



# EACDG News

May 2010

The newsletter of the East Anglian Carriage Driving Group Ltd – for members and friends

## Enter Elveden now – 22-23 May

There's still time to enter our two-day event at Elveden if you're quick. If you haven't competed there before, don't miss this lovely venue on the Elveden Estate – a huge expanse of grass holds the dressage and cones arenas and the purpose-built stable field – with water laid on, and Jack-in-a-box trade stand. The marathon runs through the estate and around the world-class obstacles which were built in 2009 and extended this year – and they are right next to the stable field. Book now – and remember to get tickets for Saturday night's hog roast for you and your friends; two courses just £10 per person (with a vegetarian choice). Closing date 12 May. (Please note that there won't be a catering trailer this year.)

## Don't miss Sandringham... 26-27 June

After Elveden, there's Sandringham Club event on the same weekend as Sandringham national. We have our own stable field, dressage and cones areas and our marathon is a variant on the national course with six of the same obstacles. This is always a memorable event.

See the EACDG yearbook or view the Events page on our website for schedules and more details. Enter online or send a postal form.

## Late start – yet a great event!

EACDG's season had a late kick-off after losing the "Crinkly Camp" (for the over-25s) and our first one-day event over the too-cold-too-wet Easter weekend, however the enjoyment of the Ashfields Spring Event was unanimous. Mark Ingham was our efficient Technical Delegate and he also designed a flowing cones course which pleased many drivers and flagged the six obstacles sympathetically, mostly up to D in aid of the hard of remembering. The marathon course was shortened to just over 10kms in total and, although there were a couple of showers on Sunday morning, the ground soaked up the moisture and the course did not become deep or slippery.

Entries were just under 50 and covered every class – although unusually there was only one open pony driver doing three phases, Jenifer Barker-Simson, our favourite octogenarian. Pre-novice and novice classes remain strong with new drivers making their debuts with us – Lorna Ingram, Nicola Smith and Terry Bailey, among others.

Liz Harcombe, driving World Horse Welfare Yogi, moved up to novice pony class where she gave indoor driving's Junior Supreme Champion Charlotte Snow and Harry a run for their money, Liz coming second. Charlotte had the fastest competitive marathon time, 53.96. Open horse class Graham Heath had the second-fastest time, 54.44, with his second horse *hors concours* in 51.49.

Overall event winner was Michael Morris, open horse, 89.19. The Michelle Chambers Cup for the best dressage was won by Ben Grose, also open horse, 31.6, who was squeezed down to fourth place by Sue Hargreaves by 0.26



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penalties. Bill Dagge and Dave Bowman won the “most like Dennis the Menace” outfits competition (*third photo*).

There was a quality presence in pony and horse pairs, 13 in all, many with a new mix, with former pony fours champion Alan Clarke returning to pony pairs and Anna Grayston (*top photo*), current advanced pony pairs champion, and national drivers Rita McGregor, Stephanie Byrne and Wendy Wadsworth. Alan and Anna tied in the dressage (33.3) and then Rita came between them after the marathon; Clare Iveagh was fourth.

Sue Botley (*bottom photo*) began with a good win in the horse pairs dressage and kept just ahead of Martin Wilson to top the strong class by three penalties.

David Taylor, horse, and Martin Yemm’s pony tandems competed alone, as did Daniel Naprous and his horse four. Pony fours were represented by Gary Power and Chris Orchard (*second photo*) with her white scurry ponies.

*For those who know the rules, yes, there is a rule about not driving obstacles 30 days before a national event, however this was waived for the Ashfields national event, 7-9 May, because of the club’s regular spring event and because Ashfields is an important training facility. The obstacles were re-flagged for the national.*

## Be happy with your results...

We aim to treat everyone fairly and equally. If we do not have the right information, you may get the wrong score – only you will know that so it’s up to you to tell us – please!

The results at our events are carefully calculated by Annette Bond and the scoring team – Louise Green and Mike Watts. They need regular updates from judges and stewards in the field giving clearly written times and any extra information (such as “no gloves”, “groom down” or “corrected error of course”) so they can work out scores and penalties correctly from the record sheets.

