



Meredith and Miz have a strong partnership



The rider achieved a personal best in the control of paces

On TREC for success



With fellow team members

Meet the latest finalist in the search to find the Rising Star of the Year, **Meredith Baker**. She has earned herself a place in the final due to success in the sport of TREC

Our latest finalist in the search to find the Equilibrium Products Rising Star of the Year is a talented youngster who rode for her country at the TREC World Championships – after only two years competing in the sport.

Meredith Baker rode her own Miz ('Miseria') to a creditable 16th place at the Young Rider TREC World Championships in Italy.

Their performance included a personal best score in the control of paces section of the competition, scoring 57 points out of a maximum of 60.

Meredith, 21, from Andover, Hampshire, first tried her hand at TREC – a sport which comprises an orienteering challenge, obstacle course and control of paces test – five years ago after watching a demonstration.

However, it wasn't a successful start and she was eliminated for making an error of course.

"I decided to try again in 2012 and did a Level one class, which I won," says Meredith. "But I only seriously took up TREC last year, when Miz and I tried some Level 2 classes. Then we stepped up to Level 3 in August [2013].

"As this was my last year as a young rider, I thought I'd have a go at achieving qualification

Words: Jo Browne



Could you be the next Rising Star?

The search continues to find the Equilibrium Products Rising Star of 2015.

Riders of any age and from any discipline can enter and £1,000 products from Equilibrium are up for grabs.

A finalist will be chosen each month and next summer the judging panel will select the person who they think is most deserving of the title.

To find out more, and to enter, visit: www.equilibriumproducts.com.

"The other difference at that level is the jumps in the obstacle section can be higher."

A good all-rounder

Meredith has a strong partnership with Miz, a 14-year-old, 14.3hh Criollo that was imported from South America.

"He is a real all-rounder and can turn his hand to anything," says Meredith. "We've been successful in showjumping and cross-country – jumping up to 3ft 3in – and he even volunteers at a Riding for the Disabled group once a week.

"He loves getting out and about and that's one of the main reasons I tried TREC. You get to explore some beautiful countryside.

"Another good thing about TREC is it's something any rider and any horse can have a go at, and be successful at.

"You can do it for fun and as a great way of spending time with your horse, or you can get competitive and go up the levels."

Commenting on Meredith being selected as a Rising Stars finalist, Laura Cutter of Equilibrium Products, says: "We are very impressed with Meredith's commitment to TREC and how she has trained Miz to be such a versatile horse." ■

"Miz is a real all-rounder – he even volunteers once a week for a RDA group"

for the world championships, which involved completing so many Level 3 competitions and achieving a certain number of points."

With several wins under her belt, Meredith made the qualification easily and in September this year she and Miz made the two-day trip to Scandiano, northern Italy.

An amazing atmosphere

"I wasn't sure how Miz would cope with the long journey, and being in such a different environment, but he took it all in his stride," says Meredith.

"The opening ceremony for the championships took place in the town centre, with a presentation in front of a castle. A huge crowd turned out to give everyone a cheer, which was amazing – and very loud!"

After the orienteering section, Meredith and Miz were placed 19th out of 45 riders. Their best performance of the competition came in the

control of paces – which demands you canter slowly and walk quickly – where they achieved fifth place.

"It was a massive personal best score and I don't know how we achieved it, but Miz was such a good boy," she states.

Meredith says she lost some style marks in the obstacle section, but their overall performance was good enough for 16th place.

"I wasn't expecting to achieve a top placing and just to be there was an amazing experience – it was the chance of a lifetime," she adds.

After impressing the team selectors in Italy, Meredith hopes to compete for her country at senior level next year.

"I will try some Level four competitions and see how I get on," she says. "The orienteering test at that level is longer and more technical and you are out on course for a long time.

"Even at Level three, the orienteering section can take five or six hours.

Clearing a fence on the obstacle course

