

Rider Notes 2019

PLEASE READ BEFORE RIDING OUT

Welcome

First and foremost, welcome to St. Patrick's Coast Ride – Ireland's Premier Pleasure and Endurance Ride.

Safety

There are numerous road crossings on this ride and care must be taken at all times. We have signed all crossings both for horses and cars but this unfortunately does NOT mean cars will slow down. At the crossings on the main and busier roads we have stewards to assist. You are still responsible for your own and your horse's safety. The stewards are there to help and not to dictate, but we suggest that when they say stop or wait you do so. Riding in an unsafe manner will not be tolerated and the organisers reserve the right to stop you from continuing under such circumstances.

There should be NO horses in the inner racecourse area in front of the ride office at any time, with the exception of the RDA who will collect, start and finish from the parade ring.

You may see cautionary notices on the route, WALK, MUDDY, KEEP LEFT, RABBIT HOLES, BADGER SETT etc. and other such comments. They are there for a purpose so please respect them and take caution at these sections by reducing your speed and being aware of the ground conditions.

Some areas may have rabbit holes, in particular returning back on to the beach after the first beach section and coming up from the beach towards Ballykinler Village on the MoD lands. Please ride with caution and be aware of the ground in front of you at all times.

Emergency

If you have a problem on route please use the Emergency Number at the top of this document and on the labels that you were issued with as part of your rider pack, please ensure one label is placed on your horse's tack and one on yourself. The Emergency Number will contact the ride office who can despatch medical, vet or farrier assistance to help you. Please be clear as to what the problem is and try and know where you are on the course so that we can locate you as fast as we can. If you can continue *safely* and without worsening an injury, to the next road crossing or checkpoint, please do so but tell the ride office of your actions regarding your location and decision.

Route changes & Crops

Due to on-going harvesting and weather at time of the maps being published and these notes being printed changes could occur to the route.

Always follow the on-route signs and stewards on the day - they will be up to date regarding any such changes. Harvesting may also be taking place on the day of the ride so beware of tractors and farm machinery in fields and on the roads.

Generally, on stubble fields you can ride across them but if the crops are unharvested and still in the ground, or the field is for silage, always follow the tram lines (tractor tracks used to spray fields/crops) or keep to the edge of the field as marked by yellow tape.

Emergency Stickers

In your ride pack you will find 2 self-adhesive stickers – please adhere one to your person (ideally hat) and one to the horse (ideally saddle).

A few dos and don'ts

Do always be courteous to landowners, stewards and members of the public at all times.

Do make sure your rider bib number and time is taken by the official timekeeper when passing through the start and finish of the ride so we know everyone is safely home.

Do ride at a steady pace appropriate to your horse's fitness

Do offer your horse water at regular opportunities.

Do close any gates that you open – we hope to have no gates on the route to open and close, but last-minute changes could mean we have gates to open and close. If you find it closed - close it again.

Do NOT wear spurs.

Do NOT carry a long, dressage style, whip.

Do NOT stop for a picnic or for other reasons - it delays us releasing volunteer stewards at the end of the day.

If you do not finish and arrange to be collected from the course, make sure the ride office knows your name and rider bib number.

Courtesy

We have well over 40 farmers and landowners who allow us to ride over their property. Please respect this privilege. Harvesting may be happening at the time of the ride so do watch out for signs in case we have to alter the route from that on the map. If going through cropped fields, either follow the tramlines where the tractors and sprayers have been or go around the edge of the field as indicated by red tapes and marker signs. **DO NOT RIDE OVER CROPS.**

The many road crossing and other stewards are all volunteers on duty to help and keep you and your horse safe. Please respect them, do not dilly dally along the way, do not stop for a picnic on the beach etc as we need to relieve these people as early as we can after the last riders go through.



Starting

The start and finish for Pleasure Riders and CTRs is beside the Vet Gate area. ERs start and finish their loops at the same location but the finish, in the event of a contested finish, will be on the racetrack – it will be marked.

