



The East Anglian Carriage Driving Group Ltd

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2007



ALAN CLARKE

The Indoor Carriage Driving 2006/7 season came to a very successful conclusion at the Championships which, once again were held at Keysoe in Bedfordshire.



PAUL MILLS – going for it.

East Anglian members had a wonderful weekend – again! Congratulations must go to Alan Clarke Champion of the Pony Teams – to Paul Mills, Champion of the Horse Pairs – to Mark Bell, Champion Senior Juniors, with his sister, Katie in second place, less than 5 points behind. Others juniors placed were Charlotte Snow; her younger sister Amie Snow; Harriet Bradford and Tabitha King.



MARK BELL – 'low flying!'

In the adult classes, we were well represented in the notoriously difficult tandem class where Danielle Twitchen was second and Amanda Wells third.

The Veteran Class read more like a list of famous people at a driving trails event: Brian Nichols and Jenifer Barker-Simson kept the East Anglian flag flying, with Brian scooting around the obstacles to finish in third place (behind Sarah Garnett and David Mathews!)

Other members who had a successful weekend included, in the Open Pony; Fiona Powell, Nina Snow, and Janice Parker. In the Novice Horse Sue Hargreaves came third, while Chris Smith, Diana Irwin and Frances Collings did well in a very strong Open Horse Class. Finally, our Novice pony representative was Deirdre Luff.

Just to get to the Indoor Championships, each competitor had to be successful in their area to qualify, so WELL DONE TO YOU ALL.



NINA & GARY SNOW - CHECKING THE OBSTACLE DRAWINGS!

Blandings Farm at Badlingham, just north of Newmarket, was our first event of the season. We held a training day on the Saturday 8th April with Derek & Sharon Wootton and Richard Margrave. Unfortunately, several of our members couldn't come on the day due to lorry breakdowns, sickness and family commitments, but it was still well attended and a lot was learnt. The members who attended the training thought it was a very constructive day.



YVONNE FARMER TACKLING OBSTACLE 4.

On the Sunday, the inside/out event attracted 20 turnouts. The Dressage & Cones course drove really well. Competitors then had about two hours before setting off to drive the short marathon and six obstacles. Amanda Wells, whose lorry ramp fell off as she was loading to leave (!), brought both helpers to man an obstacle; Sharon Wootton, whose pony was unlevel, withdrew and came on Sunday to Steward for us in obstacle six and then Rosemary Neal, who wasn't at all well on

Saturday but felt better on Sunday, stewarded for us on Obstacle five. Without these stalwarts, we would not have had enough stewards to be able to use all the obstacles. The beautifully constructed obstacles all drove without mishaps, even the water, although some ponies were deeply suspicious!

For the first time at one of our smaller events, it was decided to arrange for a Snack Wagon to be on site. This was appreciated by all, so hopefully they will come back to our next event at Blandings, on Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th May. [So please support them.](#)



**ROGER DRIVER (the driver), WITH
TABITHA KING IN THE BACKGROUND**

Louise Garget and her family have spent a considerable amount of time over the winter, making additions to the obstacles, dressage arenas, and cones course. Blandings Farm now offers excellent facilities, which can be hired for training. We were very lucky with the weather, and everyone had a lovely weekend.

You can find the results on our Web Site: www.eacdg.org.uk

The Junior Easter Camp was once again held at the Unicorn Trust. Quite a few of our Junior members went to the Camp, which is why we were missing some competitors for the Blandings Event. It was very successful and very well attended by youngsters from all over the southern half of the country. The Scottish Juniors usually have a clinic arranged up north by Amanda Saville.



**SALLY WHITCOME DRIVING THE ASHFIELDS
CHALLENGING CONES COURSE.**

Our second event of the season was at Ashfields Carriage & Polo Centre, Gt. Canfield. This event attracted a huge number of entries – 68. Yep that’s right – this is as near a National as you’re going to get without paying the money!

Mike Watts coped with a logistical nightmare scheduling the event, but with much thought he got there in the end. By setting up the practice arenas on the polo field, then asking competitors to come down ten minutes before their allotted time it worked. A big thank you to Jo Meech, who had to cope with some very abusive competitors (not members!) who didn’t want to accept this system, but it meant that the Arena areas were not congested, and everyone was able to work in calmly before their test.

