

## What is Combined Driving?

Combined Driving is one of the fastest growing equestrian sports in the world. Any age person can participate and any horse that is trained to drive and properly conditioned is capable of competing. Competitions offer levels similar to Combined Training & Eventing: Training level through Advanced.

Combined Driving consists of a three part test, each intended to show the versatility of horse and driver. Each phase is judged separately with penalties accrued for specific faults.

The Presentation and Dressage Phase includes judging the team's presentation based on the appearance of the driver, horse and vehicle. The Dressage test is performed in a driving arena, and the horse and driver are judged on freedom of movement, harmony, balance, lightness and regularity of gaits.

The Marathon (cross-country) phase is a timed drive in open country. The distance will vary based on the level of the test. The cross country route and obstacles are marked and the drive is timed. The objective is to test the fitness, stamina & training of the horse, as well as the judgment and skill of the driver. All types of terrain may be included in this phase.

The final section of the Marathon is called "Obstacles". This section calls for the driver to maneuver the horse and rig through a set of lettered gates of varying complexity. This part of the course is timed separately from the rest of the Marathon phase.

The last phase is a cone course set in the arena. This requires precision driving as cones are often set only a few inches wider than the wheels of each vehicle. The cones section tests the obedience, suppleness and willingness of the horse after the Marathon phase.

The minimum required to begin at the lowest levels of the sport (other than a driver) are:

Horse or pony

Cart or Carriage

Harness

Appropriate safety gear