



**'It's about him enjoying himself and me enjoying him': Tim Price's four-star winner Wesko has made a spectacular comeback after two years on the sidelines**

**N**EW ZEALAND event rider Tim Price missed his top ride Wesko in more ways than one when the horse damaged a tendon at the height of his career.

"It was a massive blow, as he had so much on the horizon that year," explains Tim, who was preparing his former Luhmühlen winner and Rio Olympic hopeful for Kentucky 2016, having finished runner-up at the event the year before. "Horses do come back from that sort of injury, but you don't know until you know."

After early treatment with stem cell therapy and platelet-rich plasma (PRP), Wesko was sent to Mark Ford for 18 months of rest and rehabilitation.

"The yard wasn't the same without him," adds Tim, who said at the time that the incident felt "life changing". "The horse has done a lot for my career and had always been 100% injury-free."

Wesko, now 15, returned to Tim at the end of 2017 — and this summer made a spectacular competition comeback, finishing second at Jardy CIC3\* Event Rider Masters and sixth at Blair Castle.

"It was a dream to get to where we did this year," admits Tim, clearly chuffed to have his "old mate" back in action. "But we're still on the journey — we're not totally there yet. He's definitely come back eager and happy to be working again, but it's important that we take our time and don't ask too much of him."

"It's very much about him enjoying himself

and me enjoying him," says Tim. "In the past there was maybe a bit of pressure, but this time around we will see what suits him. Next year, he'll be great — he's a class horse."

Occasionally, an injury is not just career-ending but life-threatening. The future looked bleak for Flora Harris' event mare Amazing VIII, who was ambulated away from the cross-country finish on her Badminton debut in 2015.

"She did a tendon — a spiral tear, a proper job," explains Flora. "We absolutely thought it was the end. The injury was so severe that treatment with stem cells or PRP was pointless. If she was a gelding, we would have considered having her put to sleep."

It was only because "Maisie" appeared so comfortable over the following days that the team persevered. After a period on box rest, she was sound enough for the field.

"We tried to put her in foal but she didn't take, despite repeated attempts," says Flora, who noticed that the usually content mare was becoming bored and fed up. "We sent her to winter at Candelteers Equestrian in Somerset, where they did a beautiful job of getting her fat and happy and giving her something to do."

"Tracy Howe did all the slow rehab, walking Maisie for months on hard surfaces, long-reining her and hacking over Exmoor," adds Flora. "When she came home, she was ready to go back in the school to do some work."

In July, a full three years after the incident,

Maisie delighted her connections with a successful run at Little Downham. She has since completed two CIC3\*s, finishing sixth at Millstreet and forming part of the victorious British Nations Cup team at Waregem.

"Our vet can't believe how her leg seems to get better and better," says Flora, who will keep the mare, now 14, at short format events. "But we will be guided by Maisie and how she feels, because it would be greedy of us to push her."

"We were heartbroken when she injured herself so badly and genuinely thought she was finished as a ridden horse," she adds. "We just feel very lucky to have her back."



**'We thought it was the end': Flora Harris and Amazing VIII are back on the circuit despite a spiral tear to the mare's tendon in 2015**

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FLORA HARRIS ON AMAZING VIII'S RETURN TO COMPETITION