

Showing – Getting Started Guidance Notes



Showing is an exciting new activity within RDA! It is a progression from a class that has been part of the National Championships for some time, Best Turned Out. The aim of introducing showing is to:

- Provide another activity, working towards riding an individual show
- Offer riders a new and different challenge
- Provide a progression opportunity from the Best Turned Out Competition.

So why pick showing?

Showing teaches you how to put in a performance and accept the judges' comments as a positive way to improve. It is also a great start to a horse's education, as it teaches manners and gives exposure to the show environment without the exacting pressure of a dressage test or showjumping round. There will be an expectation to be able to walk, trot and canter either on the lead rein or independently. It is an activity that can be enjoyed by all riders with any type of horse/pony.

RDA UK has been working with SEIB for a number of years and introduced an SEIB RDA Search for a Star series to enable those who would like to explore the possibility of showing, an opportunity to compete in a showing environment that is still connected to RDA.

In addition to the SEIB Search 4 a Star classes that we hold at the RDA National Championships we are delighted to be offering a more grass roots approach to Showing to all Groups wishing to get involved and learn more about Showing. We have produced several documents to help demystify Showing and to provide information on what is involved in the three new classes that will be on offer.

RDA Showing Classes

The new classes will consist of:

- Ridden horses/ponies led (walk & trot)
- Ridden horses/ponies unled (walk & trot)
- Ridden horses/ponies unled (walk, trot & canter)

Each class will be judged on the following criteria:

1. Manners & suitability
2. Riders individual display
3. Type & conformation
4. Turn out of combination
5. Overall impression

SEIB Search for a Star RDA Showing Championships

The concept of Search for a Star was initially created to introduce horse riders and owners into the showing world. The aim is to encourage, to help and to guide where possible. The remit of Search for a Star has now been extended to RDA riders with a whole new series called the SEIB RDA Search for a Star series. The Championships for this series will be held at the British Show Horse Association Championships which is held at Addington Manor Equestrian Centre in September.

The competition is open to any rider associated to an RDA Group who can walk & trot independently. Entry is subject to the Groups approval for each horse and rider. Any type of horse is able to compete and the class will be judged as follows:

- 30% conformation
- 30% turnout
- 40% suitability, manners and way of going

Preparation

Be prepared - Go to a show beforehand and watch as a spectator to understand what is expected of you as a rider. Take someone with you and make a day of it. Consider the atmosphere, how it runs remember that Showing at this level is intended to be enjoyable and fun and that the more experience you get the better your scores will be.

Make a note of what they are wearing, the rider etiquette and also what the stewards are doing. Stewards help the show run smoothly by being the communication between the rider and the judges so make sure you know where they are in the arena as they are the ones telling you when to stop, go and change the rein.

Before you go to your first horse show to compete, it is important to ensure your horse becomes used to things that they will experience at the show. Make sure they are used to banners and horses moving close to them as well as the possible noise of a loud announcer. Practice riding with other horses in the arena and standing still in line. When the judge calls you forward for your individual show, he/she will expect your horse to stand still whilst they inspect him. Your horse will be expected to move away from the rest of the class and will be expected to ride past the others maintaining a good rhythm.

Ensure you know the correct dress code for your type of horse/pony as these will differ. We have created a useful document "Horse & Rider Turnout Guide" to help you with this.

Learn your individual show as giving a good show within the horse's capability will be the way to success! The "What is Showing" document on the RDA website will give diagrams of a simple show and detail what is expected for each of the RDA Showing Classes.

On the day

Correct turn out for both horse & rider is required as mentioned above. Make sure your tack is clean and well presented. Your horse/pony should be well groomed and possibly may have had a bath the day before! Your horse/pony isn't going to stay pristine for the whole day no matter how hard you try!

Ensure you know the timings of your class and that you are ready in good time. All riders will be called into the arena and asked to complete a couple of circuits together, this is called the 'go around'. Remember first impressions are important, turnout; overall picture and suitability are all taken into account.

Depending on the class entered, you may have to follow certain criteria as set out in the class guidelines; before being called into a line up. Riders will then be asked to perform their individual show before returning to the line. Once all competitors have ridden their shows, the judge will make their final decision and placings.

Don't forget

Horse shows originally started to increase the standard of riding and stable management. The show should be enjoyable and positive experience. It's not always about winning or being placed so don't be disappointed if you're not placed in your first few shows, you will raise your level of horsemanship the more experience you get.

Stay safe and have fun.