We must congratulate our Dressage Judges, who had to sit and concentrate all day, working their way through so many competitors!

(We will schedule more comfort-breaks next time – promise!).

Our Cones co-ordinator, Hilary Ray and her team faced a real challenge, changing the widths of the cones to accommodate the various competitors as they came forward from the Dressage Arenas, but all in all, this went smoothly.

A big thank you to them.



**SARA LANE ABOUT TO SWIM THE WATER
OBSTACLE, WITH ‘CHARLIE’ HER SHETLAND.**

The marathon started early on the Sunday morning, which enabled us to be finished earlier and so allow competitors who had travelled long distances to get away. Unfortunately, due to over a month without rain, the ground was rock hard and so many of the tracks were very bumpy. The Obstacles drove very well, but the depth of the water obstacle caught out some – congratulations to Charlie (pictured above) who needed a snorkle!

We managed to obtain enough Stewards this time. A big thank you to Dawn Trembath MFH for bringing Hunt members to Steward, this was very helpful, hopefully they enjoyed themselves and will come again.

A big thank you must also go to Jill Wood, who Stewarded the ‘human crossing’ by obstacle 2, making sure no spectators were ‘run over’ by a competitors coming over the bridge.

Our Scorer, Bridget Randall stayed tucked away in the caravan all weekend. By doing the scoring electronically, (ably assisted by score collector Mike Wells) the scores were out quickly and ready for the presentation of rosettes and prizes in the early afternoon. Once again there were generous prizes and trophies donated by Ashfields.

The electronic scoring also enabled Mike Watts to put the scores on the Website early Monday morning. You can find the results at: www.eacdg.org.uk



ONE CAN'T MISS DEIRDRE IN THE PINK!

Musings of an Organiser.....

Does everyone realise what is needed to run a weekend event like Ashfields?

First find your venue. Negotiate with land owners and make sure there is enough land to allow section A to be a minimum of 5 km (to a max. of 10k) then between 800m and one kilometre for the walk, a safe place (with water and shade) for the halt; then a route for section E that is one kilometre for each obstacle, minimum. (ie: We needed 7km for Ashfields). Hopefully this route will bring you to the obstacles.... and give a minimum of 300m from the last obstacle to the finish. Oh! And don't forget you need to have 200m in between each obstacle..... and the shortest possible legal driveable route through each obstacle must not be longer than 250m.

We are lucky to have the use of permanent obstacles at three of our venues, - I won't go into the amount of work designing and building these entails (as well as the expense) – even decorating them involved Wilf and Harry balancing on a fork lift truck! Didn't they all look splendid with the flowers and flags?



KATIE BELL – Driving 'Cob'

Once the course and obstacles are sorted out, you can set about finding a flat area for the cones and dressage (each arena needs nearly half an acre!); a suitable area for the lorries and trailers, a warm up area, loos, water and then, the dreaded.....' Risk Assessment:'

Before each event our Safety Officer, Nigel Collins, has to spend hours and hours compiling endless sheets of paper detailing everything and anything that might

happen during the weekend, and what measures will be taken to minimise risk. So if someone tells you to do up your hard hat, or not leave a bicycle lying in the grass – there's a reason. So please do it!!

Then the organiser has to find the right Judges for each class (six needed for two arenas), together with writers and arena stewards (14 in all). We are lucky that we are able to call on ridden dressage judges locally, who provide a good balance to the driving judges. With so many entries, we needed a stable manager, and were lucky to be able to call on Peter and Julie Pethybridge, who acted as stable managers, and then stewarded for the dressage.

The Judges, Stewards and Officials all need feeding and watering during the event. The Judges usually have a sit down lunch, while the others have packed lunches (both days). That's a lot of sandwiches.....



