



Scottish Carriage Driving Association

Newsletter

Summer 2006

Hopefully everyone has enjoyed a successful and enjoyable summer of competition. There is still one more Scottish Points event at Thornton. This will be followed by the Interclub Championship and there are more details about that below.

Congratulations to Ian Bertram on his selection to represent Great Britain at the World Championships for horse singles. By the time you receive this newsletter, Ian, Catriona and Lonoeh will have set off for Italy and plan to meet up with the other team members after a couple of weeks getting acclimatised. We wish them all the best in their endeavour to bring home a medal.

Interclub Challenge

Every year, driving clubs in Scotland and the north of England compete for the Interclub Challenge Trophy. Having won this competition a number of times, it is now the SCDA's turn to run it. The venue is Holker Hall and the competition takes place on 7th/8th October.

To maximise our chances of winning again, we hope that as many as possible will compete. All classes will drive Novice Test 1 (amended 2001) and the entry fee is £55. There are classes for novice and open single horse and pony, pairs and multiples. There will be a social function with a hog roast (BYOB) and tickets cost £8.

Schedules and entry forms can be obtained from the SCDA web-site or from Anne and John Hulse. Entries and names of any volunteers to help steward the event should be sent to: Anne and John Hulse, Bridge End House, Great Asby, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria, CA16 6HD. Telephone 017683 52570.

Questionnaire

You will find a questionnaire enclosed with this newsletter. There is also a S.A.E. to encourage you to respond promptly. Why not spend a few minutes giving us your views before the envelope and questionnaire get buried under a pile of other paperwork.

The BHDTA at present is facing a time of change and are willing to listen to what members want. There have been a number of proposals put forward with some finding favour and others creating resentment. In order that the directors can accurately represent the views of SCDA members we would encourage you to respond and have your voice heard at National level. As an affiliated club, the SCDA is the second biggest driving association in Britain (only the Indoor Driving Club has more members) and for this reason we do have influence. Please respond to the questionnaire.

As further encouragement, all returned questionnaires will be put into a draw and the lucky winner will receive an SCDA Polo Shirt.

Competence Cards

Before competing at a Novice Qualifier, at either a Club Event or a National Event, competitors must have a completed Competence Card. This stipulation also applies if you wish to compete for the first time with a multiple.

The BHDTA rules state that competitors must have these signed immediately after the Club competition (they should not be signed retrospectively) and they should be accompanied by a full set of results from each competition. If you need a Competence Form, copies can be obtained from the SCDA Secretary or the BHDTA office or downloaded from the BHDTA website www.horsedrivingtrials.co.uk reference section.

This will be relevant for anyone thinking of making a move to another class next year. The new class structure for Nationals looks likely to include an Intermediate class with all Novice qualifiers taking place at club events. This has still to be confirmed but it is hoped that this will reduce the step up to Open competition and encourage more competitors to make the move from club events to National Novice.

Safety

Following a series of untimely mishaps at a succession of events this year, the directors have agreed that a review of safety procedures is necessary. If a competitor suffers any type of accident, this information will be passed to other event organisers, to allow a closer check to be kept, to ensure both their safety and that of other competitors.

In addition, a closer adherence to the BHDTA Rule Book is necessary. We will continue to advise members of "local rules" in the newsletter and the 2007 Omnibus will contain a list for information. Otherwise the BHDTA Rule Book will apply. It is unfair to expect event organisers to run the risk of contravening the Association's rules. This is necessary in our ever more litigious society.

For many years there has been a tolerance from event organisers regarding electric fencing but this will no longer be acceptable in 2007. Horses or ponies can be contained by hurdles (or similar) in an area of 10m x 10m if required. Otherwise they can be tied to the side of your vehicle or be stalled in their lorry or trailer. It is frequently possible to obtain stabling locally and competitors are encouraged to approach event organisers for advice and suitable numbers to contact.

Grooms will also need to be 14 years of age in order to compete at SCP events. Drivers must be over 18 years of age if the groom is between 14 and 18 years. The directors appreciate that there is an appendix in the BHDTA Rule Book which allows younger children to groom but, after lengthy discussion, feel that, from the perspective of competence to avert or assist during an emergency, the National rule should be adhered to at SCDA events.

It is not the intention of the SCDA to put unnecessary obstacles in the way of competitors, especially newcomers, but there is no point in waiting for an accident before such a review of safety is conducted.

