

North Eastern Driving Trials Ltd

**EAST KESWICK
12/13TH APRIL**

Brian Anderson started the planning for the NEDTL warm up event over the winter, with plans for a new water obstacle, using a pump to fill the moat like ground structure around one of the permanent obstacles. This was tried and tested the week before the event and it worked very well, creating a great water obstacle with up to five water crossings but options for the water shy!. The ground was firm and everything was set up by the working party by Thursday. Friday night was definitely one of the coldest I have spent in the wagon, I put more clothes on to go to bed !. Then the rain started, all night! Next morning we got up with trepidation, what had happened to the ground and more specifically was the water pump now in the middle of a lake? The organising team checked the ground, not too bad but as we were using a permanent grass dressage arena, would the farmer agree that we could go ahead? Fortunately, the farmer is very supportive of the NEDTL and gave the go ahead. The marathon course was checked and very quickly it was decided to abandon obstacle 1. But the team weren't defeatist, they immediately identified a dry location and designed a new obstacle. And at the end of the day with over 35 competitors the dressage arena had very little ground damage. The cones had driven well, with a good smattering of double clears spread across the classes. The sun even came out and dried the hill leading down to the obstacles, so everyone was looking forward to Sunday. On Saturday evening a pie and pea supper was held in the barn and enjoyed by all, on a dry but very cold evening. Then at 4am, the worst scenario started, very heavy rain!!! Even before breakfast ,the organising team immediately started checking the course. It was agreed that stewards would not be able to get to obstacles with cars, not even 4 x 4's. The ground was very slippery and some areas had become a deep bog and even the quad bike was slipping down the hill to the obstacles, so what chance did competitors have. Therefore, it was unanimously decided that the event should be cancelled. The stewards contact list was tested for the first time and almost all stewards were contacted before they left home. We would like to thank all the competitors, for their support of the organising teams decision. It was disappointing for all, but safety must come first. And as if to really taunt up, the sun came out at lunchtime, when the last few wagons were being towed out!!! Here's hoping the weather improves for the next event at Ripley Castle.

Lorraine Swift