Attelage de Tradition Newsletter No 8 Spring 2025

AIAT Event Dates

Glamis 17-18th May

New Forest 7-8th June

Sandringham 28-29th June

Ashfields 2-3rd August

Beamish 13-14th September

Mostyn 30-31st August

One of the superb tandems driving cones in front of the riding school at the Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art

International AIAT Conference Jerez February

A strong contingent of Brits consisting of organisers, judges and TD's travelled to Jerez last month to attend the judges' clinic and AIAT Annual General Meeting. What a privilege it was to see 39 stunning turnouts in the golden glow of Spanish sunshine and to network with like-minded traditional driving enthusiasts.

Jerez

Our very own AIAT GB chair, Rosemary Neale was one of the three official judges in Jerez at the event held over the weekend and this interesting task was made more challenging by the large group of extra people inspecting the turnouts and submitting marks to be moderated at the conference the following day. As many as 8 or 9 'scrutineers' had the chance to examine the turnouts close up. A wonderful variety of carriages, horses, harness and outfits was presented with the chance for us to see how it is done in Spain. The standard of turnout was high and myriad collections of accoutrements admired. The presentation morning was challenging but fascinating and we had the AIAT founder Christian de Langlade mingling amongst us and offering his wisdom and gentle advice and encouragement when discussing what score to give for this or that. After the chill and grey of England, the setting and the weather had a somewhat film set quality. It was all just lovely.

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Once the judging was complete, we were treated to a display of the school of equitation in the traditional surroundings of the riding school originally built to celebrate the high school training and selection of the Andalusian horses. A tour of the stables revealed over 100 of the magnificent stallions in airy, high vaulted buildings. What a bucket list tick for all equestrians. This Mecca of the Iberian horse was originally created by the Domecq family and purchased 100 years ago by the Duke of Abrantes. Traditions of precision of training have been upheld and we couldn't help but be impressed with the sheer history and scale of the place.

The ‘attelage’ international family enjoyed hospitality on a grand scale. The carriage and harness collections of the Royal School made a fitting backdrop to tables for five course meals stretching to midnight each night and we learned fast to pace ourselves with the trays of sherry and hors d’oeuvres! One afternoon, we were bussed to yet another amazing

harness and carriage collection at a hacienda nearby where we saw olive groves and networked some more.

During the judging moderation meeting where all the practice judges’ scores were analysed, we were able to discuss all the different aspects of decision making and to ensure that judging points were as unform and consistent as can be. Extremely interesting!

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The surprising and somewhat sad announcement of the weekend was the retirement of Christian de Langlade as president of AIAT. His and his wife Antoinette's amazing legacy of this wonderful sport cannot be overstated and the large, enthusiastic contingent in Jerez was testament to its popularity. Christian handed over to Spanish AIAT president José Juan Morales who will no doubt continue the immense work and dedication begun by his predecessor.

The GB representative on the international committee will be Richard Lanni bringing his wisdom and experience to the table on our behalf.

Overall the conference and event was a brilliant experience, particularly meeting friends from across the continent as well as from across the pond! Hotfoot from CIAT Grand Oaks in Florida and surely jetlagged were the CAA representatives at the start of their exciting journey into Attelage de tradition.

CIAT Grand Oaks in Florida

Paul Mills is a very experienced TD at our British events and He and Gill were invited to travel to Florida in January to support the CAA with running of the traditional driving event there. 'Attelage' in USA is at the fledgeling stage but of course with huge enthusiasm and potential. Paul helped build the course alongside apprentice TD's and then also headed a training clinic.

The facilities at Grand Oaks, the show centre and driving stables of the late Gloria Austin, were magnificent. Naturally, the Florida weather was exceptional with January being just the right end of hot.

Judges and TD's from America will be visiting UK events this season and will be warmly welcomed and there will be plenty of opportunity to share our experiences and knowledge gained to benefit all.

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CIAT Grand Oaks in Florida

Enviable weather and facilities at Grand Oaks. This lovely event has been quickly followed up by clinics and events attracting more new enthusiasts. We wish all at the CAA every success with their future AIAT journey!

The Hoscars!

What a lovely party! At the Stratford Manor Hotel, Sam Searle (CIAT New Forest organiser) arranged a super dinner dance where AIAT enthusiasts met and celebrated once again, successes of recent years. It was all elegance, good company and food followed by fun awards nominated and presented by Chair Rosemary Neale. Then out came the dancing shoes! A superb way to get the season rolling and get our lovely AIAT GB supporters together at this lovely centrally-situated venue. Watch out for next year's date,

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Become a Patron of AIAT GB

If you are a supporter of AIAT and enjoy attending or competing at events and learning more about this popular carriage driving activity, then join us as a Patron. For only £50 a year you will receive a special Patron's enamel badge, a souvenir Yearbook, an invitation to attend events around the UK and access to all areas where you can get up close to the action. Each event committee may offer our Patrons opportunities to join in the entertainments special to our region.

For more details contact Richard James by email. rj@carriagedriving.co.uk

Exciting Season Ahead

As our season fast approaches, much is happening behind the scenes. Whether it's competitors pulling out the best harness, practising in those full collars and brushing up the skills for success or for organisers, the booking of marquees and rosettes and planning suitable and interesting routes around beautiful estates! No less than SIX stunning events to support.

It really helps a huge amount if people enter nice and early. Lester Dagge has updated our superb website and some events are offering online entry.

http://www.attelagedetradition.co.uk/#

Good Luck All…tell your friends to come and watch!

Next Newsletter will contain reports of Glamis and New Forest.