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Hawke's Bay Rural & Lifestyle



NZPCA FIRST START ONE-DAY EVENT

Tips and Tricks for the big day

PLEASE NOTE - these are in addition to the rider notes, please make sure you read both

Are you getting excited about your first event!!!

Not long to go now.....in this document you will find some helpful tips and tricks for your first event.

We know it can be a bit scary and overwhelming, so we want to make sure you and your support crew have all the info you need to have a great day!

On Friday, the cross country course will be open from 12pm to walk. Showjumping will be open Saturday morning to walk.

When you arrive on the day. Settle your pony in, then:

- Check in at the gear check tent to collect your back number
- Sign the waiver (if non NZPCA member)
- Ensure your helmet is yellow tagged and your back protector is red tagged (we can do this for you on the day at the gear check tent)
- Look at the event layout and timings, and the course layouts

DRAW TIMINGS:

- Please double check your dressage start times on the Evo Events website as there may be changes to your start time

How your riding day should be:

- **Dressage first** - you will now have a time that you will be doing your dressage, and what arena you are in

- **Show jumping next** - you will have been given a time when your ring opens. This is run in 'blackboard order', which means you put your name or number on the board and go into the ring when the steward calls you
- **Cross country** - back number order, just like dressage you will ride in the order of the back numbers that you were given to wear

SUPPORT CREW:

Parents, we know it's not just the kids that may be new to eventing. If there is anything you are unsure of, please let us know. We are a friendly bunch and are more than happy to help out. We will have knowledgeable folk floating around on the day. Look out for high vis vests, Flaxmere Pony Club tops, or ask the office folk in the Dalvui rooms.

GEAR CHECKS - mandatory for all phases and all classes

You can pick up your **back number** from the Gear Check area when you arrive on the morning of the event.

Make sure you read Appendix D in the First Start Regulations and use the correct gear on the day.

[First Start Riding Regulations](#)

Your first Gear Check will be performed when you show up mounted (on your pony) before the dressage phase. Make sure you allow enough time to get this done before your scheduled dressage time.

You MUST have a gear check before each phase otherwise you will be eliminated.

Below is your gear check scheduled based on your class entered:

If you are in class...	Then you MUST have a gear check before...
Class 9, 10, 11	• Dressage • Show Jumping • Cross Country THREE gear checks in total

FALLS

- If you have a fall in any of the phases you will be eliminated from the competition. You are also required to present to the First Aid to be checked.
- If you fall in the warm up areas you must present to the First Aid and get the all clear to take part in the next phase. This is to keep yourself and your pony safe.

PONY ID

We must be able to identify your pony at all times. When they are in the yards they must have a tag on their halter with your (or your parents) name and phone number, and you must have a tag on your saddle with the same details.

DRESSAGE

Learn your test, someone can call it for you, but it helps to practice it ahead of time. Try setting up a mini arena on your lawn, with yoghurt pots for the letters and use your two-legged pony (you!) to practice. Or practice by drawing an arena on a piece of paper and use a toy pony.

Gear - Make sure you check what you are and are not allowed to have on in the dressage arena, because once you are in there you can't change anything.

For example - Your pony or horse can't have boots on. You can carry a whip but it must meet the regulation in Appendix D.

Schedule Time - Double check you have your dressage time correct and know what arena you are in. Check on Evo Events website.

Warm-Up - You can warm up near your arena, but not in front of it. Chances are you will be after the person with the number before yours, so try and find that person, When they are in the arena then you know you are next. Be respectful of other riders in warm up - for example if someone is trotting a straight line and you are in the way, move somewhere else.

Make sure your pony is nicely warmed up with some walking, trotting and if you have canter in your test then some cantering. Practice some of the movements in your test, including the halt and salute. If you have time you can watch the rider before you. Sometimes this helps to know you have your test right, as long as they have!

When the rider before you leaves the arena you can start circling the arena. Ride up to the judge's car passenger window and give the writer (person in the passenger seat) your name, or they might give you a nod to acknowledge they know you. Then you can carry on around the arena until you hear a car beep or horn. Do not enter the arena unless you hear the beep. Just trot or walk around, whatever you feel comfortable doing. This gives your pony time to see everything around the arena.

