th with Ceylor LAN.

"Persimmon came out like a lion today," laughed Kitty. "We may have to have a quiet run next time out. I was most pleased with his showjumping



here – it was probably the best round he's ever jumped."

Padraig McCarthy riding Simon Porloe, who finished fourth, and Georgie Spence on Wil Limbo (11th), were the only two combinations to make the time across country. Stuart Buntine and Mark Phillips' track ran in the opposite direction to last year, and caused relatively few problems if ridden accurately and on a forward stride.

The Specsavers Test at 7ab, a table followed by three big strides to an angled corner, was the site of a handful of 20 penalties, as was the Equi-Trek Hollow, a sunken road combination three from home.

One to Note
OLIVER TOWNEND was the man to beat on Saturday, winning the Listers Mercedes-Benz CIC2* with Andrew

