

Q: *Was Gal's freestyle really the best that's ever been?*

**BILL:** The nice thing about this question is that there isn't really a single correct answer. Some opinions may be worth more than others, and your own can be foremost if you so wish. When I first saw the video from the end of July of Edward Gal & Moorlands Totilas doing their 89+% ride at Hickstead, I very much admired the horse's athleticism, and the piaffe/passage was truly spectacular. My overall impression, however, was less ecstatic than many others'. For me parts of the ride seemed almost inorganic -- robot-like. The topline reminded me a bit of a Saddlebred -- nearly a headset, and I missed the elasticity and harmony I have seen in other horses. Looking at the linked video here from the European Championships, I take it all back. I admit that the music doesn't appeal to me -- on the apocalyptic scale it belongs somewhere to the west of the Road Warrior soundtrack. But, WOW, what a ride this one was! Goosebumps are more than appropriate.

Tears, well, that's up to you.