JACQUI TAKING THE 'SPLASH'

Prior to the event, someone has to take the entries – this year poor Jacqui had to make numerous journeys to the post office (about 5 miles + 50p parking) to collect entries that hadn't got enough postage on them, (and pay a £1 fine). If you're not sure, take it to a post office and have it weighed! You can cut down the weight by letting Jacqui know on the entry form that you will look up your times and results on the webpage. On the subject of paper – someone has to make sure there are enough dressage sheets; green cards, section cards, obstacle scoring pads, running orders, maps of the obstacles, and a map of the route. And then order sufficient rosettes for all the classes.

As well as publishing the website, and keeping it up to date, Mike Watts took on the task of scheduling both the dressage and the marathon this year. With the marathon each competitor needs to be set off at a safe interval from the previous competitor (so you can't have a 17 hh horse following a Shetland!) A nightmare which also involves an in-depth knowledge of the rules, also a knowledge of the driving ability of our competitors.



STEPHANIE BYRNE TACKLING THE CONES COURSE.

At Ashfields David Taylor once again designed the cones course for us, and set it out, helped by Jeannie who also drew the diagram and worked out the distances, and then handed over to the Cones team. Running the cones course is not just a matter of pressing a stop watch! These people have to know the rules, measurements, do's and don'ts as well as being able to run around putting balls back on and re-measure gaps when competitors have marmalised them! The new rules meant that we had to have THREE different lengths of cones course.

After the dressage and cones are finished, everything needs to be collected up and put away to enable part of the marathon route to use the same land. Setting up the marathon course ready for Sunday, allocating the stewards and making sure all the markers are in place is a particularly demanding part of the event to organise and co-ordinate.



The COUNTESS OF IVEAGH TAKING THE WATER.

How many people know that:

There should be a minimum of four stewards per obstacle, (two to check the times at the in/out gate, one to do the hold up, and another to check the routes on the other side of the obstacles). Ideally, two stewards should be at the start and finish of each section, to allow for toilet breaks. This gives a minimum of 40 people!!! Then you need: An event co-ordinator; A secretary manning the tent; Score collector; Paramedic: Safety Officer and TD. That get's the event running ... then you get to the bit that NOBODY wants to know: Someone has to clear up the marathon course at the end of the event – and also pack the trailer, so it can be transported to the next event (another job). The next day someone has to writes the thank you letters...



CLAIRE TAYLOR BEING HELPED BY DAVID

So PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, if you are not competing, it would be absolutely wonderful if you could come and help – and bring family, friends, and neighbours. Our club needs YOU!

[SPARE ENTRY FORMS ARE ON THE WEB PAGE.](#)



DAN - NOT DOING ANY STUNTS TODAY.

BLANDINGS FARM EVENT

Just to remind you that our next event is at Blandings Farm on 26th & 27th May, again this has been scheduled over a bank holiday weekend, so please can you send your entries in NOW, as entries close on the 8th May. – Please be warned if there are not enough Stewards, the event will be difficult to run! So please send off that entry AND try and put forward that helper NOW!

Crinkly Training Camp

The first Crinkly Training Camp is 15th 16th 17th June. The proposed structure for the Crinkly Camp includes two training sessions per day, with meals for both driver and groom, (i.e. three lunch and two dinners, over the period). Including talks, quiz's and lectures in the afternoon/evenings. There will also be an evening 'do', including a small band, held in the Clubhouse Saturday Evening. Numbers for the camp are restricted to 16 turnouts. For those of you who are interested, please send in your application form and if we can't accommodate you for this camp, we can hold your application over for the next one if you so wish.

Closing Date: 1st June. 2007.

SANDRINGHAM EVENT : For those of you wishing to go to Sandringham, Please note that David, Jacqui, Tony, Zoe, Wilf, Janice & Carolyn will endeavour to 'make camp' and all park together in the lorry park, so if there is anything you wish to know, or where to go, just look out for their lorries and/or East Anglian Flag or Banner, fell free to go and ask! The paperwork will be ready and left with the Stable Manager for you to pick up on arrival and remember Stewards are always needed. Please check the map before setting off to Sandringham, as the National will not put out road signs, but if we can arrange it there will be yellow EACDG. – So please don't forget to get your entries in early, as we are restricted to 50 competitors.

Photos By Mike Watts.