ALL riders **must check out and back in again** by having their times recorded at the start and finish. Once you have registered and have got your rider bib number and rider pack from the office you can proceed to the vetting, if required, and then on to the start beside the Vet Gate.

Finishing

Please make sure your number and time is taken at the finish so we know you are back in. Once completed and your horse has been vetted, if required, please revisit the ride office, return your numbered bib and collect your rosette. The photographer will also be there as well when you can view and purchase images from the ride. There will also be a catering van on-site.

Vetting

All riders, including Pleasure Riders, can vet. Vetting for Pleasure Riders is voluntary but you will not be eligible for the Pleasure Rider trophy nor a team prize if you do not vet and get your start and finish times officially recorded by the timekeeper.

In order to vet, you present your horse to the vets before you start. You should not saddle up nor have boots on your horse. (Hoof boots are allowed but the vet may ask you to remove them for vetting). Do not apply hoof oil. For the trot-up section to check your horse's soundness, a headcollar is fine if your horse is well-behaved, otherwise a bridle should be worn. Stallions must be presented in a bridle.

After the ride, you have 30 minutes (or time as indicated on notice board in the office and at Vet Gate) from your finish time to present to the vets again. The horse's heart rate must be 64bpm or below at this time.

If you have any questions about the vetting procedure please ask at the ride office when you check in or talk the stewards or helpers at the Vetting area, they are there to help you.

What to do –

1. **DON'T PANIC!!!** - the vets are here to help you and ensure your horse completes the course in good condition.
2. Before you begin your ride you must present your horse for vetting. The horse must be untacked (no saddle, leg protection, bandages or hoof oil) and under control in either bridle (compulsory for stallions) or headcollar.
3. The vet will take the horse's heart rate (must be 64bpm or below for Pleasure Riders), check general body condition and monitor for soundness while you trot up (in hand) 20m out and back. Run alongside your horse and keep the horse on your inside when you turn at the end of 20m.



4. The same procedure will take place at the end of your ride and an additional heart rate will be taken 1 minute after the start of the trot up. Both heart rates must be 64bpm or below for Pleasure Riders.

Tips and tactics –

1. Having a friend (crew) to help hold your horse and generally assist at the beginning and end of the ride will be invaluable.
2. Before presenting your horse for vetting at the start of the ride, take a moment or two to walk and trot the horse in-hand to loosen up after travelling.
3. Have the things you will need after you finish already prepared beforehand - water to cool the horse down, a rug to throw over in case it's cold and water to drink.
4. The aim at the finish is to reduce the horse's heart rate as much as possible before presenting and cooling your horse down, allowing him to drink and stale (urinate) all help to bring the heart rate down. Don't give hard feed to eat or allow him to gorge on grass but some horses settle better if they're allowed a pick of grass or hay.
5. You must vet within 30 minutes of finishing the ride and deciding when to vet is your judgement call - vet too soon and you risk elimination through high heart rate - leave it too long and your horse may stiffen up and fail the vetting!
6. DON'T PANIC - there will be helpers in the vet gate who can check your horse's heart rate for you if you are unfamiliar with a stethoscope and generally help with the whole procedure.

Water

There is drinking water (for horses) at about the halfway point located between the two beaches at the Coast Guard Cottages and again at about the 2/3 point at Lismahon Horsemanship, located after crossing the main Tyrella Road. Many fields also have drinkers that you will pass. Ensure that the water looks clean if using, some have not been used in a long time. The grass fields are more likely to have clean water than crop or stubble fields. **Ensure your horse gets an opportunity to drink wherever and whenever available.**

Crewing

We encourage all riders to bring crews, and a mobile crew is compulsory for ERS and CTR distances of 64km and over. One person in a car is sufficient for a small group riding together.

Your crew can meet you at designated crewing points on the route with water and refreshments for both horse and rider. Crews can get a map showing these points from the ride office.