Beep! - when the judges in the car beep their horn (or ring a bell), that means you can enter the arena and start your test. Don't panic if you are at the other end of the arena, you have about a minute to enter the arena. You may also hear a beep in the middle of your test, this means you have made a mistake and the judge will come and see you.

Callers - when you hear the beep or horn, the "caller" can start calling the test - this also signals to the rider it is time to start the dressage test. The best place for a caller to stand is behind letter E, but not too close to the arena to be distracting to the rider and pony. Callers please keep in mind that there will be other riders doing their tests, so keep your voice at a volume that your rider can hear clearly, but that it does not distract the rider in the next arena.

Smile at the judge and give your pony a big pat on the way out, even if your test didn't go quite as you thought it would. Your pony doesn't know that it didn't! Leave the arena for a walk.

After your dressage, change your gear for the next phase. Note: Level 1 competitors can go straight to the Obstacle Course when they have finished their dressage.

Smile 😊 - Judges love to see you smiling and enjoying yourself.

Summary for Dressage

- **Gear Check!!**
 - Know your schedule time
 - Learn your test (or have it called out)
 - Warm-up
 - Watch the rider before you
 - Introduce yourself to the judge
 - Wait for your beep
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Have you completed GEAR CHECK??

SHOW JUMPING

Make sure you walk your showjumping course before you jump it, so you know where to go. Your class starts at 10.30am so you can walk it before then. If your dressage start time is after the show jumping starts you may need to walk your show jumping before your dressage test. Arrive early so you have plenty of time.

When you are walking your course, walk where you will ride your pony - begin at the start flags and end by going through your finish flags, just like you would on your pony. Make sure you have nice corners and look at anything that you might think your pony will worry about. A good idea is to then go through the course from the side of the show jumping arena to ensure you know it off by heart.

Show jumping time - *GEAR CHECK FIRST THOUGH!* You can have boots on your pony and you can wear a body protector if you want to. It helps to put your stirrups leathers up one or two holes as well after dressage.

Write your name or number on the white board by your arena - this is when you will be going into the arena to jump. Make sure you know what time your ring will open.

Warm up - there will be two or three jumps that you can warm up over. Make sure you jump these with the red flag on your right, so that everyone is going the same way. Trot your pony around first to make sure they are nice and warm. When you are ready to jump it is good for your pony to start with a crossbar so they know what they are doing. If there are lots of people warming up you need to make sure you are safe and not going to crash into anyone or cut them off. You can call out when you are going to jump one of the warm-up fences - you can say 'rider coming' or "I'm jumping the crossbar". Make sure you don't ride close to the back of any of these jumps, as you will be in other riders' way.

The stewards will call out your name/number and you can go and wait by the entrance.

When it is your turn, ride past the judges box so they can see your number. Then wait for the bell and then head off through the start flags.

If a bell goes when you are jumping then you have made a course error and will need to leave the arena. If you have a rail down, don't worry about them, just keep on riding your course!

If your pony stops at a fence, circle around and have another go. You can have up to 3 stops on the course before you get eliminated.

Make sure you thank the judge and stewards when you finish.

Summary for Show Jumping

- **Gear Check!!**
- Walk the course BEFORE THE SJ STARTS, if your dressage is at the end of the class you may need to walk your show jumping before you do your dressage.
- Put your name up on the blackboard by the gate, this is the order that you will jump
- Watch a few other competitors
- Think about your turns/corners
- Remember the Start/Finish flags
- Wait for your bell
- After you have gone through the finish flags, travel at a safe pace to the gate, walk through the gate.

Have you completed GEAR CHECK??

CROSS COUNTRY

Walk the course - This helps you learn the course and picture how you will approach and jump each fence. The course will be open from 12pm on Friday 15th August for you to walk it and see where to go. *Flaxmere Pony Club Head Coach Carys McCrory will be doing a course walk at 4pm on Friday if anyone would like to be part of that. Please let Jess Cranswick know.*

When walking the course go through your start and finish flags. Take a photo of each jump so that you can look back later to check you have your course right.

