

NZCDS Guidelines for Showing

Recommended reading:

Sallie Walrond's "Judging Carriage Driving"

Vivian and Richard Ellis and Joy Claxton's "Make the most of Carriage Driving."

Both books published by J.A.Allen & Company Ltd, UK

Marylian Watney and William Kenward's "Show Driving Explained"

The Royal Agricultural Society Rule Book and Guidelines.

(For Equestrian Competitors and Judges.)

"The Art of Driving" by Max Pape. Published by J.A. Allen.

(References are for Horse /Ponies and Donkeys. Guidelines are for light harness.)

Prior to Shows.

Do you have an official height certificate? This is important especially if your animal is close to a height limit and can save embarrassment for competitors and stewards.

It is the responsibility of Competitors to make sure they are eligible for the classes they are entering.

The Royal Agricultural Society (RAS) of NZ has rules, by-laws and regulations covering forbidden substances which cover all shows and events held by A & P shows and affiliates to the RAS.

Preparation (Horse)

For early season shows decide well before if you are going to clip or not. Late clipping can damage the new coat coming through. Judges prefer to see well groomed, clean horses, whether they still have some old coat or have been clipped.

Some subtle clipping of fetlock feathers and under jaw can give a tidier impression. Tails can be cut or pulled so they don't trail the ground and mane pulled or plaited. But before you start clipping or cutting consider if you are going to show in a breed class where you may need to leave manes, tails and feathers untouched.

Tails should not be plaited.

(Heavy harness horses have their own requirements for presentation.)

To plait or not? A neatly plaited mane can enhance the turnout. A nicely pulled mane that lies well can look a lot better than loose, uneven plaits.

Eyes, ears, nose and rectum should be clean.

A little trimming of ears can improve the general impression.

Pick out feet and wash. White hoofs should be finished with a clear oil or foot preparation, and black with clear or black. Striped hoofs better with clear finish.

Horses should be shod and shoes and hoofs in good condition.

Donkeys are not normally shod.

A horse that has been well worked, groomed, and given correct feeding should stand out.

Harness.

Fit, soundness and cleanliness are a priority.

For shows a well kept, fitting, complete leather harness should place higher than a synthetic or mixed one ...all things considered.

(This includes blinkers and breeching, and has brown reins or brown at the driver's end.)

Are there cracks from neglect or dryness?

Saddle pads are not part of a show turnout class, but if you have synthetic harness you may need to use one...keep it as neat as possible.

Are there any dangling straps? All ends in keepers? Nothing twisted? It is surprising how often when you are lined up ready to be judged you notice something that has been overlooked in nervous haste.

The traces should go straight from the breast collar to the swingletree without interruption.

Are the trace carriers long enough? If too short they could interfere with the way the horse is pulling and the weight of the vehicle could be taken on the rump.

Single turnouts, driven to a two wheeled vehicle, should have a sliding backband. Four wheeled vehicles with independent shafts must have a fixed backband.

Is the breast collar at the correct height so that it neither interferes with the horse's breathing nor action?

Is the breeching at the correct height for a rein back and not too long or too tight?

If a breast collar is used traces should be attached to a swingletree, not a fixed hook.

Does the backband lie straight down the saddle? If it is in front (closer to horse's head) traces are too short, if it lies behind the saddle the traces are too long.

Check that the throat lash and curb chain are not too tight

The cheek straps should pass through a loop in the noseband, not vice versa.

Are the blinkers in the correct position and noseband and brow band a good fit?

The reins should not pass under the neck strap of a breast collar.

The saddle should sit approximately 10cms behind the wither, a little further back than a riding saddle.

The back strap should be reasonably tight and not lie flat along the horse's back.

See that there is no tail hair caught in the crupper.

Finer points

At one time it was correct to carry "spares" (and still is overseas). These could contain leather hole punch, knife, hoof pick, spare trace, and other useful items. In most New Zealand turnout classes there could be a variety of vehicles with some, eg viceroys, having no suitable place to store spares, so this requirement is seldom asked for here, and could be unfair.

The buckle (pin) holes should be dyed and not show as raw (undyed) leather colour, or synthetic material.

A Liverpool or similar driving bit is correct.

The blinkers should be clear of the horse's eyes and should be at a height that the eye is approximately in the centre of the blinker.

The buckle joining the reins should be attached to the "off" rein.

Vehicle.

As before cleanliness, soundness and fit are important. Some shows have separate classes for traditional and modern vehicles. Traditional classes may also include viceroys, (unless stated in schedule) as these four wheelers with pneumatic tyres have long been used for Hackneys and other breeds. Some shows have a separate class for viceroys.