Obviously accuracy is our top priority: of course we will explain your results and investigate any discrepancy – but you must check your own results and ask us – the TD or a member of the organising committee (not the scorer) – **at the time** and as soon as possible after the results have been posted. Don’t leave it until the prize-giving; just ask an official or the TD politely. We score according to the record sheets and if these are late or difficult to decipher, it’s possible that your score is incomplete or that there’s been an error: we are human.

*It’s important to wear your correct number when you are competing so you get your own score! Please wear the number you have been allocated because the scoring system is set up in advance of the event, making changes takes time needs many checks to make sure one change does not cause an error, and wearing a different number – or no number – can confuse the stewards, judges and officials.*

We aim to publish (‘post’) provisional scores as quickly as is reasonably possible after each class finishes a phase of the competition.

**Hold-ups?** The scorer needs a clear understanding of how long any hold-ups are on the marathon and although these are normally written on the stewards’ sheets at the obstacle where the hold-up occurred, it’s a good idea for the groom to write down the length of a hold-up on the “green cards”, and to tell the steward at the end of E and importantly, to check them against the score immediately.

In 2010 we are trying our new ‘live scoring’ system which displays the scores on a PC as the scorer enters them. You can see how you did as soon as possible and you have extra time to check the scores.

It is up to you, the driver or groom, to check your scores. When the scores are first posted, they are time-stamped. You have 30 minutes to check them and raise any issues. If you believe there is a discrepancy in your score, please consult the TD – not the scorer. The TD will check the paperwork and let the scorer know what changes, if any, should be made and should tell you, too. It is perfectly OK to ask questions: please remember that we rely on our observers’ written records and the TD’s decision is final.

After the scores have been posted for 30 minutes they are taken as a true record. We do not change scores after they have been finally published, at the prize-giving or after the event.

**Example:** if you think you knocked down two balls in the cones and you have nine driving penalties (one ball = 3 pens), ask the TD to check the score for you. (*Best of all, after you have completed your cones round, ask the cones stewards to confirm how many balls fell and to give you your time. If this is different from your published score, then ask the TD to check the paperwork.*)

**Tip:** if you are one of the last in your class and are busy seeing to your horse or pony (especially if you’ve had a hold-up), why not ask a friend to wait by the scoreboard and read your score to you over the phone? Hold-up penalties appear under “Section E penalties” in the results.

*It’s useful to read the BHDTA rulebook so you’ll know what to do if things go wrong so you don’t needlessly eliminate yourself.*

### Test yourself – how well do you know what to do?

1. You are called ten minutes early to drive your dressage test, what are your options?
2. When can the track-width of your carriage be measured?
3. Your new hat comes off in the dressage arena, what is your best course of action?
4. When do you salute the judge? And how?
5. When can you start your cones round?
6. What should you do if you knock over cone 5 on the way to cone 3?
7. What should happen if you run out of a multiple cones obstacle (such as a zig-zag)?
8. What order should the marathon obstacles be driven in?
9. What should you do if you’ve driven the obstacle gates A, B and then go through C backwards?
10. What should you do if you’ve driven the obstacle gates A, B and then drive through D?
11. You drive the obstacle gates in the order A, B, D, C, D, F, E, F. Are you penalised or eliminated? If you are penalised, by how many penalties?
12. You drive the obstacle gates in the order A, B, A, C, B, A backwards, D, C, E. Are you penalised or eliminated? If you are penalised, by how many penalties?
13. What pace can you do in the last 500m of section E of the marathon?
14. How long can you halt in the last 500m of section E of the marathon?

## How do I qualify to enter a national event?

If you've done well, you may wish to progress from club to national competitions, you do it by having a BHDTA qualification card signed at three club events with three-section marathons. (Usually you will have reached the club open classes before you consider doing this!) Single drivers can then enter national novice qualifier classes which are held at club events around the country. Doing well qualifies you for the national championships at Windsor.

