

Man) was just behind in equal 28th on a score of 52.5, while errors on course left Ciaran Glynn and GFG Killossery Krabba in 54th with 57.9.

Dyrna, the Don Juan de La Bouverie sired gelding was bought by the Dempsey family just over two years ago.

them a real boost as they set off for the championships. Sam is trained by Niall Quirke on the flat and has help from Peter O'Toole with dressage.

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This year, Camilla
campaign from Englar
bases herself with her

Connemara wins in America

By Amber Heintzberger

COMPETITORS travelled from around the USA to compete at the Wellpikde American Eventing Championships last weekend.

Strong winds and heavy rain pounded the competition venue, near the city of Chicago, and saturated the ground with record rainfall.

Only the lower-level divisions were able to go cross-country, while the upper levels were run as a combined test (dressage and show jumping only).

Organisers originally tried to run the show jumping on Saturday and cross-country Sunday but it soon became evident that conditions were only going to get worse. Even with the re-scheduling, competitors rode in a torrential downpour and splashed through enormous puddles in the arena.

Connemara stallion ArdCeltic Art made his owners proud by winning the Training Amateur Championship, with Donna Miller in the saddle. The pair scored 23.7 in the dressage and added 3.2 time faults on cross-country, in spite of heavy rainfall and deep going. A clear jumping round kept them in the lead.

Imported from Ireland in 2006 by Hidden Creek Irish Sport Horses in Georgia, the handsome grey five-year-old stallion (by Monaghanstown Fionn by Abbeyleix Fionn by Ashfield Sparrow by Carna



• The Irish-bred ArdCeltic Art was victorious at American Eventing Championships last weekend

Bobby out of Moydow Lady, by Murphy Rebel) has a gentle demeanour and has also been evented by Miller's and Roger Brown's 14-year-old daughter Devon.

ArdCeltic Art has had a successful career in his short life in the USA. In 2006 he was the American Connemara Pony Society Purebred Connemara Champion In-hand (Region 4), in 2007 he was the ACPS/US Eventing Association National Purebred Horse of the year for Eventing at the Novice level, and in 2008 he is at the top of the Nutrena/USEA Leader board for the Training Horse category.

In addition to winning the Championship, for which they were awarded an armload of prizes as well as a generous cheque, the pair won the English Riding Supply Optimum Time Award, an award given to the horse and rider combination in the Training Amateur division who come the closest to the optimum time on cross-country.

For this accomplishment, Miller and Art were decked out from head to toe with prizes and took home a new Ovation 4-Star Eventing saddle and bridle, as well as breeches, gloves, a polo shirt and a new jacket.

Miller said that she hopes to move ArtCeltic up to Preliminary (the US equivalent of Irish Novice level) in the near future, but added that for now, they are both going to enjoy their vic-

tory and take some well deserved time off.

Third place in the Preliminary Amateur Championship went to 11-year-old Irish Sport Horse/Connemara gelding Macintosh and owner Ashley Johnson, 31, who were in sixth after dressage with a score of 36.3, but moved up in the standings when other competitors had rails down in the jumping (cross-country was cancelled for this division).

Johnson and Macintosh finished the competition on their dressage score. This was the pair's second trip to the AEC and first time finishing in the top three.

"He was pretty good in the dressage - he had a couple of hiccups that put us in sixth, but he was mostly on his game. Unfortunately, we didn't go cross-country.

"I had never jumped him in the rain before but he actually jumped the best he ever had! A lot of people had trouble making the time, but we were a second under optimum and that's how we moved up."

Johnson purchased Macintosh from professional rider Courtney Cooper, who did not know his breeding. Johnson is planning to start a family, so has decided to sell Macintosh.

"I wish I'd had him five years ago," she said. "That's life. It's been a lot of fun owning him and I was excited to get to compete at Prelim again, which I hadn't done since high school."