Ainsley Vince wins Grand Prix event in Palgrave

By Bill Rea

A layoff from competition doesn't necessarily have to mean a long time to get back into it.

Ainsley Vince of Burlington proved that Sunday when she won the $25,000 Ram Equestrian Grand Prix at Caledon Pan Am Equestrian Park in Palgrave.

She was riding Frieda in the event that was part of the 2015 Summer Classic.

Vince and Frieda, a 14-year-old Belgian Warmblood, were among the seven entries (out of 20) who turned in clear rounds to make it to the jump off. There were four clear rounds in the jump-off, but Vince was more than three-and-a-half seconds faster than the nearest competitor, completing the course in 40.88 seconds.

?That horse actually has been off for a really long time,? she observed after the competition, adding the time away from the action didn't appear to hurt her much. ?She really didn't miss a beat.?

Kevin Crosby of Rockwood was second aboard Cristobar, turning in a clear jump-off in 44.4 seconds.

Crosby said this was just the first time he had ridden the horse in competition, as his regular rider had been injured.

?He's an exceptional horse, and he made it quite easy,? he said.

?I don't think I could have gone as fast as Ainsley,? he added.

Third place was taken by Liam Dumont-Walker, who was clear on Lilius in 44.56 seconds.

Lanie Thomas of Schomberg was fourth with a clear round in 48.18 seconds on Campino.

Beth Underhill of Schomberg was very fast on the jump-off, completing the course in 42.45 seconds, but knocked down a rail on one of the jumps and had to settle for fifth place with four faults.

Like other riders who have competed this year at the facility that will host equestrian events at the upcoming Pan Am Games, Vince had lots of praise for the park.

?I think it's fantastic that Ontario has a facility of this calibre,? she declared.

Ainsley Vince of Burlington guided Frieda over this jump in Sunday's jump-off to post a time of 40.88 seconds. That was more than enough to give them the win in the $25,000 Ram Equestrian Grand Prix.Photo by Bill Rea