Vintage vehicles, if sound, and replicas of the same are ideal for showing.

FEI marathon vehicles may present in a turnout class, but would have to be correct and, all things considered, should be at a disadvantage against well presented show vehicles.

A vehicle should be properly balanced so it is neither too light nor too heavy at the shaft tip.

The swingletree should be wide enough to keep the traces well clear of the hind legs.

Seat should be high enough so that the driver's (whip's) reins are clear of the horse's rump.

The floor of the vehicle should be parallel to the ground.

Traces should follow the line, or be parallel to, the line of the shafts.

Shafts should be at a slight angle, (the higher point at the shaft tip), when attached to the horse.

Finer point.

Traditional vehicles should have the chain to swingletree, if fitted, covered in leather.

Overall impression.

Judges look for a balanced turnout that is pleasing to the eye. The animal and vehicle should suit each other. Driver and passenger should also be in proportion to the vehicle/horse.

Horse, harness and driver's dress should be appropriate for the vehicle.

Metals used on harness should match and also match metal on the vehicle and lamps.

For a show vehicle dress can be more formal and a holly whip and lamps would finish off a neat turnout.

Lamps should suit the vehicle and be clean. Remember that the candle should have been lit at an earlier time, and matches should be in offside lamp.

All whips should be long enough to reach the horse's shoulder.

Finer point.

Some of this may seem trivial. In most cases a judge will not have much trouble choosing their winners without worrying about details.

Dress.

For all turnouts a hat, whip, gloves and apron, (or rug) are essential.

Aprons should be of suitable length. (When standing they should roughly be ankle length.)

Brown leather gloves are traditional for gentleman and lady whips.

A jacket should be worn. (If the weather is very hot or wet the judge may make allowances.)

A small buttonhole finishes off a turnout but it is not essential and should not be worn by a groom. Usually on the right lapel for women and the left for gentlemen.

All dress should be neat and tidy and compliment the turnout.

Remember it is the horse that should be the showpiece.

Gentlemen.

It is correct for a gentleman to wear a top hat if he is driving a multiple turnout or a smart single to a gig, and a suit of grey, black or brown to suit the vehicle. For a less formal turnout a country style of hat or panama would be correct. Shoes should be black or brown and be non-slip and flat. (Jodhpur boots acceptable.)

Ladies.

Dress should be tidy, practical and feminine. Flat shoes should be worn and not riding boots.

Jacket and skirt, or trouser-suit, are suitable to wear.

Loose scarves or clothing should be avoided.

Hats! This is up to the driver but should be firm enough to stay on and suit the turnout. Hair should be tidy.

Grooms.

Grooms must wear jacket, hat and gloves. Riding turnout is acceptable.

Hair should be tidy.

Finer points

To keep hair in place a hair net is desirable.

Shorter aprons are generally for Trade Turnouts. They were once used for every day, not special outings, shows etc.

Leather automobile gloves, with cut out backs, are not traditional.

In wet weather string gloves are acceptable.

A passenger may dress more formally than a groom, and is not expected to go to the horse's head when lining up.

A small buttonhole can finish off a Whip's turnout but is not essential. It is incorrect for grooms to wear them.

Passengers should wear a rug/apron but grooms do not.

For a butcher's Trade Turnout the apron has vertical stripes, and fishmonger horizontal stripes. (Trade Turnouts rarely seen in New Zealand)

Period costume should only be worn for a Period Turnout class. (Rarely seen in NZ)

Show Etiquette

Drivers should be on time and not keep the steward and judge waiting.

It is usual to enter the ring on the left rein unless otherwise instructed.

While waiting in a lineup the less chatter the better.

Shows put your horse in a different situation to normal driving conditions so be aware and try to anticipate any problems before they happen.

It is a good idea to have a capable passenger when driving a green or nervous horse.

Keep a reasonable distance away from other competitors and if you need to pass, do so carefully on the outside. (A driver with a young horse may like to keep well to the outside and this would be a time when careful passing on the inside would be acceptable.)

Do not leave the horse unattended when tied up harnessed to a vehicle.

Shows often bring out more "go" in your horse, and extra hard feed could bring problems!

Do not race around the ring, cracking whip or shouting. It will not impress the judge or other competitors.

Remember that both drivers and animals can have "off days" and accept this with good grace if placed down the line.

If your horse is misbehaving, and you feel it best to retire, report to the steward and indicate your intentions before leaving the ring.

