SPILL the beans!- Andrew James

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In our SPILLERS SPILL The Beans Series we get to interview a variety of our fabulous professional customers and find out more about them. We find out who inspired them to get serious about horses, what kit they can’t live without, and ask which is their favourite SPILLERS feed, of course!

This month we caught up with top event rider and family man Andrew James…

Who are you and what do you do?

Hi, my name is Andrew James, and I am a 5* International event rider. I have an event yard in Bedfordshire which we built ourselves a few years ago and I produce horses from unbroken to 5*level.

How did you start with horses?

It’s a funny story - My parents are both horsey and I didn’t really want to ride but Mum used to say if I rode to the shop, she would buy me sweets and that was enough for me!!!

Who was your inspiration growing up?

I really admired Jeannette Brakewell. I think she’s a phenomenal rider and the security in her lower leg - just amazing. Growing up that’s what I always wanted to try and emulate.

What’s your lifetime horsey highlight?

Going double clear at my first Burghley with Cadoc Z! I had been going every year to watch since a child and to finally ride over the finish line felt so emotional. It was a lifetimes work coming together and meant a lot to me.

And what’s challenged you the most working with horses?

Probably the long hours and the cold/wet weather.

If you could spotlight one special horse you’ve had, who would it be and why?

This is a hard one but probably Ciao Mario as he took me round my first Advanced and finished top 10 at Bramham this gave me the belief that I could make a career out of the sport.



If you have a horse free ultimate luxury/fun day, what would it be?

Building sandcastles on a warm beach with my sons!

What’s the one piece of horse equipment you can’t live without?

My Antares saddles – the horses need to feel comfortable, and you need to be able to feel the horse underneath you and feel secure on the horse. You get that from well-fitting saddles and I have used Antares for a very long time.

What is your No 1 top tip for managing your horses/yard/business?

I’m very lucky that my wife Rachel runs the yard and business so keeping your partner happy is my top tip!!

What are your goals for the 2025 season?

In the spring I’m hoping to take three horses to Bramham and if all goes well, we can head to Burghley and Pau - fingers crossed!



Which horse in your yard do you think is a rising star we should look out for?

I’m very lucky to have a few exciting horses coming up the grades but Qadira is a phenomenal jumper. We have had her from scratch and she jumped a great round at Blenheim last year.

What’s your best piece of advice for up-and-coming riders?

Go and base yourself with a professional to learn the ropes - and don’t try and reinvent the wheel.

And finally, which SPILLERS feed is your favourite and why?

My favourite feed would be the SPILLERS Digest+ Conditioning Cubes, we use them a lot on the yard because they are high in fibre and oil and low in starch which helps the excitable horses and horses prone to ulcers.

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