



Competitors'
**INTERNATIONAL
HANDBOOK**

*Issued by British Carriagedriving
as guidance only for
first time or inexperienced international competitors*

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. PURPOSE

This handbook is written in order to help first time or inexperienced international competitors. Hopefully it will assist in planning to compete at an International Event in Europe and will draw attention to things that will be different to the procedures at UK National Events.

1.2. DETAIL

Intentionally the handbook has been kept to a reasonably short length. It does not attempt to go into detail and it will be necessary to look up some sections in more detail. References to useful website addresses have been given where possible.

1.3. SEQUENCE

The document has been set in what is hopefully a helpful sequence of Planning, Travelling, Arriving, the competition and general matters.

1.4. REFERENCE DOCUMENT

You may find it helpful to use the handbook as a check list to ensure that nothing has been overlooked.

2. PLANNING



2.1. INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

Look at the British Carriagedriving website (www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk) to see the calendar of international events and identify those you may wish to enter.

2.2. SCHEDULE

Download from the calendar on the BC website the event schedule. Do read it very carefully making a note of the important matters such as the THREE closing dates of entries.

2.3. ENTRIES

Entry in Principle.

Contact the British Carriagedriving office (email@britishcarriagedriving.co.uk), before the closing date to ask that notification is sent to the event that an entry will be made.

Nominated Entry.

Before the closing date fill in and submit to the British Carriagedriving office the Nominated Entry form (will be found on the BC website). This will identify you and your horses/ponies to the event organisers. You can nominate up to double the number of horses/ponies you will ultimately be allowed to take.

Definite Entry.

Before the closing date you must declare the horses/ponies you will be taking, from your nominated entry list. Again through the British Carriagedriving office.

HippoBase. If the schedule requires entries to be made by HippoBase you will have to contact the British Carriagedriving office who will be able to do this for you.

2.4. ENTRY FEES

Check the schedule for the entry fee requirement. Some events allow payment on arrival others require you to pay in advance by bank transfer.

2.5. INSURANCE

Full membership of British Carriagedriving provides Public Liability and a limited amount of Personal Accident Insurance cover whilst competing abroad. You should take evidence of this membership with you. If you are a member of a British team competing at a World Championship there is a separate team insurance policy.

If the competition is in the European Community you will need a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). For other countries you should take out travel insurance to cover medical treatment.

If you have veterinary insurance make sure it is extended to cover foreign travel. Be careful of anti-doping rules if treatment is required before the event.

2.6. FEI DRIVER REGISTRATION (YEARLY)

You will require an annual FEI Driver Registration. An application form can be downloaded from the British Carriagedriving website.

The fee is £15 payable to the BHDTA.

2.7. FEI HORSE/PONY REGISTRATION (YEARLY)

All animals that compete in an FEI competition must be registered annually with the FEI (This is in addition to an FEI Passport).An application form can be downloaded from the British Carriagedriving website.

The fee is £15 per horse/pony, payable to British Carriagedriving.

Both of the above fees now also apply to para-equestrian competitors.

2.8. OBTAIN AN FEI PASSPORT FOR HORSES/PONIES (LASTS 4 YEARS)

An application form can be downloaded from the British Carriagedriving website. There are separate forms for new or renewal applications.

The current DEFRA (new application) or FEI (renewal application) should be sent with the application. British Carriagedriving will obtain a new FEI cover for your passport and send it back to you.

On receiving your draft passport (new ones) check that the diagrammatic drawing and description are correct and that the vaccination history is correct and up to date.

To compete in an FEI event it is necessary for the passport to show that the horse/pony has been vaccinated within 6 months of the event, following the primary course and annual booster.

Check that all the entries on the document are correct, including the owner details, sign it, and then send it straight to the BEF office for stamping.

The fees, new or renewal, are £204 (Horse) £96 (Pony) payable to British Carriagedriving.

2.9 PROCESSING TIME

Do allow plenty of time for these applications to be processed. In the case of Passports, at least 1 month and preferably longer. There is a facility for processing FEI passports quickly but The BEF charge a fee of £60 payable to British Carriagedriving.

2.10.POST OR TELEPHONE

It is possible to obtain the above application forms by writing to or telephoning the British Carriagedriving office (0845 6432116).

2.11. FEI DATABASE

Once registered, both drivers and horses/ponies are listed on the FEI database and you can check your registration there. (www.fei.org)

2.12. RULE BOOK

Make sure you **download and** take a copy of the FEI Rule Book with you. Visit the FEI RULE BOOK page of the British Carriagedriving website where you can see both the Rules and the Regulations.

2.13. BACK PROTECTOR

Remember that it is compulsory when competing at an international event for both the driver and grooms to wear back protectors, during section E of the marathon.

2.14. FLAGS

Take a couple of good sized Union Jack flags for display on your lorry and on the carriage in any ceremony.

3. TRAVELLING

3.1.DETAILS OF PARTY

Before you leave, advise the event organisers of the names of the people and horses/ponies in your party. Also the vehicles, trailers, caravans and their sizes.