Crews should carry water and a bucket, as well as liquid and energy food for the rider. Back at the venue, the crew can help wash down and prepare the horse for vetting as well. Bring plenty of water, though there is some water available at the venue. Crew points can be great places to meet new friends, they are mostly manned so there will be others to help as well. Crewing can be as much part of an Endurance Ride as the ride itself.



We encourage you to persuade a family member or friend to come along and support you – and have a bit of craic as well. Crews are recommended for all competitive riders and are required for all CTRs over 64km and ER riders.

Pleasure Ride Trophy

The Kilgarry Breezer Pleasure Ride Trophy for St. Patrick's Coast

There is no extra cost to enter this – you just need to vet and ensure your times are taken.

It is open to everyone doing a Pleasure Ride with the exception of ILDRA members who compete for a member's trophy during the year. You can compete if doing either the 16km or 32km ride.

Open Pleasure Ride Team Competition

All Pleasure Riders (members and non-members) can compete for the Open Team Award. Teams of 3 or 4 (best 3 rides to count). You can ride together but it is not necessary. Riders in a single team can do either the 16km or 32km ride (you can mix distances in a team) and the team with the best score at the end of the day wins.

Scoring for both the Kilgarry Breezer Pleasure Ride Trophy and Open Team Competition is based on a recognised endurance formula that factors in the distance ridden, your speed/time taken and your horse's final heart rate. These figures are all put into the system and a score comes out giving us a winner. It is NOT solely about speed, it could be you winning!

To compete for these trophies, is declare your intention to vet as a team before you begin and present your horse to the vets for a pre-ride vetting after you have checked in and got your rider number. Make sure your start and finish times are recorded by the timekeeper and then, within 30 minutes of finishing, re-present to the vets for a final vet check – your horse's heart rate must be 64bpm *or below*. There is also a maximum speed allowance of 13kph (8mph) – competitors exceeding this speed will not be eligible for the Pleasure Ride trophy.

Go on - Give it a go – vetting is not onerous for Pleasure Riders and the stewards and vets will do all they can to help and encourage you.



Notes on the route

Marking

All routes are marked in Red. We are using Red tapes and Red arrows on the roads. In addition, there will be some signage, in particular at divergence points where the 16km, 32km and 40km routes merge or separate – arrows are NOT colour co-ordinated on divergence signs. Read and follow the direction on them appropriate to your distance.

Blue (or red and white) tape is used for a caution or warning in addition to signage on some areas of the course.

There are also some sections where horses will be going in both directions. Please keep left and where this involves a cropped field, if it is not harvested, please keep in the LEFT tramline only. At some two-way sections you may see red arrows on the road going both directions – follow the one that is coming from the direction you have come from.

The arrows are quite small and near the edge of the road so when you join a road watch out for them – there should then be red tapes on the road but these can be removed by members of the public or blown back and caught in the hedge, so please pay attention to the arrows and look carefully for red tapes. We also put a blue line across roads where you should not be going. If you ride across a blue line you are going wrong and must turn back.

Beaches and Approach and Exit

Both on the tracks to and from the beaches there **ARE RABBIT HOLES** – we will be filling them in and/or marking them where we see them but you, as a rider, must ride carefully. Where marked we strongly suggest you WALK and keep your eyes open on the track ahead.

The beaches along this shore can have stretches of soft sand and you are cautioned to be aware and vigilant at ALL times to the ground conditions.

Routes

16km (Green on Map)

The 16km loop rides out the back of the venue, it then does a loop right round the old racecourse gallop and returns to the racecourse by a slightly different route. Note some of this loop is 2-way so ride with consideration for other riders.

On returning onto the racecourse property turn immediately left through an old red iron gate. You then ride another loop out and round Hollymount Forest before returning to the venue across the main Downpatrick to Newcastle Road at the back of the stables. Again, some of the route is 2-way traffic so ride with caution and consideration, in any cropped fields keep to the left tramlines.

