



GUIDELINES FOR ORGANISERS OF NATIONAL DRIVING TRIALS

February 2017

ARTICLE 1. INTRODUCTION

i. The aim of these Guidelines is to assist an Organiser who undertakes the running of a British Carriagedriving National Horse Driving Trials Event for the first time. It will also be useful as an aide memoire for all other National Driving Trials Event Organisers and should be read in conjunction with the Rule Book and the British Carriagedriving Guidelines 2017.

ii. It is essential that the Organiser should be in possession of the current edition (2017) of The British Carriagedriving Rules, The up to date FEI General Regulations and The FEI Veterinary Regulations.

ARTICLE 2. MAKE UP OF A NATIONAL DRIVING TRIAL EVENT.

i. A National Horse Driving Trials Event comprises of three Competitions:-

Competition A – Driven Dressage.

Competition B – Marathon.

Competition C – Obstacle Cones Driving Competition.

ii. These three Competitions are judged entirely separately, and the winner is the Athlete with the Best Overall Score for all three Competitions, which make up an Event; but also, special prizes (rosettes) may be awarded to the winners of the individual Competitions.

iii. If Event is spread over two days it is probably preferable to run the Driven Dressage and Obstacle Cones Driving on the first day and the Marathon on the second day.

iv. Any of these Competitions can be Organised on their own, as separate Events i.e. Driven Dressage and Obstacle Cones Driving (with an instructional session in addition if you wish); or just the Marathon.

ARTICLE 3. LAND NEEDED FOR A HORSE DRIVING TRIALS EVENT.

To be able to stage a Horse Driving Trials Event, there must be sufficient land available for the following:-

- (a) A Driven Dressage Arena with a Practice Arena, warm up areas and possibly an Exercise Route.
- (b) An Obstacle Cones Driving Arena and Warming up Arena, however (a) & (b) are usually combined for a three day Event.
- (c) A Marathon Course with 6 – 8 Obstacles.
- (d) Adequate parking space for Horseboxes and Portable Stabling,

remembering that Driving Athletes tend to have larger lorries than the normal Riding Athletes.

- (e) A "Driving-in" area, bearing in mind that a Driven Horse needs considerably more space to warm up in than a Ridden Horse, particularly if there are a lot of Entries.

ARTICLE 4. THE DRIVEN DRESSAGE ARENA

i. All Driven Dressage Tests are driven in an Arena of 100 m x 40 m. It is possible to use a smaller 80 m x 40 m Area in some instances, at very small Events, but the larger Arena is the usual size and must be used at all three-Day Events.

ii. The Arena should be as level and smooth as possible, with sufficient room at one end and both sides for the Judges to park their cars up to the edge of the Arena and with space at the other end for Athletes to swing round to enter the Arena. The Arena should be bounded by white boards or similar; although these need not form a continuous line, provided the outline of the Arena is quite clear. The letters X, D & G should be clearly marked on the ground, either with sawdust or a similar material; also, the Practice Arena should be marked in the same manner, with similar material. Check in The Rule Book for details of the other letters which should be marked (by White Markers or similar with the relevant letter on them) round the outside of the Arena.

iii. Ideally the Driven Dressage Arena should be a minimum of 100m away from Stables, Horseboxes, Warming up Areas and other distractions.

ARTICLE 5. OBSTACLE CONES DRIVING AREA

i. The Obstacle Cones Driving Arena should be as flat as possible and approximately 130m x 70m in size. For Three Day Events, this is usually the same Arena that the Driven Dressage took place in. There should also be a good sized collecting area, to allow Athletes to warm up prior to the Competition. If the Arena is smaller than the above size it would mean a reduction in the number of Obstacles in the Cones Arena, to less than 20. Usually this is the Area that was used for Driven Dressage.

ii. The number of pairs of Cones that can be used (up to the recommended maximum of 20) will depend upon the area available for the ring, but it is important to design a flowing course without sharp turns, particularly at Novice level; however a number of Multiple Obstacles will be in the Course. Bridges and Water must be advertised in the Schedule. The Rules allow for a maximum of 20, but if the Arena is smaller the number must be reduced accordingly.

iii. The Obstacle Cones should be set at the standard track width for each Class with the allowance as per the Rule Book.

