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Subaru Houghton

# French's on track for London

**SUBARU HOUGHTON  
NORFOLK  
24-27 May**

By Pippa Roome

PIGGYFRENCH must surely have sealed her British Olympic team spot with a convincing win in the CIC\*\*\* section C on Jakarta.

"It's a relief after all the [wet weather] cancellations," she said. "It seems so long since we've been out competing at the top level with lots of pressure.

"I wanted him to look solid in all three phases. Winning is a bonus."

Michael Underwood and Piggy's father Wally's Jakarta finished on his third-placed dressage score of 38.1. If there has been a question mark about last year's Badminton runner-up, it's the fact he can get strong across country — a particular worry over Greenwich's twists — but on Saturday he gave Piggy a great ride.

"I think he's the best he's ever been," she said. "He feels so good in himself — even as an older horse he's strengthened up. He's got a whippet shape, but he's carrying more weight on his back now. I couldn't stop grinning when I got back."

New Zealand's Mark Todd was second after dressage on 36.3 with London hope NZB Campino. But he was one of 22 riders to incur showjumping time-faults in this section and his two cost him the win.

"It's annoying, but as he's my number one horse now I came here hoping he'd put up a good

**CIC\*\*\*  
NATIONS CUP**

**INDIVIDUALS**  
1st Piggy French on Jakarta (GBR)  
2nd Mark Todd on NZB Campino (NZL)  
3rd Sarah Cohen on Treason (GBR)

**TEAMS**  
1st Britain  
2nd Australia  
3rd Germany



Piggy French makes her bid for the British Olympic team by staying on her dressage score to win CIC\*\*\* section C on her 2011 team ride Jakarta



Alex Rozolovsky eyes up the top to the corner at the Hovest Perceval complex on the way to CCI\* victory with Wolv II



The Nations Cup prize-winners: Britain (first), Australia (second) and Germany (third)



Sam Griffiths takes CIC\*\*\* section D with Real Dancer, who was bred for dressage by Rotspon

performance in all three phases and he has," said Mark. "It's sad to lose NZB Land Vision [2011 Badminton winner, who is out for the year with injury, news, 10 May], but this horse is possibly as good."

Both Piggy and Mark might have been a place lower had it not been for a rare moment of confusion from William Fox-Pitt,

who led the dressage on 35.8 with Avoca Alibi and showjumped clear, but jumped the wrong final cross-country fence and was eliminated.

The following day, William's bad weekend continued with a horrible fall in the other CIC\*\*\* section when Neuf Des Coeurs chipped in a second stride at the

log at the top of the steps in the Shadwell Stud quarry (fence 22abc). He fell over it, briefly trapping William's leg under him. Both walked away, William limping slightly.

The bright spots on William's weekend were a 44 dressage and clear showjumping for Olympic possible Lionheart, who was then

withdrawn — he heads to Bramham — and sixth in the CCI\*\* for Chilli Morning.

**Britain claims Nations Cup** AS well as her individual win, Piggy French led the British team to victory in Houghton's FEI Nations Cup, which was run as part of this CIC\*\*\* and is the sole British leg

He's like a whole pile of spaghetti and you're trying to keep all the spaghetti going in the same direction

Lucinda Fredericks on the huge CCI\* runner-up Rovello II

of a new six-event series. The first was at Fontainebleau in March. This win was not any indicator of Olympic form, because no nation fielded its crack team. But as British performance manager Yogi Breisner said, it's always nice to win — and a 28-mark margin is never a bad sign.

"We hadn't budgeted to take teams to these competitions, so we decided to select the best from those already entered and I'm pleased with how they've gone," said Yogi.

Mary King provided the discard score with Derek Baden's Kings Tempress (21st), but didn't push

either of her horses to the max. With dressage scores in the 40s and double jumping clears, both the mare and Imperial Cavalier (11th) kept up Mary's Olympic hopes.

Francis Whittington (seventh) did his chances of selection no harm with a 44.1 dressage and the first of the six cross-country clears inside the time. The only minor blot was Margrete Paget's Sir Percival III bowling down to the double at fence six in the showjumping and taking the back rail off the spread in.

Anchorwoman Sarah Cohen was an impressive third on Preci Spark Limited's Grantham Cup winner Treason, who was just 1sec over the time across country after a 45.9 dressage.

"I've ridden him since he was four and we've got a great bond," said Sarah. "He's the nicest horse I've sat on — he's got the movement, the brain, the scope and the blood. It won't take long to fine-tune the dressage to be 10 marks better."

Does Sarah have a late claim