



**Competitors'**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
**HANDBOOK**

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

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*Updated May 2018*

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# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1. PURPOSE**

This handbook is written 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.

For more information look at

*[http://www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk/reference/competing\\_abroad.htm](http://www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk/reference/competing_abroad.htm)*

## **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](http://www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk)) to see the calendar of international events and identify those you may wish to enter.

### **2.2. SCHEDULE**

Download the event schedule from the international calendar on the BC website. Do read it very carefully making a note of the important matters, particularly the TWO closing dates of entries – Nominated and Definite.

### **2.3. ENTRIES**

*Note: To compete at FEI International events (CAI 2\* or CAI 3\*) you must be on the international competitor list in the appropriate FEI \* category. Drivers and horses must also be registered with the FEI for the current year. See below for more information.*

*All entries for FEI International events must be done using the FEI on-line entry system. This is done for all competitors by British Carriagedriving. You will need to download and complete the on-line **International entry form**.*

#### **(a) Nominated Entry Date – atleast 4 weeks before event**

You can nominate up to double the number of horses/ponies you will ultimately be allowed to take.

#### **(b) Definite Entry – atleast 4 days before event**

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

### **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 Liability Insurance cover for the member and also for any groom or backstepper competing with them. In addition, a limited amount of Personal Accident Insurance cover is provided for the member and accompanying grooms and casual helpers whilst competing abroad at an event endorsed by British Carriagedriving. Additional personal accident cover can be purchased by following the link on the BC website. You should take evidence of this membership with you.

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. BC MEMBERSHIP AND FEI DRIVER REGISTRATION (ANNUAL)**

You are now required to be an **International** Member of BC in order to compete in FEI events. Cost £225 (which includes FEI driver registration fee). FEI Driver Registration is mandatory and must be renewed annually.

Note: An FEI Driver Registration application form must be downloaded from the British Carriagedriving website and completed before your FEI registration can be validated.

## **2.7. FEI HORSE/PONY REGISTRATION (ANNUAL)**

All animals that compete in an FEI competition must be registered annually with the FEI (This is in addition to a valid FEI Passport). An application form can be downloaded from the British Carriagedriving website. All horses/ponies being registered for the first time are required to be microchipped.

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

Both of the above FEI registrations 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 where there is a special page with Passport Information. 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. Check the owner details, sign it, and then send it directly to the BEF office for stamping. It is not valid until it is signed and stamped.

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.

The fees, new or renewal, are £210 (Horse) £96 (Pony) (payable to BC).

## **2.9 PROCESSING TIME**

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

## **2.10. POST OR TELEPHONE**

All the forms are available on line, but it is also possible to obtain them 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 this via the International page on the BC website.

## **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 General Regulations.

## **2.13. BACK PROTECTOR**

As in Great Britain, it is compulsory for both the driver and groom/s to wear back protectors on 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](http://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. It is preferable to purchase a vignettes on line prior to departure (particularly if you are travelling at night), although they can be purchased at major filling stations, just before the border; 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**

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 special arrangement with P & O for BC members to book on favourable terms.

You need to make your own booking  
([www.poferriesfreight.com](http://www.poferriesfreight.com) - [www.brittany-ferries.co.uk](http://www.brittany-ferries.co.uk) - [www.stenaline.co.uk](http://www.stenaline.co.uk))

When travelling by ferry it is your responsibility to ensure that your vehicle is suitable and your load is stowed and secured appropriately for sea transport.

It is a legal requirement that horse boxes must be able to be properly secured to the ship. This means that all horse boxes travelling by ferry must have the correct number of lashing points able to take the ship's equipment. Vehicles less than 9m long and weighing between 3.5 and 20 tonnes will normally require a minimum of 2 on each side, increasing to 4 each side for vehicles over 30 tonnes. Small trailers should be able to be lashed over their wheels using webbing straps. Towing eyes are not recognised lashing points.

If you have a vehicle which is unable to be secured to the ship, there is a good chance your vehicle will be refused for shipment. This applies all year round, but is especially true in bad or anticipated bad weather.

### **3.5.HIGH VISIBILITY JACKETS**

You must carry High Viz jackets for you and all passengers. They must always be worn when out of the lorry cab at the port, or if you have a breakdown.

### **3.6. DRIVERS' RESTAURANT**

You will be given one ticket per person to 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](http://www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk)) where you will find the forms that you need:

1. Veterinary Health Certificates (EXHA31 version 2/17). You will need to download this, fill it in on line and email it to Defra's Animal Health Office (Equine Export/ Import) in Carlisle who will email your export licence to your vet. The vet will complete these, at your expense, when he does the welfare inspection, which must be done within 48 hours of departure from the UK, so set up an appointment in advance. Take the completed form with you to the port with the horse passport. The licence allows you to return 10 days without further veterinary inspection, 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](http://www.defra.gov.uk)).

