



Controlled Warm Up (alternative section 'A')

GUIDELINES

Competitors may not have participated in competitions with a controlled warm up before this year, below are some guidelines to consider when you do.

Whilst it is different to a conventional Section A, it is not difficult if you consider the 1,2,3 that follow: -

- 1- Know the Rules
- 2- Have a (Flexi) Plan, &
- 3- Be considerate.

1- Know the Rules

- As always it is worth knowing the rules behind each element of the competition. DO remember that this is part of the marathon so grooms must be on the carriage, hard hats must be worn and fastened, and body protectors worn. And it is timed so don't forget to start your stopwatches. The controlled warm up has the following Rules: -

Article 960: 1.7: As an alternative option to Section A: A controlled Warm-up with a maximum time allowed of 30 minutes - In a designated warm-up area with a minimum 5000 square metres, properly stewarded, with a judge in attendance.

- If you are competing in an FEI competition, the following also applies. Note that it is not compulsory to use the preparation obstacle and you do not have to use it for the full 2 minutes it is available to you. See planning section.: -

Article 960: 1.8: If competing under FEI Rules before the start of Section B a marathon-type obstacle for preparation purposes made of any material and situated in a separate area must be provided. Each Athlete may use that Obstacle for 2 minutes maximum.

- It is also worth noting that if there is a controlled arm up section then the time for the compulsory rest is reduced: -

Article 960: 3.1: Compulsory rests. There must be a halt of 10 minutes in the designated neutral area prior to the start of Section B. When Section A is a "controlled warm up" the halt must be reduced to 5 minutes.

2- Have a (Flexi) Plan

Preparation is key! Some points to consider BEFORE you arrive at the controlled warm up area.

- Where is it? – How far from you lorry/trailer? How long will it take to get there arriving 10 mins before your start time?
- What is the area? Is it on grass or a surface? Is it flat or on a slope, what is the terrain like?
- Is there shade, wind breaks, trees etc that might influence what you do? Bear in mind if it's a hot day you may not be the only competitor wanting to stand in the shade!
- It's called a 'warm-up' for a reason, you are about to complete section B with the obstacles and your equine athletes need to be physically ready to perform to the best of their abilities. There may be less than 1Km from the start of section B to obstacle number 1. If you've stood still for the whole controlled warm-up, is this distance enough to warm up you horse or pony?
- Walk on foot the practice obstacle and have a plan agreed with your groom/s as to what, if anything, you are going to do in your optional 2 minutes. Consider both yourself and your horse or pony, is it worth practicing to get your 'eye' in? Will it help you to know what your control/ steering feels like?
- The 'Flexi' part of the plan is important as weather conditions may change during the day, so whilst standing still seemed appropriate early on, it may not be a good choice by the time you are on the course. So have a plan but also build some flexibility into it so that you are still confident with your choices if conditions change.

3- Be Considerate

You will not be the only competitor in the controlled warm up so consideration for fellow competitors is paramount. Whilst you may wish to trot and canter for the full time allowance there may be some who wish to stand still and stay calm, and vice versa.

There should be sufficient space for everyone to use the time as they wish but a considerate, polite approach should be maintained to make this possible.

Finally - It is more than likely at BC events that you will continue to drive a conventional roads and tracks Section A, this just gives organisers another option.

A controlled warm up can 'feel' very different to a conventional Section A but with preparation and practice they will become familiar to us all. If you're unsure of any points then don't be afraid to ask the competition officials or experienced competitors for advice.