



British Carriagedriving

OFFICIAL NEWS

Council Meeting

The date for the next meeting of the British Carriagedriving Council is 14 April.

North Club TD Clinic Date change

Unfortunately a clash of dates has occurred between two indoor events and the Club TD clinic in the north. The clinic date has therefore been changed and brought forward a week to Sunday 8 March. As no bookings have yet been received, hopefully this will not cause any inconvenience and encourage more club officials to attend. The course is being taken by Philip Bateman. All other details remain the same.

Membership renewals

Please remember that your membership is due for renewal by 31st January for existing BC members. After this date you will no longer be insured. In addition, your insurance for January is only valid if your membership is renewed by this deadline. Membership forms can be downloaded from the website if you've

misplaced it or you can use the online system to pay via BACS or Paypal using a debit or credit card or a Paypal account. **Please note that it is not possible to renew your membership over the telephone.**

Membership cards and Yearbooks will be mailed to 2015 members before the end of January so if you have sent your membership and not received this by the end of the first week of February, please contact the BC office.

Rule book

After the FEI's General Assembly in December, a list of new FEI rules were published. These have been carefully considered by the BC Rules Committee, chaired by Chris Smith, and a number of changes have been implemented for 2015. Other rules have been changed in our own Rule Book and one of the main ones is the need to wear a back/body protector on the marathon at National and Regional events. These changes are listed in detail in the BC Yearbook which is sent to all members. The revised Rule Book for 2015 will shortly be available to purchase. A notice will be put on the web-site when this is in print. The idea of the spiral bound format was to keep the cost down was to enable a fresh copy to be purchased annually. The cost of the Rule Book remains at the 2014 rate of £6, including postage, for the basic option and £6.50, including postage, for a personalised copy.

Baileys British Young Drivers Easter Clinic

This event takes place at the Unicorn Equestrian Centre, Stow in the Wold, Gloucestershire and offers carriage driving training, with or without a turnout, for those aged 8-25 years. All are welcome from seasoned competitors to those just starting out.

British Young Drivers arrive Tuesday 7 April

for an on foot session in the afternoon, followed by driven training on Wednesday and Thursday with UKCC coaches, great food and company. You can sleep in your lorry or there's plenty of nearby B&B accommodation.

National Young Drivers – by invitation for national competitors - arrive pm Sunday 5 April for training Monday and Tuesday.

For more details email:
byd@britishcarriagedriving.co.uk

EVENTS

Spring Catton

Calling all Young Drivers! Have you noticed in the Spring Catton schedule that there is a class specifically for you? It runs over two days and is aimed at young drivers, with a single Pony or Horse, who have not competed above Novice level at National or Regional events. This class comes with a very modest £50 entry fee and a reduced start fee of £22. Hopefully lots of you will be able to come to this excellent venue.

Course and Obstacles: Due to the early date of this event, the obstacle on the steep hill will not be included in this course. Plans are also underway to alter the route so that the event drives differently from the July one.

INTERNATIONAL

International entries, registrations and passports

If you are planning to travel abroad, you will need an FEI passport for your horse (valid for 4 years) and both your horse need to be registered with the FEI (valid until 31 December of that year and renewed annually). All the forms for this are under the "Information" heading on the British Carriagedriving web-site. You also need



to ensure your vaccinations comply with the FEI rules before sending your national passport for upgrading to an FEI one. You only need to be registered with the FEI to enter Hopetoun and Sandringham which are 2* events in Britain.

When it comes time to enter, first check that your class is available at the event you plan to attend. Initially, send an indication of your plans to the British Carriagedriving office, then complete the nominated entry form at least one week before the nominated entry date. All the entry date deadlines are published in the schedule which are available on the FEI and BC websites.

Council recently agreed that if international events are oversubscribed, the chef d'équipe for that class will allocate places. They will balance need to give people experience with the need of long listed drivers to compete internationally and achieve qualifying scores.

GENERAL

Georgina retires

After almost 30 years of driving, Georgina Hunt announced her decision to retire at the 2014 National Championships. She started out in the sport in a rather unconventional manner when she started supporting her father when he tied the family's two 11.2 first ridden ponies together and taught himself to drive. By the early 80s he had bred enough ponies for a team and we used to take it in turns to drive pair at successive competitions until Georgina finished runner-up at the National Championships in Harrogate when she was 15. Following that initial success, she went on with the team.

Georgina has experienced a huge number of different turnouts during her competition career. She has driven single pony, pony pair, pony tandem to finish Indoor Champion and Pony Team where she accumulated seven National and three European titles. Georgina cites winning Saumur in 1999 for her third title as her most satisfying result.

She then moved up to horse fours where she finished second on numerous occasions (there was a rather proficient Aussie driver on the circuit at the same time!) and the odd win. For demonstration purposes she put a pony six-in-hand together for a display at Ardingly and, with Boyd Exell, even drove a heavy horse six-in-hand, although this was in the States and just for fun.

It has not all been plain sailing however as there's been the odd mishap along the way. Georgina rates being airlifted to hospital from



Photo: Sandra Priestley

Ashfields, after being ejected from the driver's seat while exiting the water obstacle, as her most memorable disaster!

Georgina has a host of tingling memories: waiting for the sun to come up at Breda for her first international competition so she could warm up for her test, bursting through the smoke at the opening party of the Unicorn Equestrian Centre with two teams of star struck ponies, driving down the Mall towards Buckingham Palace with her horses and the RLC drag, having Prince Philip cook her supper at a barbecue at Sandringham and the thrill of the extreme driving at Olympia and how proud she felt driving in front of such an amazing audience where she felt as though she was driving into a wall of sound, although the horses behaved impeccably throughout.

No-one gets anywhere in driving without a raft of helpers, especially when driving fours. Georgina is grateful to her parents who have always been her there for her and to Boyd Exell who has always been on hand to offer technical advice. Georgina's also notes that her great friend Sara Simmons can always be relied upon for an honest opinion and Georgina attended the recent FEI Single Horse World Championships to support Sara who was competing as part of the British team.

On being asked what prompted her to retire now, Georgina responded: "A reality check. Driving a horse team is not for the faint hearted and I have burnt my way through all my reserves, both financial and emotional. I have a



wonderful husband and daughter and don't want to be going away to shows and leaving them to catch up later, or not at all."

Georgina has concerns about the overall standard of horse fours in Britain as she can see no collective appetite for raising the standard nationally to become a force to be reckoned with on the world stage once more. In order to achieve such an improvement, Georgina said: "More time would have to be spent abroad competing and scouting for horses, and that doesn't appeal to me now."

Thinking towards the future, Georgina does not plan to retire completely from the sport. Initially, she says it depends on which horses she sells. She has one horse she fancies as a single prospect, and she is also considering keeping some horses for coaching purposes (that's teaching, not driving). Georgina concluded by saying: "Or else it's a pony club pony for Sophie and with luck history might repeat itself...who knows? And that's the bit that excites me at the moment!"

Opposite page top: Georgina Hunt. Below. British Young Drivers get some help with harnessing at the Unicorn Trust. This page left: British Young Driver Tara Wilkson. Right: A prospective young driver undergoes training at the Unicorn Trust.



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