

PROTOCOL FOR COMPETITIONS:

what to do when you go to a Competition.

Read the rules for your classes before leaving home, so that you are prepared with the correct equipment (tack, clothing, whips etc) and know how the classes are run. If entering online e.g. via horse-events – make sure you read the Schedule as well as the notes on the horse-events page.

Look for the course walk times; there may or may not be a break in the middle of the class for later competitors e.g. for large show jumping classes there may be a mid-class course walk. Cross- country course walks are usually allowed from 2 pm the preceding day for One Day Events (Eventing) and Hunter Trials.

Check whether you need to print your number at home, if you do need to print at home:

- i) if wearing a number bib use A4 paper – one copy for front and back.
- ii) If tying on your back use A5 size (doubled over A4)
- iii) if affixing to a saddlecloth (at least two safety pins) use two A5 size – one on each side

Print in darkest black or use a black felt pen with the number(s) as large as possible.

Ensure you have packed sufficient water, hay, feed and rugs for your horse/pony. See the What to Wear leaflet on the General Information page on the Croome website for the Rally / Competition checklist.

Arrive in plenty of time so that you have time to find out where your ring is etc; late competitors can disrupt the day for everyone else.

Park as directed (if you can find shade all the better); make sure you leave plenty of room between you and neighbouring lorries/trailers.

Horses and ponies should not be left unattended whilst tied to the outside of the lorry/trailer.

When tying up outside, check the fit of the headcollar and the length of the lead rope should not be so long that a front leg can get over it. Lead ropes should not be tied directly onto the tie ring on the side of the lorry/trailer - you should always use a tie clip (between the ring and lead rope) or you can use a piece of bailing twine tied onto the tie ring and then the rope is tied to the loop of bailing twine (whilst you don't want the bailing twine to be brand new, you don't want it too frayed – it should break if the horse/pony pulls back hard).

Hay nets should always be tied so that they are not too low when empty. If your horse/pony needs fly protection – remember to take fly spray, fly mask and/or rug.

Follow any one-way system that may be in place on the show ground to get to your collecting ring/arena.

If your horse/pony is liable to kick or does not like other horse/ponies coming up too close behind him, then tie a red ribbon in his/her tail; if they do not like horses/ponies coming too close towards them, then tie a small red ribbon in their browband. If you are on a young horse/pony, then you may tie a green ribbon in its tail. Please be aware of any horse/ponies with coloured ribbons in their tail or browband and give them a wide berth.

If competing during Covid restrictions, please remember: Arrive – Compete – Depart. Do not congregate round the collecting ring or arena – go back to your lorry once you have competed. Results are usually posted online or on a website as soon as possible or there may be Live Results available. Rosettes might be available for collection or will be posted.

Before leaving, please check the area round your lorry/trailer. All droppings should be picked up (whether in a field or on hard-standing – make sure you have a poop scoop with you) and taken home. Any hay left on the ground should be picked up. No rubbish to be left anywhere on the ground please.

Please check the schedule or venue rules to see if dogs are allowed – if they are – please make sure they are **always** on a lead (no matter how good they usually are off the lead) and do not forget to poo pick after them.

If a sunny day, whether hot or not, it is better not to take dogs with you and leave them in the car as the car will get hot however low the temperature is outside if the sun is shining.

SHOW JUMPING:

When you arrive at the collecting ring, let the Steward know you are there (they will usually be by the ‘gate’ (opening) from the collecting ring to the arena. If not given times, you will probably need to put your number on the board.

Check the number of riders that are due to go in the competition arena before you, so that you know how long it will be until your turn.

Warm your horse/pony up – walk, trot and canter on both reins – remember to pass people coming towards you on your left side (i.e. left to left) - *the ‘outside track is for walking – the ‘inside’ tracking is for trotting, cantering and those jumping* - and then do a few jumps – remember to jump the practice fences in the correct direction – Red flags on the Right (white flags on the left) – most horses/ponies will jump a cross pole, then a couple of verticals and then a couple of oxers (spread fences) – do not over jump your pony – with experience you will learn how much warming up your pony needs – don’t worry about what anyone else is doing.

