

ENDURANCE GB THE LION'S TAIL

Hints For Your First Vetted Pleasure Ride

Your ride details will be sent 5 to 10 days before the ride. Included will be a vet sheet and pre ride veterinary presentation times. At this ride block times apply so you may present for vetting any time between opening & closing times. You should start approximately 30 minutes after the veterinary inspection.

Study the map carefully. Check the speed at which you have to ride and work out how long it should take you to reach each checkpoint and the finish.

Make a note of your latest pre-ride veterinary inspection time and plan to arrive at the venue at least 30 minutes beforehand. Remember to fill in the details on the top of your Vet Sheet.

On arrival, go to the Secretary's Office to collect your number bib. Be sure to read all the information displayed on the notice board so that you become fully aware of any route changes etc. The Secretary will issue labels bearing an emergency telephone number, which you should ensure are applied to your saddle and helmet. Also make yourself familiar with the layout of the venue so that you know where the farrier and veterinary inspections are being held and where the timekeeper and the start and finish are.

You must wear your number bib for all the pre-ride inspections, during the ride itself and for the post-ride veterinary inspection. First of all take your filled out vet sheet and present your horse to the farrier for inspection. Next, report to the Veterinary Steward. For the pre-ride veterinary inspection the horse must be presented without tack except a bridle (and a rug if the weather is cold). The horse's hooves must not be oiled. When called, remove your horse's rug if it is wearing one. The veterinary surgeon's assistant (known as a Vet Writer) will take your vet sheet as you enter the vetting area.

Place yourself at your horse's head while the vet checks for any "lumps and bumps". You will then be asked for the horse to be trotted up. If in doubt practice the trot up at home, ideally over a 30 metre distance by trotting away and back again, ensuring that the horse moves freely at a steady trot on a loose rein. All the veterinary surgeon's comments will be recorded on your Vet Sheet which will be retained for the post-ride inspection when you have completed the course.

After the Veterinary Inspection you may tack up and then you are ready to start the ride. Make a final check of all your equipment, go to the start and report to the Timekeeper and off you go.

Make sure that you have the map together with your checkpoint and finish times. **Always carry your map, as even if you don't know where you are someone else may be able to use your map to direct you back on to the route.** The route is marked with marker paint (directional arrows on the ground). Diverging routes for different distances are usually marked with a notice. Sometimes the markers get vandalised and may even be removed altogether, so it is essential to carry the map. It is also recommended that you carry a drink with you, especially if it is a hot day.

Whilst on route, always make absolutely sure that that the Steward at each Checkpoint has noted your number as you pass through. This is your responsibility, not theirs! Be patient if there are other horses at the Checkpoint when you arrive.

Whilst riding, if you have not seen a route marker for a while and suspect that you may have gone the wrong way, check your map. If necessary, go back to the last marker you saw and then retrace your steps until you find the correct path. Take time to **be courteous to other competitors and to other users of the countryside**, such as walkers and cyclists who may be using part of the same area. Take care at road crossings and on slippery roads. Always follow the instructions of Stewards at road crossings, remembering that they are not allowed to stop the traffic. Follow the country code whilst riding in fields with livestock.

On completing the ride, return to the Timekeeper again. They will confirm your finish time. You have a maximum of 30 minutes from your finish time to prepare your horse for inspection. The inspection procedure will be similar to the pre ride inspection. Please make sure that the horse's legs are clean enough that any cuts or abrasions can be clearly seen.

After all this we hope that your horse has completed the course and passed both veterinary inspections. If for any reason your horse does not pass a veterinary inspection or you retire on course you MUST get permission from a veterinary surgeon to travel your horse home before leaving. So **if you retire on course then you MUST bring your horse back to the venue** (by lorry or trailer if necessary) **for inspection**. Contact the nearest Checkpoint (who will have communication back to the venue) the **in case of a serious injury** so that **you or your horse can be treated by a veterinary surgeon on course**.

Finally you may prepare your horse for the journey home. Remember to return your number bib to the Secretary and collect your rosette and vet sheet.

Some 'DO's and DON'T's'

Do ask politely if is okay to pass before passing other riders on route.

Do pass other participants sensibly and quietly.

Do thank all stewards on course, they are all volunteers and there to help so that you can enjoy your ride.

Do thank motorists who slow down or stop while you pass.

Do wear comfortable clothing appropriate to the weather conditions.

Do wear boots with a minimum $\frac{1}{2}$ inch heel unless you have stirrup cages.

Do stop and help anyone who needs assistance

Do ask someone if you are not sure about anything or need assistance yourself.

Do ask when making your entry if you would like someone to ride with – no guarantees but we will do our best to find you a riding companion.

Do make sure you offer your horse a drink before leaving and on returning to the venue.

Don't wear spurs or carry a whip longer than 30 inches

Don't use training aids on a ride (eg: Draw reins)

Don't gallop off as soon as you have passed someone.

Don't leave a gate open if it was closed when you arrived at it.

Don't ride on crops or on mown verges in villages.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WANT MORE ADVICE call
VAL on 01664474677 / 07787377434 who will try to help.