



DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: THE SPOTTER

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Volunteers are an extremely important component for any carriage driving show, and an internationally-rated competition such as Live Oak will require the services of over 100 volunteers! Many people have expressed doubts about their ability to volunteer, but anyone can do it! This document describes the duties of the Spotter. Spotters are important on any component of a CDE or Pleasure Driving marathon.

Equipment Needed: You will need a sharp set of eyes, and possibly a pair of binoculars. In addition you will need at least one stopwatch (I prefer 2 or 3), pencils, paper (spotters sheets), a clipboard, and possibly a radio, but all equipment should be provided by the show management (though just in case, I always bring my own equipment). To make yourself comfortable, also bring along a cooler with water (no alcohol!), sunscreen, raingear, bug spray, snacks, and a chair. You should also have a list of competitors and the order and time they are expected to appear in your zone or section.

Spotter Duties: The spotter has a number of duties. The first is to look for breaks of pace. The second is to look for missed mandatory gates. The spotter also records any halts or instances of a groom/navigator being off the carriage (with both feet). The spotter should also be sure that the drivers have a whip on their carriage at all times. The details of these duties are in Article 2052 of the CDE (yellow) section of the ADS handbook or FEI Article 952.

Spotting is an important area often overlooked by both show organizers and competitors. Competitors often relax in areas outside the hazard and may break pace unintentionally or miss a gate because they are not paying attention as well. A very few competitors may intentionally break pace or skip gates, and could be thinking, “who is going to catch me?” As a spotter, get information from the Technical Delegate or President of the Jury (Judge) about what area you are going to spot. Your area or zone may include several mandatory gates, or parts of a walk section. Be sure to position yourself where you can see every part of your zone with an unobstructed view, but keep yourself out of the path of the turnout. Some spotters like to “hide” so as not to distract the driver or equine, and also to better catch a problem.

Breaks of Pace: CDEs generally have three or five sections, indicated by letters. Section A is any pace, so generally no spotters are needed for breaks of pace, but may be needed to look for missed gates. Sections B and D are walk sections, and the only acceptable pace is the walk. Section C (generally advanced only) is a trot-only section. Section E (the part of the marathon with the hazards) is trot-only for Training and Preliminary level drivers, and any pace for Intermediate and Advanced drivers. These paces are for any zone outside the hazard. Within the hazard is any pace, and issues within the hazard are handled by the hazard judge and crew, not the spotter.

If you see the turnout (*any* equine) change pace from the mandatory pace, immediately start your stopwatch, and stop the watch when the pace is corrected. Keep your eye on the equines, not your watch! Quickly reset your watch, and record the number of seconds the pace was broken on your Spotter Sheet. There may be several breaks of pace in your zone – don’t add the seconds together, but record each incidence separately. The scoring judge will later assign one penalty point per every 5-second break-of-pace incidence (Article 2052.4)

Any intentional break of pace in sections B, C, or D is cause for elimination (Article 2052.5). Be sure to indicate the break of pace was *intentional*, and how you know it was intentional (a voice command, obvious use of whip, or no effort to correct the pace). The scoring judge will decide what the penalty is.

In Pleasure Driving competitions (Article 56), cantering is prohibited (unless specifically stated in the prize list). A break in gait to a canter is defined as 3 full strides or 6 short strides, but only if an advantage has been gained. The judge will determine advantage – the spotter records the strides. In the case of multiples, every equine in the turnout must break to a canter for a break of gait to occur. In a cross-country fault competition (Article 60), breaking to a canter is penalized at 5 faults per incidence, and elimination occurs for any prolonged cantering or the 4th incidence. However, in pleasure driving marathons, a break of pace for *any* equine in the turnout is penalized at 10 points per 5 paces (not seconds) so the spotter must count the paces but ALSO record the number of seconds for any break (Article 64 and 68).

Whip: Drivers must have a whip on their carriage at all times in a CDE. Outside of the hazards, the whip does not necessarily need to be in their hand, although drivers must enter and exit a hazard with a whip in hand. The penalty for not having a whip on the carriage in sections A, B, C, and D, and outside the hazards in E, is 5 penalty points per section. Make a note of any missing whip and the scoring judge will assess penalties. In Pleasure Driving competitions, the whip must be in the driver's hand at all times while driving (Article 25). Failure to carry a whip at all is instant Elimination.

Course Error or Deviation: Competitors must pass through all compulsory gates (or "turning flags") in numerical order, and must also go through each hazard in section E in the correct sequence. If a competitor misses a compulsory gate (or hazard) and comes back to correct it before going through the next gate or entering the next hazard, there are no penalties (they already lost plenty of time!). After the last hazard in section E and the finish of the course, competitors must stay on the track and cannot zigzag, halt for no reason, or circle, or they will get ten penalty points for each occurrence.

Halting and/or Dismounting: In sections A, B, C, and D, and outside the hazards in E, any dismounting from the vehicle must be done at a halt – the carriage must be stationary. Use your stopwatch to time the halt! Dismounting from a moving vehicle is 20 penalties for the groom, navigator, or passenger, and 30 penalties for the driver. All people (driver, navigators, grooms, passengers) must be on the vehicle at the start and end of each section. Competitors may stop to repair damaged vehicles or harness, correcting an accident, or "for any reason beyond the competitor's control" anywhere on the course except while in a hazard. Stopping for any other reason will receive one penalty point per 10 seconds. In Pleasure Driving competitions, halting and dismounting carries various penalties depending on which class you are competing in. Refer to your rulebook for the specific details of your class.

Conclusion: Spotting is an important job -- your recordkeeping will be responsible for the final scores and placing of the competitors. Be sure you don't get distracted by chatting with friends or spectators. Try not to get so excited about watching the competitor that you forget to record the information! Although this is an important job, you can also have fun!

SPOTTER'S SHEET



Please record breaks of pace below.

Break of Pace: Sections A is any pace. Section E is any pace for Intermediate and Advanced, but Trot for Training and Preliminary. All competitors may walk or trot only from the last Obstacle to the Finish. Sections B and D are walk sections. Section C is a trot section. Should one or more of the horses break into a pace other than that specified for that section and not be corrected within five seconds, the competitor will be penalized 1 penalty point on each occasion. If the break continues, penalty points will be assessed at a rate of one for each additional five seconds. Intentionally cantering or trotting all the horses in a Walk Section (B or D) will be penalized by elimination.

Halts: If a competitor stops in Sections A, C or E other than for an accident, broken harness, damage to the carriage or a delay beyond his control, he will be penalized 1 penalty point for every commenced period of 10 seconds that the team is at the halt.

Grooms: Grooms may leave the vehicle at any time outside the penalty zone without incurring penalties with the exception of Sections B and D. Grooms or passengers dismounting in Sections B and D will be penalized 20 penalties on each occasion.

Name:			Location of Spotter:		
Competitor #	Breaks of Pace	Halts	Grooms Down	Missed Gates (enter gate number)	Penalties (to be filled in by scorer)