

Omagh Academy Best in Class.

The Bluegrass Horse Feeds Schools Team Show Jumping Open Championships was held on the Saturday of the Balmoral show. It was the first class in the main arena and gave all the qualified school riders a chance to experience jumping in this arena during the Balmoral show. There was an excellent standard of jumping, although the time, particularly in the first round proved very influential. Five teams that had qualified at a series of qualifiers held in Northern Ireland lined up against the top five teams from the Equestrian Ireland interschools League. The format adopted was exciting to watch with all the first line riders going first followed by the second, third- and fourth-line riders, meaning that it was down to the wire to decide the result.

The winners, the Omagh Academy team of Lori Smith riding Archie, Zoe Keys on Victory Day II, Kate Millar on Just Ruby and Amy Mcloughlin on Rhonda, were the only team to post a clear team result. This school was closely followed by Borris Vocational in second place, who having been victims of the tight time ended on two faults. The Borris Vocational team was Patrick Doyle riding Stormy Darkness, Caoilfhionn Lawlor on Adrigoole Atto, Cathy Doyle on Boley Boy and Aine Kavanagh riding High Five. Similarly, time proved decisive for the Royal School Dungannon team of Bethany Smith on Dun Surprise, Erin Matheson on Longwood Down and Lucy Orr on Jazzy Suzy, who finished third on three faults. The final two places went to the East Glendalough team of Robert Cherry on Firebozy, Anna Hudson Carlstrom riding Kingcarra Mia, Anna Morrissey and Shergar Rose and Connor Doyle and Rusheenduff Patrick and the Down High Flyers, both ending on a score of four faults, with East Glendalough posting a faster time to take fourth. The Down High Flyers team was made up of Abby Cumiskey on Crackerjack VIII, Annie Gibson and Castle Lux, Megan Nelson and Fancy Trend and Zara Sharvin and Arubahrain. Dominican College Wicklow was judged Best turned Out and took the tack and turnout prize. That team consisted of Naoise O'Neill on Slanelough Supremacy and siblings Casey, Megan and Baylee Neville, riding Westbrook Dancer, MHS Talisman and Drumlane Oscar.

The other schools that qualified to compete were Loreto Community School, Milford, Colaiste Bhríde, Carnew, Gorey Community School and Glenlola Collegiate.

There was excellent commentary from the Balmoral team and great support from all the spectators and school connections.