If you are approaching a practice fence and someone is crossing in front or behind the jump shout “ jumping vertical/oxer”. **Always** be aware of people jumping, which is why

you always walk on the outside and do faster work on the inside, so that you can approach the fence(s) without being impeded by someone who is only walking.

Since Covid you may find that there will be a steward in the collecting ring altering the jumps for you – they should know the order that the riders are competing, so they will make sure you get your turn – if you want a jump lowered or made higher – ask. There will be a maximum height (usually the same as the class you are jumping in) that you are allowed the jump to be.

Listen for your number and acknowledge the gate steward when called. If you are first to jump in the class or after a mid-class course walk, then you will need to warm up before the start of the class or break or walk the course very quickly so that you have time to warm up before your start time or have just one more jump before you have to go into the arena.

When you walk the course, remember to see where the Start and Finish markers/timers are – you must go through the Start to begin and through the Finish to end your round.

Remember to wait for the bell (which may be a horn or a hooter) – if you are not sure if it has gone or not, then go and ask the Judge(s) – do not ask a spectator or arena party – they may have heard the wrong bell in an adjacent ring! There may be a time display and the judge(s) may be using a 45 second countdown, which starts when the bell is rung – so you can check by looking at the time display and if counting down, the bell has been rung. You should go through the Start before the 45 seconds has got to zero (and then the timer will start counting up for the time for your round), but don't panic if you don't, it just means that the time recorded for your round will be longer.

Jump your round and then come back to a walk before leaving the arena; if there is just one opening for the entrance/exit, then let the next competitor into the arena if they are waiting. Do NOT trot or canter out of the arena!

If the rider falls off, under Pony Club Rules they are not allowed to remount and must leave the arena on foot.

Sometimes a rider may be (understandably) distressed by a fall in the arena – in most cases they will be fine but should be checked by the First Aider anyway. If their parent needs to enter the ring to help the rider, please try to leave the arena as soon as you are able, so that the class may continue.

DRESSAGE:

You will be given a time for your Dressage Test – this is the time that you should be 'entering at A' - it is not the time that you arrive in the warm-up. Please arrive in the warm-up in plenty of time to warm up your horse/pony and make sure that the Steward know you are there.

Warm-up by walking, trotting and cantering (if in your Test) on both reins – passing any riders coming towards you with them on your left-hand side – left to left.

When the Steward says you may go in – go to the Judge (probably in a car) make sure the writer (normally in the passenger seat) has acknowledged you. Do not try and talk to the Judge, they will be writing their comments for the previous rider.

Wait for the signal to start – which will probably be a car horn – if there are several arenas make sure you know which horn is being used in your arena; the signal may be a bell. You have one minute from the signal to start to when you must enter the Arena – a minute is quite a long time.

If the car horn/bell sounds during your Test, this usually means you have gone wrong – do not panic, the Judge will tell you what you have done wrong and you can start from where the mistake happened. Remember each movement is judged separately, so a mistake is not a major catastrophe!

When you do your final salute, however you think the Test has gone, always smile at the Judge and do not forget to give your horse/pony a long rein and lots of pats, as you leave the Arena.

EVENTING (Dressage, Show jumping and Cross Country)

You will be given times for each phase – there should be at least 30 minutes between each one.

Make sure you know where you are going and usually both the cross-country course and the show jumping course may be walked the day before. If walking the cross-country course on the competition day, please be aware of competitors riding on the course.

Dressage and Show jumping phases – as above.

Cross-country: make sure you know the course, especially if there are any options or alternative routes.

Fences will be marked with flags – Red on the Right and white on the left. If several different heights make sure you know which colour marker (may be a disc with fence number on) refers to the course you are doing.

When you finish your cross-country course, depending on how your horse/pony is feeling, either walk (back to where you are parked) to cool off or get off and loosen the girth and walk back.

If hot, use water to cool off and put a cooling rug on your horse/pony.

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If entering Pony Club competitions, it is especially useful to either have a paper copy of the Rules pertaining to the Sport you are doing (Show-jumping, Dressage and/or Eventing) with you at the competition or you can download them from the main Pony Club website and have on a smart phone or ipad.

If you are competing at Area level competitions it is strongly advised that you have access to a Rules book both before and on the day of competition – it is your responsibility to know the Rules.

Any questions ? – please ask someone or ask on our Croome PC Members Only group on Face Book