Pairs and tandem drivers get the same card signed at three club events and can enter their classes at nationals. Team drivers qualify to drive a team at national events by competing with a pair or tandem at three nationals.

As soon as you have completed your three events, send a copy of the card with the results to the BHDTA office so you'll be on a list of eligible drivers. You can take up to two years to complete the card.

Don't be afraid to share your objectives with us in advance so we can help you to achieve them.

**IMPORTANT!** We must have your qualification form **before the event starts** – this is because you are observed in every phase by the event officials. Stay popular by planning ahead and telling us you want it signed on your entry form – and kindly provide a SAE so we can send the form back to you if you leave the event before the card's signed at the end of the event. Thank you! FP

## Volunteers wanted

Our team of volunteers enjoy our events as well as being darn good at their observing and recording tasks. We always welcome an extra pair of hands and eyes and stewarding is a good way to make new friends and to learn the rules. "It's very interesting," said Natalie Smith, who wrote for the dressage judges at Ashfields national.

Spectating is the first small step to becoming involved, of course. Do you have interested friends or neighbours who'd like to come and watch us next year? Can you help us to find more people who might help us in the future?

We always need more helpers. Can you help to find more people? Volunteers get a free lunch and refreshments and can be added to the newsletter mailing list, if they wish.

Please call Hilary Ray 01206 251339 and leave your contact number if you'd like to join the volunteers or to put her in touch with new people who are interested for 2010.

## Get your carriage and harness maintained

Your carriage, like a car, needs regular maintenance. We are lucky to have two enthusiastic and knowledgeable carriage repair and maintenance experts in our area.

Derek Seaman has made several carriages himself and can give your carriage a "spring-clean" or maintenance check. He's in Beccles: 01502 716429.

Simon Willis, 07817 683509, is based at Ashfields for much of the summer. He's a well-recommended carriage builder and "fixer" and he'll be happy to give your carriage a check-up and any maintenance it requires.

Tabitha King of T K Leatherworks, Soham: Tabitha can repair and make leather items and bespoke bridework so get your harness in tip-top condition now. 01353 725176 or 07721 763598.

## Dogs are lovable...

We camp in close proximity during events – here are some how-to-get-along tips for those bringing a dog:

- Dog owners, kindly note that you are most welcome when you keep your dog under close control and when you clear up after him in public places.
- Dogs are not allowed in the dressage or cones arenas or in the obstacles at any time.
- Remember that not all horses and ponies are used to having dogs around so kindly keep your dog under control at all times. Please don't let him roam loose around other people or their horses or property: he won't always be a popular guest.
- Play with your dog in an area well away from horses and other people's lorries, tents and caravans. Please don't play ball games near horses.
- Where the venue has game, sheep or other livestock, keep your dog on a lead for exercise and keep him secure at other times.

*Thank you!*

## Your committee 2010

President	Guy Stainton 01787 370681 guy@carriages37.fsnet.co.uk
Chairman	David Taylor 07771 902027 carriagehouse@btinternet.com
Treasurer	Jacqui Clarke 01702 510077 jacqui_12@btinternet.com
Secretary, Newsletter	Fiona Powell 01473 735732 fiona@eacdgc.co.uk
Website, Entries & Membership	Mike Watts 01473 735050 mikew@eacdgc.co.uk Ivy Cottage, Boot Street, Great Bealings, Woodbridge, IP13 6PB
Committee	Zoe Morgan 07770 944868 wbrcarriages@aol.com Tony Clarke 01702 510077
Small Ponies	Janet Sycamore 01284 828828 home@npsycamore.co.uk
Volunteer Co-ordinator	Hilary Ray 01206 251339 or 07795 148199 hilary_ray@hotmail.co.uk
Safety Officer 2010	TBA

*If you wish to correspond with the committee, please address your message to the Secretary in the first instance.*

*Get the new 2010 BHDTA rule book for £10 plus £2.95 p&p – and read it! [www.horsedrivingtrials.co.uk](http://www.horsedrivingtrials.co.uk), or call 0845 643 2116: write to BHDTA, East Overhill, Stewarton, Kilmarnock, KA3 5JT*

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