You will also need to set out your stabling requirements, including bedding.

It is helpful to the organisers if you tell them your date and approximate time of arrival.

3.2.ROUTE

Plan your route carefully and work out the distance to establish if you need overnight stops with stabling.

Some racecourses may offer overnight stabling and good lorry parking areas.

For those travelling from the north via Dover, Parkers have a stabling facility near Dover. (www.johnparkerinternational.com).

3.3.TOLLS AND VIGNETTES

Each country has different means of charging for the use of roads. In France it will be tolls. In many others it will be vignettes or GO boxes. Vignettes are usually purchased at major filling stations, just before the border and tolls usually take credit cards. You will need to know the number of axles and the emission rating of your lorry. A search on Google may help identify websites that will give more details.

3.4.FERRY

With the demise of Seafrance, the Dover route is serviced by P & O, Portsmouth by Brittany Ferries, Hull by P & O and Harwich by Stena Line.

Check with the British Carriagedriving website where you will find details of the new arrangement with P & O for members to book on favourable terms.

You need to make your own booking (www.poferriesfreight.com www.brittany-ferries.co.uk www.stenaline.co.uk)

3.5.HIGH VISIBILITY JACKETS

You will be using commercial port facilities where it is expected that when out of the lorry cab you all wear High Viz jackets. They will also be required if you have a breakdown.

3.6. DRIVERS' RESTAURANT

You will be given 2 tickets which enable you to use the commercial drivers' restaurant which will be less crowded than the tourist one and serves good food at reasonable prices.

3.7. HORSE/PONY PAPERS

Do visit the British Carriagedriving website (www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk) where you will find the forms that you need to apply for Export Licences (EXH 1 for horses) (EXH 2 for ponies). The DEFRA guidance notes are EXH 5. These licences are free. They will only be sent to you 48 hours before travelling.

For ponies you will need evidence of value which can be either a receipt when purchased or the insurance value **or a letter from British Carriagedriving confirming the competition purpose of travelling.**

In addition you will need Veterinary Health Certificates (EXH 3). You will need to get your vet to complete these, at your expense, within 48 hours of travel, so set up an appointment in advance. They last for 10 days, and if you are away for longer you will need to get the event to arrange for the State Veterinary service to provide a new one for the return journey, particularly if you are returning any other way than Calais/Dover. You will find all the requirements and explanatory details on the DEFRA website (www.defra.gov.uk).

3.8. AGENTS

If you feel a little daunted by the requirements for booking ferries, obtaining the correct horse/pony paperwork, the route, the requirement for vignettes and overnight stabling, you can instruct an agent who, for a reasonable fee, will do all this for you.

Georgie Matthews (GG Equine Services) georgiematthews@btinternet.com
Parkers www.Johnparkerinternational.com
Pedens www.pedens-bloodstock.com

3.9.INSURANCE

Consult your lorry insurance company about any additional cover required for your proposed trip.

3.10. LORRY

Make sure your lorry is checked over before your trip and have spare tyres for the lorry and trailer already correctly inflated. Your headlights will need adjusting for driving on the right at night.

You will need a warning triangle and a first aid kit. Fix a GB plate to the rear of the lorry.

Have your lorry registration document and MOT certificate with you.

Do be aware of the driver's hours regulations. There is a good explanatory booklet "A Guide for Horsebox and Trailer Owners" produced by VOSA which is part of the Dept. of Transport. (www.businesslink.gov.uk/transport)

3.11. BREAKDOWN COVER

Take out breakdown cover insurance to cover repairs and repatriation. Horsebox Owners (www.ohoto.co.uk) or NFU. (www.nfumutual.co.uk)

3.12. PASSPORT AND DRIVING LICENCE

Do not forget to check that everyone in your party has their passport and driving licence. If the lorry driver wears glasses you are required to have a spare pair.

3.13. VETERINARY ADVICE

Long journeys across Europe can be very stressful on your horses/ponies. Do get advice from your vet on the best welfare practice on long journey, particularly on feeding and watering.

4. ARRIVAL AT THE EVENT

4.1. STABLE MANAGER

On arriving report to the stable manager who will allocate your stables as requested. One or two events may allow you to use side stabling on your lorries but almost exclusively events on the continent expect you to use the stabling provided which gives the organisers better security control.

Your horses/ponies will be checked on arrival against their passports and the passports will be retained.

You will be able to obtain additional bedding and feed from the stable manager for which you will have to pay either to the stable manager or at the end of the event.

4.2. WASH DOWN AREA

There is usually a designated wash down area near the stables.

4.3. ELECTRICITY

Another difference from UK events is that you will usually be provided with an electric hook up point. Do bring adapters and plenty of cable.

4.4. MOVING AROUND THE SITE

Check the schedule to see what is allowed. Some events will allow quads and scooters but many stipulate only bikes. It is a good idea to put bikes in the lorry anyway.

4.5. ACCREDITATION

As soon as your horse/ponies are stabled and the lorry parked, go to the event office and collect your paperwork and horse/pony and carriage numbers. The number must be on your carriages at all times. The horse/pony numbers must be on the animals at all times when they are out of the stables.

