

Report from Blenheim International 2011

Competing at Blenheim for South Africa was especially great as there were a few South African supporters to cheer Paul and I on during the Dressage and XC phases of the competition. It was just a real shame we were not able to compete as a team. Its great riding for your Country but to ride on a South African team would have been brilliant! We need to get more South African horses and riders here, to the UK, where all the Major International events are.

The atmosphere at Blenheim was awesome! I cannot imagine how much better that could be when you are a team competitor with the added bonus of other team members to support and cheer on... It was great to be competing alongside fellow South African, Paul Hart. However, I felt gutted for Paul and sad, as if it were my own, when Paul's horse - Heartbreak Hill did not trot up sound after the holding box – we were all hoping and wishing Heartbreak Hill would pass on the 2nd trot up, I really felt for him.



I was pleased with my own performance and even more so for Uprising's performance. Uprising's dressage is showing consistent improvement and his results speak for themselves. To be in 5th place after the dressage was fantastic, especially in such a big, competitive field – My training and dedication in this phase is putting us up there with the big names and making us serious contenders and he has so much more to give.

Uprising's scope and bravery is beginning to make a 3 star course feel like a schooling round and I felt very proud to be entering the final phase still in 5th position after a very tiring XC course. However, to have 3 fences down in the showjumping was so disappointing. I felt more pained for Uprising who felt tired but tried his heart out, making 3 little mistakes in a very big and tough showjumping track, which led to the eventual leader not even producing a clear round.

That aside, a final position of 18th at an International 3 star event as competitive as Blenheim, on a young horse who is only just beginning to show his potential, ended my Blenheim competition with a feeling of proud representation for South Africa.

I am looking forward to my trip to South Africa during October where I will be teaching and doing training clinics in Johannesburg, Natal and Cape Town. It will be nice to be home and training some potential future South African eventing stars!



Regards,
A Peternell