Photo Competition

We are looking for a photograph that encapsulates the spirit of carriage driving in Scotland. It can be of any aspect of driving - a competitor, groom, steward or judge. It can be of one person or a group of people - competing, setting up, celebrating, relaxing or anything else - as long as it shows what carriage driving in Scotland is all about.

All pictures submitted must be photographs taken during 2006. The closing date for entries is 31 December 2006. Details of how to submit your entries electronically are given on the website. Alternatively entries can be posted to the Secretary.

The emphasis here is not on technical quality (although good clear pictures are preferred) but on the subject representing Scottish carriage driving in some interesting way.

As well as the winning entry becoming the 2007 Omnibus cover picture, all submitted entries will be shown at a presentation during the SCDA AGM in February and will also be featured on our website.

So get those cameras out now and get snapping. We're all looking forward to the results at the end of the season.

SCDA AGM and Dinner Dance

After the success of last year's event the SCDA will run a Dinner Dance again in February to coincide with the AGM. The date is Saturday 24th February and takes place in Bridge of Allan, either in the same hotel as last year or in the Royal Lodge, an offshoot of the hotel, 100 yards further down the road.

Is there anyone out there who would be willing to undertake the organisation of the dance? The Secretary does not have time to do this and is therefore appealing for a volunteer. Give Mary a ring if you would be willing to help out.

Scorers' Clinic

Earlier this year the SCDA ran a very successful clinic for enthusiastic volunteers to learn how to operate the computerised scoring system. This was well supported and gives a wider pool of people who can score for events.

Risk Assessment Clinic

A Risk Assessment clinic will run in Spring 2007. Event organisers, TDs, stewards or any other interested parties are asked to give their names to Andrew Smith who is co-ordinating this event. Further details will be available in due course.

100 Club



Ticket sales have been disappointing in 2006. For this reason there will be a reduced number of draws this year. If you would like to participate and have not yet purchased a ticket, it is not too late to contact Anne or Ian Gilbert.

Event Reports

Hopetoun

Hopetoun has bucked the national trend this year and had a good level of entries. Although chilly at times, the weather was good and ground conditions ideal. The obstacles were challenging as usual and imaginatively decorated by Jacky Jeffrey. The traditional ceilidh and disco on the Saturday evening was well supported and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

As usual it would be impossible to run this event without the huge amount of voluntary effort from so many people. Time and effort were freely given by such a wide variety of people it is impossible to name them all here, but their contribution to the event makes it possible for competitors to enjoy a weekend which is second to none in the National H.D.T. calendar.

Eglinton

The Scottish Points League season got under way at Eglinton Park at the end of April. Ian Gilbert had prepared a well marked course with challenging obstacles as usual. The walk section caused a few problems as it is all on grass. Despite occasional showers, the ground held up well and this, combined with a short-ish Section A in case any turnouts were not fully fit so early in the season, produced horses and ponies which were fresh for the start of Section E. Competitors enjoyed the usual social function on Saturday night with music and dancing until late.

Dalmeny

The dressage was back in its original location with Ian Bertram having done a huge amount of work in order to level the arena. There is no longer any need to shout a warning to your groom to cling on for dear life prior to the extensions! The marathon route was a delight to drive with scenic views

Falkland

The presence of the dragons was sadly missed this year at Falkland however they had been kind enough to leave a note to inform competitors that they were on holiday. Hopefully they will make a welcome return to the event next year if someone

tells them the date in time to ensure they do not have a clash of dates in 2007.

This was a superb event as usual and everyone enjoyed an excellent party on the Saturday evening, kindly hosted by John and Pat White. Driving the cones was unusual as competitors were accompanied by music. The water obstacle had been extended to challenge drivers as did all the obstacles. I always feel that it is a shame that Liz Melville does not compete, as she kindly allows the marathon route to pass through her garden.

St. Fort

Next on the agenda was St. Fort where Andrew Mylius had recreated an international cones course which was decorated with a vintage tractor and wagon. This provided a stern challenge in an arena which is a delight to drive in. The marathon route is all off road and, with the variety of different tracks turning and twisting, is always interesting with drivers needing their wits about them at all times. Again the weather was favourable and everyone enjoyed an excellent event.

