



TURNOUT

TRADITIONS IN DRIVING



Misdee Wrigley Miller and her Four-in-Hand horses and grooms give a lovely example of formal turnout in the cones phase of the 2014 Live Oak International.

Driving is a fascinating equestrian sport to watch, steeped in tradition and decorum. Though driving carriages dates back to when it was a necessary means of transportation, the disciplines of carriage pleasure driving and combined driving began in the early 1970s. Carriage pleasure driving came about when members of the Carriage Association of America (an organization focused on the preservation and restoration of horse-drawn carriages and sleighs) wanted better guidelines and consistency in the judging of pleasure shows. The group formed the American Driving Society, which was the genesis of the present-day show ring competition of carriage pleasure driving. Similarly, combined driving became the Fédération Equestre

Internationale (FEI)'s fourth international equestrian sport in 1970 under the leadership of HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, with a clear set of rules to govern the new discipline. Even with the new standards for the driving disciplines, the presentation of the carriages remains practically unchanged from the past.

Presentation is important for both carriage pleasure driving and combined driving. Depending on the type of carriage pleasure driving class, anywhere from 25% to 70% of the judging criteria considers the condition of harness and vehicle as well as neatness of attire. Driven dressage tests for combined driving score not only the performance of the horses, but also the quality of the presentation. The judge takes into account the appearance of the driver and the groom, as well as the

cleanliness, fitness, matching, and condition of the horses or ponies, harness, and vehicle. The overall picture and style of the driver and carriage should create a pleasing impression.

The rules for competition adhere to tradition in requiring male drivers to wear a jacket, while female drivers must wear a conservative dress or suit. Additionally, a driving apron, gloves, and a hat or helmet are obligatory. Grooms must wear the same attire, with the exclusion of the driving apron. More specifically, grooms wear stable livery in all vehicles, except for formal ones, which require full livery. The dress of the drivers and grooms has to conform to the style of the carriage and harness being used. In line with these rules, it is commonplace to wear top hats with formal carriages, and a more casual hat choice with a country road cart.



Clockwise from left: Steve Wilson, the 2015 USEF Pair Horse Driving National Champion, wears the conventional brown gloves to go with his brown reins. He has a shorter driving apron which perfectly matches his carriage.

Leslie Berndl displays a lovely turnout at the 2013 Kentucky Classic CDE on her way to winning the USEF Single Horse Driving National Championship. She has brown gloves to match her brown reins and her driving apron pairs well with her carriage's color and upholstery.

The groom on the back of Allison Stroud's carriage is wearing stable livery.

Tradition comes into play with the driving apron, or lap robe, and the color of the gloves. Driving aprons were an essential part of the turnout when driving a carriage was a means of transportation. Their purpose was to keep the driver's clothes neat and clean during the commute. Driving aprons are wrapped around the driver's body, above the waist, on top of the jacket, and extend down to mid-calf or the top of the shoe. They are typically made of some form of wool, often coordinating with the carriage's color or upholstery. Gloves are brown to match the reins. In the past, reins that had been dyed black left stains on horses and clothing, causing harness makers to leave the leather undyed and start the tradition of brown reins.

Harnesses can be either synthetic or leather, with metal that matches the fittings on the carriage. Black harness is considered appropriate with a painted vehicle, with shaft and pole trimmings done in black. It is also considered appropriate with a natural wood vehicle with iron parts painted any color except brown. Russet (light or reddish brown) harness is considered appropriate with a natural wood vehicle with brown or black iron, a painted vehicle with natural wood panels with any color iron, or a vehicle that is painted brown with brown iron. Shaft and pole trimmings should match the harness.

All of the traditions lend themselves to showcasing the horse. Like the attire and harness, horses or ponies are beautifully presented. They often have their mane and forelock braided, but never the tail as it is more likely to become caught on something while braided. However, if a breed's turnout guidelines dictate otherwise, manes and forelocks are left unbraided. When more than one horse is being driven, it is highly desirable that the horses or ponies match in color and build. Nothing is more impressive than a pair or team of matching horses pulling a carriage.

In addition to painting a lovely picture, the turnout and presentation of the driver, carriage, groom(s), harness, and horses or ponies play an important role in competition. Traditions from years ago are still visible today as evidence of the rich history of horse and carriage.

■ Kathleen Landwehr



Grooms wearing full livery on Chester Weber's carriage at the 2014 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games

GROOMS

Like the drivers, grooms have specific attire that they must wear in the competition ring. Grooms wear either stable livery or full livery depending on the carriage they are riding in.

Stable Livery consists of one of the following:

- A conservative suit, white shirt, dark tie, derby, dark shoes, and leather gloves
- A conservative jacket, jodhpurs or drill trousers, jodhpur or paddock boots, white shirt, stock or four-in-hand tie, leather gloves, derby or conservative cap
- Hunting attire with a hunting derby or bowler

Full Livery consists of a close-fitting body coat with buttons of yellow or white metal to match the furnishings of the harness used (if possible), white breeches, black boots with tan tops, white stock tie, black top hat, and brown leather gloves. The color of the coat remains the owner's preference, but preferred colors are conservative in nature and, where possible, complementary to the color of the vehicle.