

Felix Vogg

The Maryland five-star winner who enjoyed an autumn to remember tells *Martha Terry* about the rehab that took him from paralysis to the Euros in 26 days and a theme of quirky rides

DON'T ever tell Felix Vogg he can't do something. On 23 August last summer, his arm was paralysed in a fall. Just 26 days later, against all medical prognosis, he was riding for his country in the European Championships. A month after that, he won Maryland five-star, the first Swiss rider to record two victories at the highest level.

"When I got up from the fall, I thought I was fine although it was hurting a bit," describes Felix, 35. "I tried to get onto my next horse, but needed two people to help me and then I really couldn't ride."

Things deteriorated rapidly as the adrenaline wore off, until he was unable to move his entire arm – bar the hand.

"It was very scary, because until you experience it, you cannot imagine how it is to try everything to send the signal to your muscles to make them function but it just doesn't work, it's incredible," he says.

"It was even harder when I was able to make it move a little bit, because I had to put so much mind and energy into it just for a tiny movement. After one session of physio I felt like I'd ridden 15 horses."

But Felix had places to go. Burghley was looming at the start of September and he had a fighting chance of a top placing with his five-star



Felix Vogg with the stars of his string, Colero (left) who won Luhmühlen 2022, and Cartania (also inset) winner of Maryland 2025

specialist Cartania, who was storming round Badminton in May when they were eliminated late on after a peck on landing.

"I told the physios that I needed to be better the Sunday before Burghley, but they said there was 'no chance' of riding there or at the Europeans," he says. "I didn't hear that part."

"I did four painful hours of physio a day at a great clinic in Geneva, with electrostimulation and a lot in the swimming pool. It was fast-track rehab;