

The moment

April 2008: Winter Dressage Championships, Glos



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Rebecca Hughes

THIS is the moment when I won the prix st georges (PSG) freestyle winter championship title on Shining Light (Beacon). For years I had competed and won many young horse championships, but I had not had the chance to compete a horse of Beacon's quality at that level.

I had forgotten what it was like to turn up at a show and be worried about our performance, rather than just trying to stay on board. It was a different type of pressure — with the young horses, you worry how they will

behave in a show environment and, at the higher level, you concentrate on doing a good job.

The atmosphere at Hartpury was electric — you could hear a pin drop. As it was our first championship, I had no expectations, so it was a bit of a shock to win.

Felicity Scott, Beacon's owner, who had produced him herself to PSG and trained with my husband Gareth, asked him whether I would like the ride.

I was overjoyed, but had just discovered that I was pregnant. Felicity promised me they'd wait

until after the birth. Needless to say, that kept me ultra motivated to stay in shape and get back in the saddle. Ruby was born in December and four months later I was PSG freestyle champion — it felt like a dream.

Beacon was the perfect mix. He was sensitive, yet reliable in the ring — but then he'd turn into a wild thing in the prize-givings!

Together we had three highly successful years competing nationally and internationally and I am hugely grateful to Felicity for giving me this wonderful opportunity. **H&H**