



WEG debutants Daisy Dick and Oliver Townend wowed the selectors at Badminton

Over To You dropped for new WEG debutants

■ AFTER strong results at Badminton, Daisy Dick and Oliver Townend have been selected to represent Britain for the first time at world level, eventing selectors announced last week.

Seasoned British team rider Pippa Funnell has also been added to the GB eventing squad for the World Equestrian Games (WEG) at Aachen at the end of August.

After the Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials (4-7 May), the selectors announced the last three names to join William Fox-Pitt, Zara Phillips and Mary King — chosen after team training in February — on the squad, plus the first and second reserves.

Some were surprised that Jeanette Brakewell, whose 18-year-old team stalwart Over To You finished fourth at the event, has only been named second reserve (See Mark Phillips, page 30).

"I didn't expect to get on the team because of the horse's age and the fact there are so many youngsters coming through," said Jeanette, who won individual silver in 2002, and is planning to ride Over To You at Burghley.

"The selectors have a really difficult job. Certainly, with the next Olympics in mind, Over To You is not going to be there, and perhaps they need to test new combinations."

A total of six British riders will compete at WEG — four team and two individual competitors, but no travelling reserve.

Oliver Townend, 23, was a long shot for

WEG before he finished best of the British at Badminton, taking third place with Edward Nicholson's Flint Curtis. Oliver started riding the 10-year-old grey only this season.

"I'm shocked," he said. "After Badminton I was hoping to be selected but I had a definite feeling I wasn't going to be, so I thought I'd go and try to win some more money at Burghley."

Daisy Dick, 34, makes her WEG debut on Spring Along, with whom she was eighth at Badminton and 11th at last year's Blenheim European Championships.

Pippa Funnell, 37, will ride Primmore's Pride, who won Kentucky and Burghley in 2003 and Badminton in 2005, as well as team silver and individual bronze at the Athens Olympics. He has not competed since last summer, when an injury scratched him from the Europeans at Blenheim.

Team manager Yogi Breisner said: "Primmore's Pride is very fit and well and will probably start competing again around the beginning to middle of June."

The squad aims to improve on its 2002 tally of team bronze and individual silver.

First reserves are James Robinson (Comanche) and Sharon Hunt (Tankers Town); second reserves are Jeanette Brakewell (Over To You), Ruth Edge (Two Thyme), Polly Stockton (Tom Quigley) and Lucy Wiegiersma (Shaabrak). Ballincoola is a direct reserve for William Fox-Pitt's first choice ride Tamarillo.