



St. Patrick's Coast 2022



Handy hints for Vet Gate Virgins!

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 60bpm or below for Pleasure Riders), check general body condition and monitor for soundness while you trot up (in hand) 30m out and back. Run alongside your horse and keep the horse on your inside when you turn at the end of 30m.
- 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.



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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. 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.
- 4) 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! **DON'T PANIC** - there will be helpers at 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.