Make sure you always jump the fences with the **red** flag on the right, and white on the left. Don't jump any fences that are not flagged as they are not in your course.

Make sure you know where the halt box is and practice walking in and halting there for 5 seconds. Count out loud slowly when you do your course.

The cross country courses are colour coded - 50cm jumps are **GREEN**

Gear Check - a tagged body protector is **compulsory**. It's also a good idea to have boots on your pony.

Warm up - In the warm up area you can only jump the fences that have flags on them. The same rules apply in the cross country warm up area for the show jumping. Your pony will probably be getting pretty tired after a big day and so you don't need to jump the practice fences lots and lots of times. Just jump until you are happy with how your pony is jumping.

For cross country you will ride in the order of your back number, like you did for dressage.

When it is nearly your turn a steward will take you from the warm up area to the start box.

Start box - before you leave on your Cross Country adventure, you will be called to the start box by the Start timer. Walk into the box, turn and halt while the judge counts you down....5, 4, 3, 2, 1....off you go! Remember to take a big breath and say "I can do it"!

At each fence there will be a 'jump judge'. They will be in high vis and can help you out if required. Mum or Dad or your support person cannot help you, but our judges are more than ready to assist.

PARENTS/ SUPPORT PEOPLE - please do not go onto the course. You can follow at a safe distance and encourage, but you must not be in the way of other riders. You cannot give outside assistance or direction - ie if they miss a fence etc. That is the job of the fence judge to help within the rules.

Fence flags - **ALWAYS** have the **Red** flag on your right.

Halt Box - There will be a Halt Box in the middle of your cross country course. You must enter at a walk, halt for 5 seconds (count slowly or out loud) and then leave the box at a walk.

3 refusals = elimination - if you stop 3 times at a fence you will be eliminated. The fence judge will tell you if this is the case. This means you will need to leave the course at a walk. You may want to dismount and lead your pony back to the float.

DO NOT:

- **Follow too close**
 - If a rider is having trouble in front of you and you catch up to them you can pass them if you are not near a jump. You must call out '**rider coming**' and the other rider needs to move to the side to let you pass.
 - If you are the slower rider and you hear someone behind you say "rider coming" then let them pass.
- **Do not try and pass a rider that is about to jump a fence.** You will need to slow down and be patient until it is safe to do so. You may need to turn a circle to allow the rider in front to jump safely and move away.

FALLS:

If you fall off you need to stay where you are until our stewards/judges have given you the all-clear to go and see the First Aid team. A fall report must be completed for each fall, and riders can no longer compete on the day.

SCORING - Scores will be posted in the Dalvui room throughout the day and final scores following the conclusion of the class.

Summary for Cross Country

- Walk the course - Carys McCrory will be doing a course walk at 4pm on Friday
- **Gear Check!!**
- Watch a few other competitors

- Think about your turns/corners
- Start box - listen to the stewards as they need to count you down
- Halt box – prepare early, count slowly out loud to 5
- Don't follow too close
- Call out if passing another rider (no passing on the way into a jump)
- Remember the Finish flags

Wahoo – you did it!!!

Congratulations you have just finished the Flaxmere Pony Club First Start. Whether it goes to plan or not, remember to look for the positives in your day and give yourself and your pony a big pat and a hug.

END OF THE DAY:

PRIZEGIVING - please refer to the rider notes about prizegiving

PARENTS/SUPPORTERS

As many of us are parents and supporters ourselves, we understand how stressful it is watching our children and friends give this a go. Please respect the organisers, judges and volunteers that have put this day together, as well as other riders and their support teams. Make sure you have read the rules and regulations and also these Tips and Tricks as it will make your day (and ours) much easier.

Please stay out of the show jumping arenas and refer to notes for cross country. This is to ensure that the environments are as safe as possible for all riders.

COMPLAINTS/DISPUTES

If you wish to lay a complaint or protest there is a process to follow - the office staff can talk you through that.

MOST IMPORTANT

Treat your horses/ponies/supporters kindly as they have put in a massive effort for you, even if your day hasn't turned out how you had hoped.

Most of all, and the best advice we can give is to **HAVE FUN!!**

We hope you have a blast! See you out there again soon!