

Three Day Event Notes

By Sharmayne Spencer

1. ON ARRIVAL

This is when the vet will inspect your horse (for any possible health issues). You will need the horses EFA papers to identify him/her; the vet will take the horses temperature and heart rate. Then you can take your horse to the stable.

2. THE BRIEFING

At the briefing you will receive all the necessary paperwork, along with your bridle numbers and course plans. You will meet the Ground Jury and all the official delegates. They will talk about the course, fair play and how they would like you to conduct yourselves. After this, it is essential that you have a bridle number on at all times when out of the stable either being ridden or lead so that your horse can be identified. Take a pen to the briefing even if you are not game to ask a question, you can remember to ask somebody later.

3. THE VETERINARY EXAMINATION

This is where you and your horse present to the ground jury (the dressage judges). So make a good impression! You should have your horse plaited, hooves oiled not black-it and in your dressage bridle. Wear smart casual clothes, shoes you are going to have to run in – NO SANDALS, HEALS OR DAGGY JOGGERS. Make sure your horse is warmed up either by giving him/her a lunge or have a ride beforehand, it doesn't have to be much, just don't turn up straight from the stable. Practice a few times before you go and have someone experienced watch, so you get some feedback. Make sure your horse is straight when trotting, that you run fast enough that you are not holding onto the horse's head, hold the end of the reins. Also you must turn your horse to the right around the marker at the end of the runway.

4. WORKING AT THE EVENT

Remember that even though you may not be in the arena, you're still at the competition. All the time that you are there, there is always someone watching you! Wear nice joddies, clean your boots, use a clean saddlecloth, horse looking clean and don't forget your bridle number.

It is a good idea to have your horse out of the stable walking and picking grass as often as possible.

5. THE DRESSAGE TEST

There shouldn't be any need for me to go through how to present your horse and yourself for the dressage test, but there will be a gear check to make sure you do not have anything illegal on. You need to present to the steward in enough time to change something if necessary, spurs too long, forgot the bridle number and other things that seem to be simple but manage to get over looked.

6. WALKING THE COURSE

This is a very important part of a 3DE. I find I want to walk as many times as I can so nothing is missed. (I haven't put in all this preparation to forget where I'm going). Have a measuring wheel or walk with someone who does, so as to know the minute markers. Know the speed required and figure out where to be at each minute elapsed.

7. CROSS COUNTRY DAY AND WHAT TO HAVE AT THE FINISH

This gear should be prepared the night before, packed in a container and taken to the finish so that you are prepared. The basic things are buckets, sponges, scraper, a bucket for horse drinking water, a headstall and lead with the number on it, a drink for the rider.

At the finish you will need a 'pit crew', this should be at least 2 people (preferably not Mum and Dad), with 3DE experience to cool your horse efficiently, effectively and calmly.

As you come across the finish and then come back to trot you will be expected to trot for the vet to assess the soundness of your horse. Then dismount and the vet will take temperature and heart rate, then its up to your pit crew to help your horse recover. To cool effectively you must put water on and then scrape it off.

Before you are allowed to leave the vet will look at your horse again, temp and heart rate again and trot up, make sure you can run in your boots, or who takes him/her to trot up does it well! This is not a good point to seem unsound through trotting up badly.

Now is the time to ice legs, feed and water, and walk horse out for a pick and a leg stretch. Then let him/her rest for the night.

8. THE LAST DAY

Another vet inspection, therefore your horse needs to be presented once again – plaited etc. Apart from this, he needs to be sound, so warming up by a ride in the morning or walk out is essential. Prepare as for the first vetting.

Gear from yesterday should be clean and tidy for showjumping today.

Before going into the practice area, make sure your horse is well warmed up – similar to how you would warm up for the dressage.

If you have any questions I am always available to help.

Congratulations and Good Luck!!!!!!!

Sharmayne Spencer