2. You also need an Export Self Declaration (EXH06 for horses) (EXH07 for ponies). Take the completed form with you to the port. In an emergency you can obtain and fill in one of these at the port.

### **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. They include:

- *Georgie Matthews (GG Equine Services) [georgiematthews@btinternet.com](mailto:georgiematthews@btinternet.com)*
- *Parkers [www.johnparkerinternational.com](http://www.johnparkerinternational.com)*
- *Pedens [www.pedens-bloodstock.com](http://www.pedens-bloodstock.com)*



### **3.9. LORRY INSURANCE**

Consult your lorry insurance company about any additional cover required for your proposed trip and obtain a 'green card'.

### **3.10. LORRY**

Make sure your lorry is checked over before your trip and the tyres of lorry and trailer correctly inflated. If you don't carry spare tyres, ensure you know the specification of all your tyres in case of a puncture. Your headlights will need adjusting for driving on the right at night.

You will need a warning triangle, a first aid kit and 2 breathalyser kits, and hi-viz jackets for all people in the vehicle. 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](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/transport)).

Be aware of speed limits in the countries you are planning to drive through. You can be liable to on the spot fines which can prove very costly.

### **3.11. BREAKDOWN COVER**

Take out breakdown cover insurance to cover repairs and repatriation. Horsebox Owners ([www.ohto.co.uk](http://www.ohto.co.uk)) or NFU ([www.nfumutual.co.uk](http://www.nfumutual.co.uk)). Or use the lorry manufacturer's own international recovery service. This is a 'pay as you go' arrangement, i.e. DAF Aid or Iveco Non-Stop, which can be accessed via an App. Check the manufacturer's website for details. Note: Some require pre-registration.

### **3.12. PASSPORT AND DRIVING LICENCE**

Do not forget to check that everyone in your party has a valid 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**

When your horse/ponies are stabled and lorry parked, go to the event office and collect paperwork and horse bridle/carriage numbers (although usually you will be required to provide your own bridle numbers). Your carriages must display a number at all times. Bridle numbers must be on the animals at all times when they are out of the stables.

Check if any special accreditation passes/badges are required for your party for access to the event and the stables.

# **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 are allowed. Identification is part of the process.

Have your horses/ponies well groomed and plaited with 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 trot up their horses/ponies. You will see they turn right at the end of the lane 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 (near) side of the bridle; 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's and vet's instructions. They will 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. 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 in a multiple 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. There may not always be an 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. Be prepared for your horses/ponies to have to cope with much more arena noise and distractions than you may be used to in the UK.

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

#### **5.6. THE MARATHON**

There will usually be two opportunities to go on a course drive and inspect the route. Occasionally you are asked to cycle it instead.

The Marathon will often be run in the reverse order of placings after Dressage, so you will not know your exact start time until the end of Dressage. You will usually be issued with times for Start A, plus the times, distances and speeds. You will be expected to work out your own individual section start and finish times.

Expect the marathon, particularly section A, to be shorter than you will have been used to, and in some cases it will run in a very restricted area. Often Section B will be run around a circular route negotiated a number of times, with tracks off to the relevant obstacles. Familiarise yourself with the order of compulsory turning flags and obstacles to ensure you go through them in the correct sequence.

You will usually be required to trot into the Rest area to allow the vet/judge to check the soundness of your animal/s, but this will be clearly signed. During the 10-minute halt the stewards will check your turnout for compliance with the rules (including measuring the track width of your carriage).

There will be a veterinary check at the end of the marathon.

#### **5.7. CONES**

The plan of the course will be available an hour and a half 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 an hour and a half before the competition starts. This can be difficult if you are an early starter.

Carefully check the time you are likely to be required in the arena.



Your horse/s will have a vet check in harness during the warm-up consisting of a trotted figure of eight. You must present your turnout yourself. Bandages and boots are permitted, but must be removed if requested. Just present yourself to the judge and vet and do as they require.



## **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 helpful information is announced there.

### **6.2. PRIZE GIVINGS**

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.

### **6.3. SETTLING ACCOUNTS**

Go to show office and pay for bedding and feed and any other items and don't forget to collect your horse/pony passports before you leave.

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/or horse numbers if required.

### **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 receive a Yellow Card. Do not argue the issue with officials. It is merely a warning 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)**

Lots of information for you and your vet is available on the FEI website - <http://inside.fei.org/fei/cleansport/>. Take particular care with feed supplements and discuss your feeding and treatment regime with your vet to ensure 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 any of the phases.

### **6.8. CHEF D'EQUIPE**

If you are a member of the 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!**