Treat officials, stewards and judges as you would like to be treated yourself. Remember that many of these officials are not paid but are helping for the love of your sport.

It is etiquette for boys and men to remove their hats when the judge speaks to them or is tying a ribbon. Girls and women should merely nod their head in acknowledgement.

It is etiquette for place getters to follow the winner when leaving the ring.

Judges

Let the show committee know early if you are accepting the invitation to judge. Should circumstances change prior to the event, and it does happen, let the show secretary know as soon as possible so that another judge can be arranged.

Be early enough at the venue to talk to your steward, so he/she knows what you expect.

Dress neatly. We expect it of competitors too.

Be confident. You should have been sent a schedule prior to the show and that will give you time to think about what you require for workouts.

Check movement as the horse moves away and comes towards you as well as on the circle. If classes are large do not waste time. Know what you want to see and give all competitors the same consideration.

If it is very wet or very hot you may allow drivers the choice to dress to suit the weather.

If you decide that the standard is not sufficient to award a first, or other ribbons, explain to the competitor/s why.

The Champion on the day should be the one you really want. This is your choice and will please both you and that exhibitor. Your choice may not be popular with other competitors or even spectators, but yours is the decision on the day and from your position you can often see more than these other “judges”.

Stewards.

Arrive early.

Check the area to be used is safe and large enough for the entries.

Collect any clipboards etc from show secretary to write results.

Collect ribbons. See that refreshments will be available for the judge, yourself and any other helpers.

Talk over the schedule with the judge. You may be required to call changes of pace/direction.

Make sure your classes are running to time and drivers on time for their classes.

Remember that all the competitors have paid an entry fee and if there is a disruptive horse/driver it should be removed from the ring so that other competitors have a reasonable chance to show their horses.

Do not try to influence the judge.

Make sure you know the classes eligible for championships.

Champion Award.

The Royal Agricultural Society Rule Book and Guidelines states:

“When judging of all the eligible classes has been completed, all the first place winners should return to the ring.

The judge should then select the Champion.

(The horse or pony competing for Champion, Reserve Champion or Supreme Champion must be ridden, (in our case driven), by the person who qualified the horse or pony, or have dispensation from the chief steward to substitute the rider/driver.

Dispensation will only be granted in the event of illness or because the original rider/driver is competing in another ring.)

Reserve Champion Award.

*The steward should then call in **the second place winner of the class, or classes, from which the champion has been selected,** and place it in line with the first class winners. This horse must have the same consideration as the first place class winners and be judged equally for the title of reserve champion.*

(Should a Champion or Reserve be disqualified, following a drug test, a judge may choose a third placing to cover this.)

Ideas For A Show Schedule

Entry fee and prize money

Area To Be Used If Allocated

Judge If Arranged or TBA

A carriage horse/pony should be judged on performance, confirmation/quality and move with energy and presence

(These are suggestions only and classes could be combined or omitted)

It depends how many competitors you would normally expect where your class divisions are. The UK consistently has just one division at 138cm, and this gives a good spread of entries in both height sizes, (Up to and including 138cm and over 138 cm.), but it is up to the individual shows to decide. There is little satisfaction for driver, judge or spectators when there is just one competitor in a class.

- 1 Concours d'Elegance
- 2 Turnout
- 3 Open Hackney
- 4 Hackney Style & Action
- 5 Open Non Hackney Pony/Horse
- 6 Non-Hackney Paced & Mannered
- 7 Novice Horse/Pony
- 8 Open, Novice and Junior Whip
- 9 Multiples
- 10 Heavy Horse
- 11 Donkey
- 12 Mule
- 13 Unity
- 14 Ride and Drive

Special Classes

- 1 Conformation
- 2 Individual Breed Classes

- 3 Period Turnout
- 4 Trade
- 5 Pleasure Drive
- 6 Exercise Vehicle
- 7 Cones, Slalom etc

NB: It is usual to choose champion and reserve from performance classes, and not Concours d'Elegance, Turnout, Whip or Sports/Games classes.

Shows do not all use the same wording for classes in their schedules. As the horses first enter the ring a combination may catch the judge's eye, and he/she may think "That is a horse I want to see as my Champion or Reserve if it can maintain that way of going." So the judge will have to be sure that the horse is placed highly enough in Open Pony/ Horse class, Conformation, Paces and Manners, or Style and Action so that the combination will be considered later for the championship.

Although the winner of the Turnout class is not usually eligible for the championship a judge may expect a reasonable standard in their choice of champion. A well presented horse, with a good outline and way of going, does present a complete picture, and shows the attention to detail and care the competitor has taken.

