



EACDG News

March 2010

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

Fast forward for the new season!

There's still time to enter our first competition of 2010 on Sunday, 4 April, a full one-day event, up to 7k in marathon kit, at Ashfields driving three obstacles twice. You can enter online or print a form from the website. The closing date for the event is Wednesday, 24 March – so please hurry and we'll squeeze you in...

There are a few places left on the training camp, too – please call Mike Watts to check there is a place left and you can enter now!

If you haven't joined, please do so now to avoid the £5 re-joining fee (after 31 March). If you have already joined, you should have your yearbook by now (if not, contact Mike). This details all our events, schedules and entry fees and other details. There is an extensive "frequently asked questions" section which is now quite comprehensive but if there's a question you want to ask, please contact a member of the committee for an answer, the sooner the better. We are here to help.

Supporters – non-drivers – are welcome to join the club: it's only £10 for one or more at the same address. We send yearbooks to all our regular stewards, too, so make sure you pick up yours at the next event or call Hilary for a copy.

The yearbook and all the event schedules are on our website, www.eacdg.co.uk

Our venues remain the same for 2010, with improvements including Wilf Bowman-Ripley's new obstacle at Ashfields, near Dunmow and Elveden, near Thetford, has a re-designed and enlarged water obstacle. We return to our traditional haunt at scenic Euston Park, near Thetford, and we share the prestigious national event venue at Sandringham, Norfolk, where we are holding our national novice qualifier classes.

Those of you who enjoy **Blandings**, near Chippenham, Suffolk, will be pleased that Louise Garget is running a full programme of events there with training and also a two-day BHDTA regional event with national and club classes, 5-6 June. Call Louise for details: 07743 932907

Newcomers to horse driving trials who wish to compete must have a (pain-free) assessment before they come to an EACDG event (unless it's for training) just to check that they follow safe practices when at our events and in public. These include how the horse or pony is tied up, harnessed and put to the carriage, taken out of the carriage and unharnessed; basic "in public etiquette", which is mainly common sense and safe practices. It's not a test or exam, it's just to assess that you're aware of your own safety and welfare and that of your companions, other people and animals around you: it is not a driving test - although a degree of competence is obviously required.

Newcomers must compete with a single turnout to start: call Fiona Powell if you want to discuss how we can help you achieve your aims in driving. You can get the forms for

the assessment free from the BHDTA website, www.horsedrivingtrials.co.uk If you have any problems or would prefer them to be emailed or posted to you, please contact Fiona Powell.

On the committee: Janet Sycamore continues to pioneer the cause of small ponies and she has had considerable success indoors this winter. She and husband Nigel want to encourage other drivers of "littlies" to have a go, especially now they have their own class at our events. Janet's always keen to talk about small ponies and their capabilities and she's rapidly becoming a fount of information about their carriages and harness as well as being involved with the East Anglian Shetland Pony Group, so contact her if you want to take part with your 11.2 – 46" – or under pony.

Our volunteers, judges, observers and stewards are a wonderful friendly loyal and hard-working group of people who make our events happen and turn out in all weathers with the reward of a packed lunch and our appreciation for their hours of dedicated concentration.

Volunteer co-ordinator Hilary Ray would love to hear from you or your friends if you or they would like to help in any capacity. Please contact her to volunteer.

(Competitors are always welcome to come and flag the obstacles, etc., and help to get the venue ready so don't hold back. It's a good way to get to know what goes on behind the scenes.)

If you wish to progress from club to national competitions – either to national novice qualifier (for singles) or for multiples, or from single to multiples within the club, please share your aims with us in advance so we can help: don't leave it until the closing date or the day before the event. It just needs some planning and a qualification form.

We must have your **competence form** before the event starts – this is because you are observed in every phase by the event officials. I usually have spare forms with me, but keep your popularity by planning ahead and telling us you want it signed on your entry form. Thank you.

EACDG 2010 calendar

Where	Event type
Ashfields 2-3 April	training
Ashfields 4 April	one-day
Ashfields 24-25 April	two-day
Elveden 22-23 May	two-day
Sandringham Club 26-27 June	two-day, NQ
Euston 31 July – 1 August	two-day
Ashfields 18-19 September	two-day

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, see some great sport and to be part of the event.

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? 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.

Member's news

Derek Seaman, "the man on the backstep" for Janet Seaman, one of our top single pony drivers, has designed and built several pony carriages and is very experienced at fixing, improving and re-designing carriages of any size and design. He can also give your carriage a "spring-clean" or maintenance check. He's based in Beccles and you can call him on 01502 716429 – but get in touch now as he'll get busier as the season starts.

Simon Willis, advanced single pony National Champion Sue Denney's backstepper and carriage-maker, is based at Ashfields for much of the summer. He's also a well-recommended carriage "fixer" and he'll be happy to give your carriage a check-up and any maintenance it requires. Call Simon on 07817 683509.

Tabitha King of T K Leatherworks can repair and make leather items and bespoke bridgework - so get your harness in tip-top condition. Tabitha lives in Soham and her number is 01353 725176 or 07721 763598.

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 workshop@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 – email or by post. Your letter will be circulated to all the committee members.

Please send any item for publication in the newsletter to Fiona.

No responsibility is taken by the EACDGC Ltd or by any individual for any item or animal advertised in this newsletter or on the website, nor for the results or effects of following any advice or ideas published.

If you have not got the latest BHDTA rule book, get one from their office for £10 plus £2.95 p&p see www.horsedrivingtrials.co.uk, 0845 643 2116, BHDTA, East Overhill, Stewarton, Kilmarnock, KA3 5JT