In addition take all your party to get them accredited with the appropriate badge which will give access to the, event, the stables and, sometimes, restricted stands.

5. THE COMPETITION

5.1. THE VETERINARY INSPECTION

Unlike UK National Events you will have a formal vetting, usually on the day before dressage. Check the time carefully and go and look at the site of the Trot Up.

No boots, bandages or painting of hooves is allowed. Identification is part of the process.

Have your horses/ponies well groomed and plaited and the owner and grooms smartly dressed. Gentlemen should wear a hat or cap. It is your first chance to impress the judges.

Watch earlier competitors present and trot up their horses/ponies. You will see that at the turn at the end of the lane the handler turns to the right on the outside of the horse/pony. Observe the walk/trot signs and note that your horse/pony must be on a loose lead.

Present the horses/ponies in bridles with the correct animal number on the left side of the bridle and politely greet the judges.

You will be told immediately if your horse/pony has passed. You may be asked to go to the holding box, where a vet will make a close inspection in order to advise the jury. You will, after a short time be asked to re present your horse/pony. Do not panic but listen to the steward and vets instructions. They do want your animal to compete if it is possible.

5.2. TIMES

The time of your dressage and other phases should be in your paperwork but it may change. Check regularly at the office and the notice board for any alterations. Never pass the office without checking.

5.3. DECLARATIONS

Make sure you are aware of the procedure for declaring horses/ponies for each phase of the competition.

5.4. PRACTICE FACILITIES

Check where the practice arenas are sited and what times you are allowed to use them and the layout of the exercise route.

5.5. DRESSAGE

There will usually be 5 judges and be prepared for the arena to be on sand or another artificial surface.

There may be one or more timed warm up arenas that you progress through before entering the main arena.

Be prepared for your horses/ponies to have to cope with much more arena noise and distractions than you may have been used to in the UK.

5.6. THE MARATHON

There will usually be two opportunities to go on a course drive and inspect the route. Get a lift in a car and go on one of the drives.

Expect the marathon, particularly section A, to be shorter than you will have been used to, and in some cases it is run in a very restricted area often with the route going two or three times round the same part of the course. Be careful to ensure you go through the compulsory gates in the correct order

Often the obstacles are in deep sand which more than compensates for the shorter length of the course.

The walk is likely to have several observers and is sometimes videoed.

At some events there is a veterinary check at the end of the marathon.

5.7. CONES

Check carefully the time you expect to be required in the arena. The plan of the course has to be available two hours before the competition commences. This plan together with the speed and time allowed will be posted outside the arena.

Do not expect to be allowed to walk the cones until one hour before the competition starts. This can be difficult if you are an early starter and may require you to harness up and take your horses/ponies to the collecting ring to be held whilst you walk the course.

You will have a vet check during the warm up consisting of a trotted figure of eight. Just present yourself to the judge and vet and do as they request.

6. GENERAL MATTERS

6.1. SOCIAL

It is likely that there will be both formal and informal social events. Try and attend these as often information that will help you can be announced there. If it is formal, dress appropriately, otherwise the socials are pretty casual.

6.2. PRIZE GIVING

These ceremonies often involve all the competitors. It is important to check with the show office if your attendance is required and whether this is on foot or in carriages. In either case it will be in dressage clothing.

If there is a closing ceremony/prize-giving involving all the competitors, be prepared for it to go on for a long time, sometimes more than 1 hour.

6.3. SETTLING ACCOUNTS

Go to show office and pay for bedding and feed and any other items and collect your horse/pony passports.

If you have been out of the UK for more than 10 days collect your horse/pony Veterinary Health Certificate.

Do not forget to return your carriage and horse numbers.

6.4. EXTRA DAY ON SITE

If you need to stay for an extra night because of ferry times do ask permission from the show office.

6.5. LORRY SITE

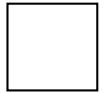
Please make an effort to leave your site clean. Otherwise it will reflect badly on other British competitors at subsequent events.

6.6. YELLOW CARDS

If you commit a minor offence or upset one of the officials you may be shown a Yellow Card. Do not argue the issue with official. It is merely a warning and has no other consequences but it will be recorded on the FEI website and if subsequently you commit a similar offence within two years then there will be disciplinary proceedings. In most cases they are issued for over use of the whip.

6.7. ANTI DOPING (CLEAN SPORT)

Do look at the British Carriagedriving website (Competing Abroad) and read the information there on this subject. Take particular care with feed supplements and discuss your feeding and treatment regime with your vet to make sure you do not innocently fall foul of the Clean Sport Rules.



If you do very well, and certainly if you win, you must expect your horses/ponies to be drug tested. This can be after the dressage phase.

6.8. CHEF D'EQUIPE

If you are representing a British Team at a World Championship a lot of the preparation work and the collection of paperwork at the event will be carried out for you by your Chef d'Equipe, leaving you to concentrate on the competition only.

THE VERY BEST OF LUCK AND ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE AND NEW FRIENDS