

BREATHTAKING views from Greenwich Park stole the show at last week's Olympic equestrian events.

Around 50,000 visitors flocked to the Maritime Heritage site on the first day of events in Greenwich Park last Monday.

The day's action witnessed close competition in the cross-country between Germany, the USA and Great Britain including the Queen's grand daughter Zara Phillips.

And the crowd roared in triumph when Team GB clinched the silver medal in front of royal support from Prince William and Kate, Prince Harry and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall.

As they watched, spectators also marvelled at the views behind the course featuring the National Maritime Museum, the Old Royal Naval College and the Docklands skyline with Canary Wharf at its centrepiece.

"This is a gorgeous place; there aren't many places where you can get a view of the iconic buildings and the London skyline like this," said Kim Bradley, equestrian enthusiast from Kentucky, USA.

"I think it was a good day for the sport. The horses looked fantastic, and the top riders showed themselves to be top riders," said fellow US horse fan Michael Pollard.

He added: "The place was packed and if there wasn't that many in the stands it was because people were out on the course itself. I think they could have filled the place two or three times over with the number of people that wanted to come though, it was fantastic, a full house and a great atmosphere."

And he told GT: "I would definitely come back and visit Greenwich, we had amazing food here and the area itself is beautiful. If I had time I would visit the museums and the rest of the area. I've had a really nice time here."

Sally Atkinson, ambassador for the Riding for the Disabled Association charity and fan from Warwick, said: "It was packed today, every stand out on the course was packed and there wasn't an issue with tickets."

Rebecca Kemp, also of Warwick, added: "I want to come back again to see the park without the Olympics here and enjoy that side of the park."

Give us unused Games tickets

THE royal borough has offered to help Games organisers LOCOG fill the thousands of empty seats for Olympic events.

Greenwich has asked LOCOG to free up unused tickets, which they will then hand out to local people. A spokesman said: "We have reminded LOCOG that we can provide an immediate and local solution for them by offering any unused tickets to local residents."

"Ever since Greenwich was announced as a Host Borough, we have worked with LOCOG to maximise the ways in which local residents and business could experience the magic of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We've distributed thousands of tickets to test events. More schools in Greenwich applied

for tickets than in any other borough, and we have secured thousands of tickets to events and the Olympic Park, which we have sold on to residents.

"We've also put in place three big screens so that people can watch events live as they happen in Woolwich, Greenwich town centre and the Greenwich Peninsula. Thousands of people have turned out to watch the events so far.

"It is ultimately a decision for LOCOG as to whether any further tickets can be distributed to local children, but we would welcome any effort which enables local residents to experience the greatest sporting event on earth while it is taking place in their area."

Games

ROYAL FLUSH: Prince William, Kate and Prince Harry were in the crowd at Greenwich Park



ORDERLY QUEUE: officials do a last minute check of the jumping arena. Left, spectators pour out of the Greenwich Park venue



OVER THE MOON: the spectacular view from the Greenwich Park cross country course, left, Zara Phillips in the jumping arena

on!



FLOATING FOUNTAIN: The Olympic-themed water fountain 'Rings on the River' measuring 11.5 meters high by 25 metres called in at Greenwich for two days last week as part of its visit to well-known landmarks



First medals given at Royal Artillery

THE FIRST medals of the Olympic Games were awarded at the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich.

Team GB's fourth Gold medal was awarded at the Royal Artillery Barracks when shooter Peter Wilson claimed victory in the double trap competition.

The 25-year-old from Dorset beat Sweden's Hakan Dahlby

and Russia's Vasily Mosin last Thursday. It was Britain's first Olympic shooting medal since the Games in Sydney 12 years ago.

Earlier in the week, the first medals of the Olympic Games were awarded at the Woolwich venue when China's Yi Siling clinched Gold in the 10m air rifle.



FIRST OF THE GAMES: The Royal Artillery Barracks saw the very first medals of the Games awarded with Yi Siling of China winning Gold in the Women's 10m air rifle, below spectators enter the shooting venue

