

TWO DAY EVENT INFORMATION FOR NEW DRIVERS

As we have several new drivers competing this year, these are intended as a few pointers to help you enjoy your events with the NEDTL.

Arrival

On arrival please park as advised by the Event Secretary or Stable Manager and let them know if you intend to use electric fencing as this may affect where you are asked to park. If you are able to arrive after 2pm on the Friday of an event, this will give you lots more time to get your camp set up and to check out where everything is for the following day.

Collect your paperwork from the Event Secretary.

This will include

- A running order for Saturday and one for Sunday
- Drawings of the obstacles to be driven on Sunday.
- Three competitor numbers – 2 x A4 and one small card number. The small card number should be displayed on the carriage on Saturday, either using a number holder or just taped on neatly. The two larger numbers are for use on Sunday and should be worn in a marathon bib by the groom. Marathon bibs are available to order from BC or you can get them from most harness/carriage manufacturers such as Bennington Carriages. If you don't have one, ask another competitor not competing at the same time as you, if you may borrow one.
- Other information about the event
- A competitor detail sheet which you should complete and leave in the window of your horsebox or car.

Before dressage on Saturday, make sure you do the following:

- Find out where you need to be for your Safety Check, which will take place 30 minutes before your dressage. There is usually a sign but if you can't spot it do ask someone.
- Walk the cones course – watch out for sharp turns to ensure you cross through the cones in the correct direction, remember to have the red number sign always 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 is elimination. Also, remember your groom cannot speak or indicate during dressage and cones.
- You can walk the dressage test in the arena if you wish to get a feel for the markers.

Dressage and Cones

On Saturday, the dress for the day is smart and tidy for both driver and groom.



The groom should be seated during all phases except for the Safety Check when they should stand at the horse's head. The driver should be wearing a driving apron and brown gloves and must carry a whip.

The presentation mark for your turnout is given whilst you are driving your test. Guidelines for suitable dress are given in the NEDTL document which is available on the website.

The person conducting your Safety Check will be an experienced driver and happy to give you any tips on how to get a good presentation mark.

Hard hats are perfectly acceptable headgear for the dressage and cones and you won't be penalised for wearing them.

After your Safety Check you can warm up for the dressage, letting the dressage steward at 'A' know that you're there are at least 10 minutes before the time you are due to enter the arena. The steward will let you know when it is your turn.

Proceed directly to the cones course after dressage. It's a local NEDTL concession that Introductory drivers who are unable to extend their axles may drive the cones with an axle width of 125cm. (being the standard axle width of most vehicles). Cone widths will be set to suit. However, you must let the organiser know at the time of entering if you wish to make use of this concession. The notice board at each event will give you details of the required speeds and cone width for each class.

Marathon

There will be a competitor's briefing on Saturday evening and again, check the notice board on the club trailer for the time/place that this will take place. Your dressage sheets will be available from the event secretary after the scoring and scores will be pinned on the notice board.

Work out your marathon times for Sunday using the information given on the marathon running list. This will tell you how many kilometres the sections are, the minimum time you have to do them and the maximum time allowed, (this is usually a two minute window) and the average speed needed. **WARNING: If you are driving a pony, don't copy down the horse times by mistake or vice versa!** (Trust me, we've all done this at one time or another!) Ponies have more time allowed for the sections than horses do.

Make sure you know where the Start of Sec A is so that you can allow enough time to get there if this is a little way from the box park.

On Sunday the dress code is Marathon clothes, which are usually comfortable, practical driving clothes and the groom normally stands behind the drive. Most grooms carry a stop watch and they should be wearing a marathon bib displaying your competitor number front and back. The groom should know all about your timings and at which time you should be at what kilometre marker.



Please arrive at the start of the marathon at least 10 minutes before your start time as there will usually be a harness safety check.

The starter will give you a four minute, two minute, one minute warning and will count you down from 5 seconds and the groom will start the stop watch.

THE GREEN CARD – VERY IMPORTANT

On arrival at the start your groom should collect the green card from the steward who is starting everyone off on the marathon. On it, the steward will have recorded your start time for Section A. The Green Card is carried throughout the marathon and handed in at the start and finish of EVERY section so that your start and finish times can be recorded. Always check to ensure the times recorded are correct and raise any queries with the steward at the time of recording – it's too late once you've set off again! When you finish the marathon, you will hand the green card in to the steward at the end of Section B and it will then go to the scorers so that any of your section penalties can be recorded (if you have them). Remember, you get penalties for coming in too early OR too late.

A spares kit when carried should consist of a spare trace (of the correct length to be of use), a spare rein, a spare hame strap (if you use a full collar), a sharp knife and some baler band. It is also a good idea to add to sponge on a Sunday as water is provided at the halt which means as well as offering your horse a drink, you can also sponge them off to help them cool down if necessary.

Once you set off just enjoy yourself!

This is not an exhaustive list to answer all your questions so just ask any of the event officials or the more experienced Open drivers who will be happy to help you.

