



# William Fox-Pitt

*Journey to success*



Photos from left: Alison Duthe, Jack Shearman and St. Hughson/EF

LEFT: WILLIAM LEADS HIS BRIGLEY-WINNING HORSE PARKLANE HAWK TO HIS FIELD.

ABOVE: ENJOYING THE COMPANY OF HIS LURCHER, TURTLE. RIGHT: WILLIAM AND LIONHEART JUMP INTO 3RD PLACE IN THE COUPE AT LES ETOILES DE PAU, 2011.

ANY CAREER INVOLVING HORSES tends to keep you grounded. You have good days and bad days, but for the lucky few the good outnumber the bad and with that you could almost be forgiven if a slight conceit crept in to what you do. William Fox-Pitt has enjoyed more success than many event riders in the world. He has won ten four star events, a team silver medal at the 2004 Olympics and a team gold and individual silver at the World Equestrian Games in Kentucky 2010, to name a few, and with a choice of six horses to ride at London things are looking hopeful to add to that collection. All that said, there is nothing conceited about William Fox-Pitt. He is simply a really nice guy who goes about his business in a workmanlike style fully aware that it takes much more than just him as the rider to achieve a tack room full of accolades.

The yard of Fox-Pitt Eventing is in the little village of Hinton St Mary, near Sturminster Newton in Dorset, England. There is no sign on the gate to say an evening superstar lives here and although you may expect his yard to be something special it is simply a yard where horses are turned into superstars. Everything in the yard is practical, neat and tidy, but not in an immaculate way, more in a comforting, relaxed sort of way. The atmosphere and chatter is immediately friendly, not just from William, but also from the winter staff as they each go about their work. Jackie Potts, William's head girl of 20 years, is in the tack room kitchen-come-office, making tea while Charlie appears with a list of the horses



needing to be worked that day. After suggesting that a couple could go hacking and a couple could be jumped, William seems happy that one is having a day off after having some chiropractic work done the previous day. "This is obviously the quiet time of year before everything gets going again in January and it's nice to only have about five to ride each day rather than the ten or so I ride once the season begins," says William.