



# INFORMATION FOR PRE - NOVICE DRIVERS

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## Your First Events:

The information below is intended as a guideline to help new drivers get to grips with their first competitions with the NEDTL. We hope you find it useful!

## Entries:

Having joined the Club, you will have received your omnibus schedule. When you make your entry for an event, please do so in good time and certainly no later than the closing date. This makes the task of the event organiser much simpler in terms of working out timings for each phase of the competition. Also, for the same reason, if you want to do a shortened marathon (Sec E only) you must tell the event organiser at the time of entering.

## Arrival at the Event:

If you can arrive on the Friday you will find this a big advantage. Not only will you have extra time to get your camp set up and familiarise yourself with where everything is, but you won't have to worry about hold ups on the road which might make you late!

On arrival, park where the event secretary or stable manager advises you and please let them know if you intend to use electric fencing. This may affect where you are asked to park. Check and see where the muck trailer is for your stable waste.

As soon as you can, collect your paperwork from the secretary's caravan. This will include:

- A running order for both Saturday and Sunday which will give you your start times.
- **(Please remember, whatever your start time for presentation, dressage and marathon YOU MUST BE THERE TEN MINUTES EARLIER and report to the steward).**
- Your competitor numbers – one small number on a piece of card for Saturday which should be displayed on the carriage using a number holder or be taped on neatly and two large, A4 sized numbers which fit inside the number bib worn by your groom for the marathon. The event secretary will have a small supply of number bibs which can be purchased at £10.50 each or they are available from the BHDTA. If you don't have one you could ask a fellow competitor (who is not competing at the same time as you) if they can lend you one.
- There will be drawings of the obstacles.
- There will also be a note on the marathon running order of the time allowed on each of the sections. This will allow you to calculate how much time you have to complete each kilometre of the marathon route.

## Other things you need to do:

Once you've got your camp set up, you will need to find out where to go for your Presentation on Saturday. Check the event notice board which should tell you where the

Presentation is being held, or ask a fellow competitor. There will be a sign reading "Presentation" in the exact spot you need to be! Standing presentation usually takes place 30 minutes before you do your dressage but again, remember to be there ten minutes earlier (40 mins before dressage).

Walk the cones and remember to have the white number sign on the left, red on the right. You should always be able to see the number of the next cone to be driven from the current cone but to do this sometimes the number is turned so just watch out for this, as driving a cone in the wrong direction means elimination. Also, please remember that it should be the **driver only** who walks the cones course – grooms and dogs are not allowed!

Walk the dressage test in the arena to get a feel for the markers and to help you remember your test.

If you have time it is a good idea to start to walk the obstacles to learn your route for Sunday.

## **Saturday:**

**PRESENTATION:** On Saturday the dress for presentation and dressage is smart for both driver and groom. Drivers should wear a hat, gloves and driving apron and carry a whip. Grooms should be seated at all times except during presentation, when they should stand at the horse's head. For pre-novices, clean and tidy everyday driving wear is permitted such as the kind you would wear to drive out at home. You should still wear gloves and carry a whip however. Hard hats with an appropriate silk are permitted.

**DRESSAGE:** Make sure you announce your presence to the steward at the dressage arena ten minutes before you are due to do your test. Don't take it for granted that just because you are warming up in the general vicinity the steward will know who you are and that you are next in. The judge will let the steward know when they are ready for you in the arena and the steward will let you know, so don't be too far away when it's nearly your turn.

**CONES:** Proceed directly to the cones course after dressage. For those in the pre-novice class, it is a NEDTL concession that you may drive the cones course with an axle width of 125cm or as close as possible to this. (125cm is the standard width of most vehicles without extending axles). Cone widths will be set accordingly. Again let the steward or starter know you are there. If you have checked the notice board you will have found out the details of required speeds and widths of cones for that event.

Once you have finished your cones you are then free to continue walking the obstacles to learn your route for Sunday. Make sure you know where the start of Section A is so that you know how much time to allow to get there on Sunday morning.

**BRIEFING:** There is always a competitors briefing on the Saturday evening, the time for which will be posted on the notice board. At the briefing (usually given by the Technical Delegate) you will be given any relevant or important information about the marathon route for the next day.

Current scores after dressage and cones are posted on the notice board and you can collect your dressage sheet from the event secretary.

## **Sunday:**

Dress for Sunday will be marathon clothes and hard hats are compulsory. Grooms normally carry a stop watch and must wear a number bib containing the competitor number.

As with all the driving phases, you must arrive at least ten minutes before your start time. There will be a harness check conducted within this period and your spares kit will be checked. Your groom should collect the Green Card from the starter - don't expect the starter to come to you. The Green Card will have all your section start/finish times recorded on it so is extremely important. At the start and finish a marathon section you will hand the card to the steward who will record your time and give it back to you. You should always check what has been written on your green card and if you have any queries you should raise them with the steward at the time of recording. The Green Card is then kept by the steward at the end of the marathon and goes to the scorers.

Water will be provided at the compulsory halt so including a sponge in your spares kit on Sunday is a good idea.

These guidelines are not an exhaustive list intended to answer all of your questions in one go, so please feel free to ask any of the event officials or the more experienced drivers who will all be happy to help you.

Finally, as we are dependent on keeping the goodwill of the landowners who allow us to hold events, please remember to clear away all of your stable rubbish before you leave the site.

**Enjoy your event!**