

Cook finds a gold Mine

*Tina Cook's promising Miners Frolic continues his brilliant season with a CIC** win, reports Julie Harding*

TINA Cook admitted that she had come to the Amlin Plus-sponsored Brightling Horse Trials for a spot of "pot-hunting", and her plan paid off when she netted first place in the CIC** during the dying throes of the competition.

As Tina collected her winning cheque for £1,000, she laughed: "My husband will be sending me out to work more often now!"

However, the contest was far from a walkover and challenges from Kerrie Daykin and Wild Card II, who led the dressage, and then local rider Clare Lewis on Sidnificant, who took over the top spot following a blistering round across the country for just 1.6 time-faults, meant that Tina had to inch her way to the top of the leaderboard with her former Burghley Young Event Horse champion Miners Frolic.

Tina lay in second place throughout and this international class was eventually settled during the final show jumping phase, in which the field of 32 who remained at this stage out of an original start-list of 47 jumped in reverse order.

With Tina and Clare sharing the same score, but with the latter leading by virtue of her faster cross-country round, Miners Frolic applied the pressure with a sought-after clear round — there were just four in total — while "Sid", usually a reliable show jumper, dislodged one rail, handing the title to Tina.

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Tina Cook

on winning £1,000

Tina is hoping that Miners Frolic will be her ticket back to the big time and she has spent years grooming him for success.

"He's a horse for the future and I'll aim him at a four-star next year," she said.

Miners Frolic, by Miners Lamp, finished ninth at Bramham in June and will now head to Blenheim; the outing here was intended as a relatively easy run between the two.

"He's a blood horse and I knew he'd cope with the hills here," said Tina. "But the cross-country did need respect. It asked plenty of an inexperienced nine-year-old, which is what my horse is."

Scott Brickell's 25-fence CIC track did indeed prove testing, the Amlin Water (fence 9a and b) giving spectators sitting on the hill plenty of excitement. Although problems were fairly well spread, the second of the three water questions — with its cascade into the water — was the most influential fence.

Faulters here included Nick Gauntlett's Chilli Morning, lying fifth after the dressage, who notched up his second and third stops before

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