Concours d'Elegance

To be judged by an artist, photographer or dignitary who is to decide, on a drive-past (trot) basis only, which turnout strikes them as the one they would most like to paint/photograph. Turnouts will not be expected to line up for close up inspection or give an individual performance.

Winners of this class are not eligible for the show championship. This is a special award class in itself.

Turnout class.

The judge should pay particular attention to details of cleanliness, safety and fit. The turnout should also be seen at the walk and trot to ensure all the points of harness and vehicle are working well (eg balance of vehicle, length of traces etc)

The horse should be sound and in good condition.

Harness Combination and/or Open Pony/Horse

This class is usually judged on the performance and quality of the horse with consideration given to the overall appearance.

Open Pony/Horse (hackney and Non Hackney)

This class is judged on the combined **performance and quality** of the horse with consideration given to overall appearance.

Winners of this class go forward for judging of Champion.

Hackneys

Horses must be sound with straight, regular paces.

Hackneys must show elevation of the knee and hock with the ability to cover the ground in an attractive, light, well balanced fashion. They should be given a workout that enables them to show their paces to the best advantage.

A top rein/headcheck and tail set are permitted.

Frequently a well dressed groom is used at the head of an animal in a lineup. This is quite acceptable.

Non-Hackneys

Horses must be sound and paces regular and straight.

They should be a pleasure to drive, well mannered and energetic without the use of any aids intended to make them imitate the Hackney.

The recommended workout is a circle on each rein at the trot, extension on a straight line, halt, reinback and a walk forward, all the time looking for balance, straightness and obedience.

Many shows do not have separate classes for Hackneys and Non- Hackneys. This should not be a problem for the judge as both should go with energy and obedience, showing manners and quality of conformation. A hackney should not place above a Non-Hackney if it is not giving a balanced attractive show and displays less quality than the other competitors.

Style and Action.

This is most often a hackney class to show the ability of the hackney to produce spectacular lift and extension. The action must be free with the legs raised and thrown forward to cover the ground, not just raised up at the back of the elbow. The horse must keep in good rhythm and be straight and true with little crossing or "dishing".

To achieve this, hackneys may wear heavier shoes and pads. They may also wear tail sets and top reins. However no discomfort should be evident

Paced and Mannered.

This is usually a class for non-hackneys. The horse must show obedience to commands yet still show quality with good paces. A workout could include change of paces, reinback etc.

Unity

This class is often judged on points out of 100, with approximately:

30% Conformation/ Quality

30% Performance

10% Vehicle

10% Harness

10% Driver

10% Overall Impression.

A workout would be required. As the judging of individuals could take a little longer another judge might be appointed to this class with competitors presenting for judging when free from other scheduled classes.

Ride and Drive.

This class is run in two parts. If the Driver is not going to ride then the Rider is usually groom/passenger on the vehicle.

If it is run at a show both parts should be presented as show exhibits and judged accordingly.

Drive. The performance and complete turnout of the horse, harness and vehicle and driver should be considered.

Ride. Riders would be expected to wear correct riding attire, and saddle and bridle (open riding bridle) to be clean, fit and in good condition.

(At a gymkhana, or sports day these standards may not be required.)

Whip (Driver) Classes

The judge will expect to see a tidy turnout with driver wearing gloves, hat and apron, or rug, and carrying a whip. (This is all traditional dress for a driver)

The driver should sit up and keep feet firmly on the floor/footboard.

Feet should not be tucked under the seat.

Hold the whip. If necessary use it. The whip is a useful tool to guide your horse.

If you are asked to do an individual test, listen to the directions and do only what was asked for.

If you are asked to 'show what your horse can do' ...then do just that. Do not go on indefinitely.

You may be asked to do a movement with the reins in one hand. This would be an ideal time to use the "Aachenbach" method of rein handling. (Not described here as this would take too long. Check with experienced drivers. Information is available in various books including Max Pape's "The Art of Driving".)

When not being judged, stand your horse up. You never know when the judge might glance back along the lineup.

Finer point.

With Aachenbach rein handling the reins are held in the left hand with the right hand supporting. This makes for a smoother transition to do a one handed movement.

Conformation:

This class is best judged without harness or vehicle and is most often an In-Hand class. The quality of the individual horse and its movement should be paramount. Action should be straight (no “dishing”) and the horse must be sound. The horse should stand square with even distribution of weight on all legs. In breed divisions the animal must conform to the breed stipulations published by the respective societies.

Everyone endeavours to do their best, but every Competitor, Judge, and Steward can be fallible. We are human after all.

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