ARTICLE 6. THE MARATHON COURSE

i. The Course at a National Event will consist of three Sections (Sections A, Transfer Section & Section B). Section A is an "Any Pace" Section which can be run along tracks, across grass or stubble fields (in dry weather) or along metalled roads (although the latter is undesirable if it can be avoided). Deeply rutted or stony tracks should also be avoided. The Transfer Section, also at Any Pace, should be along a level firm surface, but can be run in a Circle, which is easy to observe.

ii. Athletes must have a 10 minute Compulsory Rest at the end of the Transfer Section. This should be off the road and water must be available for Athletes to wash down their Horses. The Horses must also be inspected by a Veterinarian before starting Section B. Also a loo is necessary, with shade and sufficient space for 3 or 4 Horses and Carriages with parking for Officials Vehicles, who will be at the Rest Area for the duration of the Marathon.

iii. Section B includes the 6 – 8 Marathon Obstacles and the track is run at Any Pace, except after the last Obstacle when Athletes can only Walk or Trot. It is obligatory that there are a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 8 Obstacles on the Course. The Finish of Section B should be reasonably close to the Stables.

iv. The recommended maximum lengths of all these Sections, are given in the British Carriagedriving Rule Book, although it may be necessary to modify the distances to allow for the amount of space available. Likewise, maximum speeds are also shown in the Rule Book, but it is suggested that slower speeds should be used for Novices and in hot or unclément weather conditions.

v. In classes where Horses and Ponies compete against each other (e.g. multiples classes at some Club Events) the same speeds may be used for Horses and Ponies on Sections A & B. However, the Transfer Section, will probably be the same distance for both Horses and Ponies, the time allowed will need to be adjusted to allow for a slower speed for Ponies. It may, therefore, be preferable to schedule all the Horses at the beginning of the class followed by the Ponies.

vi. The Course should be clearly marked with Yellow Arrows throughout its length and, if Compulsory Turning Flags are required, these should be clearly numbered, in each Section, independently of any other numbers or flags (i.e. Obstacles) on the Course. Numbered posts should be used to mark the kilometres along the Course (preferably each one numbered accordingly) on Section A and also on Section B (where the distance in the Obstacles has to be included in the overall measurement between kilometres). Appropriate signboards should be used to indicate the various Starts and Finishes.

Marathon Obstacles

vii. Each Obstacle consists of a set of Entry Flags (red and white), a series of marked "gates" and a set of Exit Flags. Athletes are timed whilst between the Entry and Exit Flags. This is the most important part of the Course and needs the most attention.

viii. Obstacles can consist of a group of trees, a series of posts driven into the ground (which must be at least 1.3m high), water filled drums, hurdles, straw bales etc. However, it is important to ensure that they are sufficiently strong and well built, to withstand the inevitable knocking they will receive from Carriages and cannot be dragged over to endanger a Horse. It is unlikely that a post knocked into the ground with just a sledge hammer will withstand the force of a Pair Vehicle hitting it, and it is very tedious (and time-consuming) to have to keep stopping following Athletes to repair an Obstacle. Therefore great care should be taken to ensure that the Obstacles are of the highest standard.

ix. See the Rule Book for specified dimensions of Obstacles, but it is important to allow sufficient room outside sharp turns in an Obstacle for a Novice Athlete to circle or manoeuvre. Slopes can be incorporated in Obstacles provided consideration is given to safety. This is for the Course Designer to design and supervise the construction of, under the supervision of the Technical Delegate.

x. The Gates in an Obstacle are marked with red and white flags (red on the right) and these should be clearly lettered in sequence from A to a maximum of F.

xi. Ideally all the Obstacles should be in one or two large fields. Although it is not always possible, they should be at least 250m apart, more distance is always better and this can be achieved by making Athletes go out round a series of Compulsory Turning Flags before the next Obstacle and then doing another loop round flags before the next Obstacle and so on (in a clover leaf fashion). This makes it more interesting for spectators and enables Athletes to inspect the Course beforehand much more easily.

ARTICLE 7. SCHEDULE AND ENTRIES

i. The Schedule should contain: -

- (a) The Date and Address of the Venue (with directions if possible).
- (b) Name, address and telephone number of Secretary.
- (c) Details of the Competition, including which Dressage Test is to be used and the Sections and approximate length of the Marathon Course with a rough timetable.
- (d) Closing date for Entries.
- (e) Time when Marathon Course is open for inspection.
- (f) Prizes and Rosettes to be awarded.
- (g) Entry form and details of Entry Fee.
- (h) Disclaimer of Liability.
- (i) Request for stamped addressed envelope (if required) for details of starting times etc.

ii. Entries should close not less than two weeks before the Competition.

ARTICLE 8. AFTER CLOSE OF ENTRIES

i. Once the Entries have closed a draw for the order of running can be made. It is likely that in a One Day Event the same running order will be retained for all three tests. But for a three Day Event the Driven Dressage and Marathon Running Order should be reversed, so Athletes do not always go in the same order.

ii. For small Events, some Organisers may find it easier to send the detailed timings, together with a Marathon Course map, drawings of the Marathon Obstacles, to Athletes immediately after the close of Entries. The only drawback is that if the timings are worked out at this early stage, any subsequent Withdrawals will leave a gap in the timetable, but many Organisers may still find this system preferable, in which case they may wish to request Athletes to include a large stamped addressed envelope with their Entries. The drawings and plans need only be simple ones, but clear enough for Athletes to follow easily. The detailed drawings will be available when the Course is opened.

iii. The alternative is to issue Athletes with their Driven Dressage starting times and a rough idea of when the Marathon will start for each Class and the same for the Obstacle Cone Driving. Then all other details will be given to them on arrival.