Seacliff

Now in its second year this event continues to prove popular to newcomers and experienced drivers alike. It is an excellent chance to educate a new horse or to experiment with a different turnout. Liz Melville's tandem made an impressive debut, Carol Boswell convinced her tandem leader that it could cope as a single and Gladys Dale proved that age is no bar to having fun. She made a welcome return to competitive driving with both her daughter and granddaughter also competing. Is this a first to have three generations competing at the same event? The format of driving the dressage test and then going on a driveout, with the cones and obstacles the following day, worked well. Torrential thunderstorms caused the prize-giving to head under cover but did not spoil everyone's enjoyment of an excellent weekend.

West Newton

Audrey Barron introduced the more advanced dressage test to a club event for the first time. With the ability to provide two dressage arenas, this allowed the judges a few minutes after each test to stop and chat to the competitors about their performance which was much appreciated. The marathon included a new water obstacle which did not present too many problems. One notable exception was the groom who shouted, "straight on Anne," when they should have turned into the obstacle. For my safety I had better not name him though! Live music was provided for the party by various members of the White family and another excellent event was enjoyed by all.

Barskimming

One of the most noticeable features of this year's event was the weather. Other had events had been dry but Barskimming took place in a heatwave. Marathon times were extended to prevent undue stress on horses and ponies and a tanker had to be called in to top up the water obstacle. Ian Gilbert drove his dressage test with an "L plate" stuck to his carriage. This had cunningly been attached by his wife in recognition of the fact that they were bringing out a new pony (we think that was the reason anyway). The cones course was particularly testing and included a sequence which used all four corners of the arena. On marathon day two unlucky souls lost their way on section A but found their way back to civilisation in the end.

This was the first year Colin Smith had taken over the reins from Wilson Weir. Many thanks to Wilson for his time at the helm of this event.

Dalswinton

The weather chose this weekend to make sure that everyone remembered that sunshine could not be taken for granted. It did not matter whether you did dressage on Saturday or Sunday as you got wet either way. In between times the sun came out and temperatures became tropical. On Sunday afternoon the rain went off and allowed everyone to pack up without any trouble.

As always, the ceilidh in the village hall is one of the highspots of this event and the committee had gone to an immense amount of effort to cook a meal for everyone with Zan Kirk as head of this operation. Dancing then continued well into the night but this did not prevent anyone from driving the following day. One or two ponies found the mud tiring in the stubble fields but still managed to finish strongly. Andrew Moodycliffe was the sole entry in the junior class and had made the long journey back from Thirlestane the previous day where he and Murray Graham were presented with their driving scholarships at the BDS Annual Show.

Castle Kennedy

The second Scottish National event took place recently in relatively fine conditions. Charles Powell constructed a good variety of open flowing obstacles with a water splash included for the first time. After a difference of opinion in some obstacles, to the best of our knowledge Ian and Catriona are still married, and hopefully domestic harmony will have been restored to the Bertram household prior to their departure for Italy. Unfortunately there were a few competitors who incurred elimination for taking a shortcut from Obstacle 5 to Obstacle 7. The cones course was particularly testing with Carol Johnston posting the single double clear of the day. The course included a series of cones which were driven like a four leafed clover.

In the Tri-nations Championship, England triumphed over Ireland with Scotland in third place.

SCDA Merchandise

A new range of SCDA branded merchandise is now available through the web-site, by using the order form in the Omnibus or from Mike Brown directly. This includes top quality sweatshirts, fleeces, polo shirts and rugby shirts in a wide choice of colours and all embroidered with the SCDA logo. SCDA stickers are also available for your car or lorry.

All items are very reasonably priced and an illustrated catalogue is available at the back of your Omnibus or on the web-site. We hope the range will have something to suit everyone and soon be widely seen.

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The full event results are posted on the web-site as soon as Vic receives them. This means that you can pore over your obstacle times, in comfort, at your leisure. If you are not familiar with the web-site, log on to www.scda.co.uk for the up-to-date news and chat on the discussion page. Don't forget that the web-site operates an advertising service, free of charge for members, where you can post "wanted" or "for sale" items and reach a wide audience quickly.

SCDA Contacts

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SCDA information

Newsletters

Material and adverts for the newsletter should be sent to: Mary Kusin, East Overhill Farm, Stewarton, Ayrshire, KA3 5JT. Tel. 0845 226 9498, e-mail newsletter@scda.co.uk

Adverts

Private adverts in the newsletter cost £5 and business adverts cost £10. Please make cheques payable to the Scottish Carriage Driving Association and send them, with details of your advert to: Mary Kusin, East Overhill Farm, Stewarton, Ayrshire, KA3 5JT.

Don't forget that you can also place an advert on the SCDA website. This service is free to members. Go to www.scda.co.uk

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