32km (Red on Map)

The 32km loop heads out at the back of the racecourse, goes down the short side of the gallops (turning right when joining the gallops) and then at the end of the gallops continue on straight



Follow the signs and route marking until you reach the beach. Ride the whole way along the main Tyrella beach and eventually leave up a long lane to circumnavigate the potato field used in previous years.

The route round the top of the potato field is wet and stony in places – ride with care. We suggest that you WALK. Pass 2 houses and down a grass lane before returning to the beach. THERE ARE RABBIT HOLES on this section – we will have signage up, but ride with caution. If you meet people around the houses or walking to or from the beach please walk and be courteous.

On reaching the shore and before going onto the beach turn left and ride to the checkpoint at the far end of the row of cottages and make sure your number is recorded - there is also water at this location. Then backtrack returning to the beach and progress along the beach for the next stages. If the tide is too far to in to get round the rocks on the beach, you can take the lane away from the cottages and turn left immediately after the gate, staying close to the edge of the field which is not cut, you can then access the beach again at the other side of the rocks.

Again, go right to the very end of the beach and on further to the start of the 3rd beach (the MoD beach). Cross the corner at the start of the beach and leave the beach up the track – this is not far and has large signs marking it as a coastal path. **DO NOT RIDE ON ALONG THE MoD BEACH.** This is not a shut weekend and there may be live shooting being carried out on the ranges.

You will eventually end up in Ballykinler Village (there is a shop and old garage) where there will be stewards. Leaving the village past the shop and then on up a concrete farm lane again following the route markings – you leave the road on a corner – please be cautious when crossing. There will be several more road crossings (un-manned small roads), before reaching the main Tyrella road at Lismahon Horsemanship, where there will be water. You will eventually come out onto Ballyrolly Road. This is the only extended bit of road work on the course. Leave the road just before it ends into fields. Beware of cars coming off the main road here. You then cross the main road at Tullymurry and start to head towards home across some fields and farm lanes to the old railway line and eventually the Drumcullan Triangle.

Please note that you will be crossing and riding a short distance on the main road verge near Tullymurray. We will have stewards on the road but extra care needs to be taken at this point, the verge is narrow for a short section and traffic is constant and fast. Please adhere to the stewards and ride safely.

At Drumcullan take the right route heading up the hill towards the old windmill, and NOT up the lane to your left towards Drumcullan House and the forest loop. Follow the track to the old railway below the windmill and back across various fields and farm lanes, you will eventually cross the railway and heading for home coming in at the back of the stables.

Ride round the back of the stables and join the racecourse where you left it. Follow signs as to where to ride on the course – it may change during the day.

Remember to make sure you check in and go through the finish.



40km (Blue on Map)

Head out following the 32km loop – see instructions above.

At the gallops you do a full loop of the gallops following the signs for 16km and 40km until you return to where you joined the gallop. Here carry on back on the 32km route (the 16km loop heads back towards the venue from here) and DO NOT do a second full loop of the gallops.

When you reach the Drumcullan triangle at the end of the long railway section beside the lake, take the left route up past the house, use the farm access lane, and follow what is the last part of the 2nd loop of the 16km route taking in Hollymount Forest.

On returning to the racecourse, 40km riders take the long way back around the race track itself finishing in the opposite direction to all other riders. On the first loop of the 80km ER the finish is the same as all other rides. On the final loop of the ER ONLY, if a competitive finish is developing, it will be moved back onto the race track itself otherwise it will be the same finish line as all other distances.

48km (30 miles)

Do the 32km loop as detailed above, come back to vetting and vet – there is a 30 or 40 minute hold – time will be posted on the day. Then go out and complete a 16km loop as detailed above.

64km (40 miles)

2 x 32km loops with a vet gate at the halfway point.

80km (50 miles)

2 x 40km loops with a vet gate at the halfway point.

Venue Map