ARTICLE 9. TIMETABLE

(a) Driven Dressage

Starting intervals for all Tests are usually 10 minutes per Athlete, but breaks must be inserted to give the Judges, Writers and Stewards time to compose themselves. Where there is a change of Test, it is advisable to insert a break before beginning a New Test.

(b) Marathon

Athletes normally go at 4 or 5 minute intervals (maybe longer with Four in Hands and Tandems). A timetable should be drawn up showing all the times for Start A, Finish A (based on the optimum time worked out at the chosen speed over the distance of the section), Start Transfer (probably 2 minutes* after Finish A), Finish Transfer, Start B (allowing for the compulsory 10 minute halt) and Finish B.

* It is assumed that the start of the Transfer Section will normally be within 50 m of the Finish of A. If it is further, additional time should be allowed before the start of the Transfer Section.

(c) Obstacle Cones Driving

The time interval will depend upon the length of the Course and must also allow time for the Arena Party to re-set Cones where necessary. In practice Athletes will usually run at 4 - 5 minute intervals. Also after each Class time must be allowed for Prize Giving.

ARTICLE 10. OFFICIALS

A list of jobs to be allocated to helpers to run a successful Event. Depending on the timetable, helpers could well fulfil more than one task:

- (a) Office - Secretary
- (b) Scorer - 1 Scorer and 1 assistant, plus a very efficient team of Score Collectors (Driven Dressage, Obstacle Cone Driving, Marathon Start and Finish, for three Sections Marathon Obstacles).
- (c) Driven Dressage - with 3 Judges, and 3 Writers, 1 Steward per arena
- (d) Obstacle Cone Driving - 1 Steward, 1 Judge/Timekeeper, 3 Arena party
- (e) Marathon - Starters/Timekeepers for each Start, Timekeepers for each Finish. 1 Steward for 10 Minute Rest. Minimum of 2 Judges/Timekeepers for each Marathon Obstacle.
- (f) Emergencies - There really should be a Doctor and a Vet on the showground throughout the Event, but certainly for the Marathon. First Aid cover should also be provided. If possible there should also be a Vet permanently based at the marathon Rest.

MISCELLANEOUS

ARTICLE 12. COURSE OPENING

The Marathon Course should be finished and fully flagged and signed by 12.00 on the Thursday (42 hours) preceding the Event. Athletes must be free to inspect the Obstacles in Section B, but provided there is a good map, a List of all the Compulsory Turning Flags and preferably a route description provided, no reconnoitre of the rest of the Course is required.

ARTICLE 13. EQUIPMENT

Numbers will be required for all Athletes to tie on their Vehicle and to slip into their cross country number bibs, for the Marathon.

- (a) **Driven Dressage** Dressage boards, sawdust for "X", Arena Letters.
Judges' sheets, clipboard, pencils.
Order of running and clipboard for Steward.
Measuring tape to check measurement of Vehicle track width.
- (b) **Marathon** Order of running and timings for all Stewards/Volunteers, Timekeepers and Judges.
Sheets for Timekeepers, Sheets for Obstacle Observers.

Timekeeping equipment - Each Obstacle needs two Stopwatches.

Starts and Finishes should be timed on a chronometer.
Lettered red and white flags for Obstacles.
Individual numbers for each Obstacle.
Entrance and exit flags for each Obstacle.
Numbered Compulsory Turning Flags.
Yellow Arrows to mark the Course.
Section Start and Finish signs and flags.
Kilometre markers for Sections A and B.

- (c) **Obstacle Cone Driving** Set of Obstacle Cones with balls.
Measuring sticks for Arena Party.
Order of running for Stewards/Volunteers and Judges
Stop watch and Judging Sheets for Judges
Measuring tape to check measurement of Vehicle track width required.
- (d) **Athletes** Each Athlete requires a copy of the timings for Driven Dressage, Marathon and Obstacle Cone Driving, a map and route description of the Marathon Course, a List of all the Compulsory Turning Flags. Paperwork giving length of each Section and the speed set for each Section, drawings of Marathon Obstacles.
- (e) **Scoring** The Scorers need British Carriagedriving score sheets or pads ruled up in advance to fill in the information Athlete by Athlete to make it easier to work out the individual scores. Board for Competition Results

ARTICLE 14. SUMMARY

All this information is meant purely as a guide for first time Organisers and a help to existing Organisers, but may have to be adapted to suit individual needs according to the space and help available and the number of potential Entries.