

# New Zealand star leaves opponents trailing



Fiona Craig and Marcus performing an extended trot.

## **SOUTHWELL FESTIVAL by Linda Thomson**

**SOUTHWELL FESTIVAL** of dressage launched its inaugural meeting in appalling weather at Nottinghamshire's Southwell racecourse where extensive facilities, excellent going on Fibresand track and generous sponsorship, made this an exciting venue.

One of the outstanding performances of the meeting was in the Advanced 51 where Fiona Craig and the Irish-Bred Marcus left the opposition trailing by 38 points.

The pair had a successful season last year at elementary, which included the championship title at that level. They have gone from strength to strength and will represent New Zealand at the Hermes International.

Fiona was born in Scotland but emigrated to New Zealand when she was seven. She returned to England five years ago and now

runs a yard in Ascot for Marcus' owner, George Killoughery.

She also scored another good victory in the Taylor Woodrow Prix St Georges B sponsored by Fibresand Ltd, and by almost as high a margin. In the Intermediaire I, however, a unanimous decision from the judges gave the verdict to Alan Doxey and Royal Star.

In the 305 Construction Ltd Prix St Georges Freestyle, Alan and Jerrold Assersohn's Royal Star treated the spectators to another showing of much of the programme that won them the major Grand Prix/Intermediaire I Freestyle class at Wellington Equestrian Centre.

Alan's winning form was interrupted in the Shell Gas Grand Prix where his precise riding of Waldan earned him identical scores from both judges but 15 points short of the winning total.

The £200 first prize in this class was won by Frances Rudge with a much softer and calmer Florida Flash who despite missing the Stoneleigh selection trials earlier this year has had a good run in Grand Prix, winning at Etal and finishing runners-up at Markington.

Caught in one of the worst downpours of the weekend, Frances' less experienced Holsteiner Contender continued to show a lot of promise and was fourth. Tanya Larrigan and Diplomat, who were second in the Intermediaire II, took third place, but the Camerons Ltd Intermediaire II winner, Horstead Bright Spark, was unsettled for Dane Rawlins and finished down the line.

John Bowen with former eventer Lasting Impression and Lorna Tew with her own Tokyo Joe had a win apiece in the Elementary qualifier and Medium 30 respectively.

Pauline Strawson's Cranswick Herakles continued to show good form and Cranswick Akcent provided Amanda Blundell with her only win of the meeting after gaining several placings with her three rides.