

# Badminton Horse Trials

## What is Badminton Horse Trials?

Badminton Horse trials is an international CCI five star event. It is one of just six 5 star events in the world. It is the oldest five star event and is 70 years active. Moreover, it is regarded as 'The Most Important Horse Event in Great Britain'. It remains the world's oldest, richest and most prestigious horse trials. Furthermore, it is the largest paid entry sport event in the uk ,attracting crowds of up to 250000 on cross-country day, and second in the world. The first event was held in 1949 and was the start of the sport at a national level.



Badminton Horse trials is located in the stunning village and civil parish in Gloucestershire, England. Badminton house is also located there. Everyone is so supportive and the atmosphere is incredible. You get the chance to walk the incredibly tough course and see what challenges the riders have to face. Badminton is one of the toughest and most exciting equestrian events. Both horse and rider must qualify in

order to compete. Qualification can take a number of years to achieve. There are so many things available to do at Badminton Horse Trials. Such as: watching the riders compete, talk to other people who are attending and shop at all of the many well known equestrian, food, fashion and lifestyle stores. Anyone can come from a baby to an older adult. There are no age restrictions. The only thing I would say is that it can be extremely busy and if you don't like loud and crowded areas then this isn't for you. Additionally, if you aren't interested in horses then it won't be that fun for you to go see as everything is linked to horses. There is a lot of space to walk between and space for kids to run around. If you are wanting to stay over there are many options like sleeping in a caravan, booking a hotel nearby, camping, glamping and many more.

## How does it work?

Horses and riders complete the competition over 4 days, each day consisting of a different discipline. Before the competition starts each horse has to be trotted up in front of an inspection panel consisting of a vet and the ground jury (judges). The point of this is to ensure each horse is healthy, sound and fit to compete.

## Dressage



Each competitor must first complete a dressage test on day 1 or 2 depending on the order of starting (which is determined by a draw). The dressage phase is spread over 2 days in order to accommodate all entries. The dressage demonstrates obedience, discipline, accuracy and elegance by horse and rider. Horse and rider must complete a 'test' of set movements between markers in a 20m by 60m arena. At regular intervals points are marked with letters so the riders and judges know where each movement is to be performed. Badminton's dressage test consists of 25 movements in walk, trot and canter and of varying complexity. The dressage tests are approximately 7 and a half minutes long. Each movement is marked out of 10 marks. There are between 75 and 85 starters in the dressage phase.

## Cross country



Cross country is run on day 3 where horse and rider need to prove their fitness, athleticism and stamina by tackling a 4 mile xc course jumping solid manmade and natural obstacles within a set time. The cross country phase runs in the same order as dressage does. There are 45 jumping efforts; these can consist of a single fence or a combination for example 15A,B and C. The average speed is 570 metres per minute.

The time is deliberately difficult to achieve and penalty marks are added to their dressage score at the rate of 0.4 for every second exceeding the optimum time. Penalty points for errors on course are also awarded.

## The final inspection

A further inspection of the horses takes place on the Sunday morning prior to the Jumping test. This 'trot-up' ensures the horses are still sound and fit enough to compete on the final day and complete the competition.

## Show jumping

After the physical demands of cross country day, horses and riders must then demonstrate accuracy and agility in the jumping test by completing a course of show jumps up to 1.30m high and 2.30m wide. This requires both horse and

rider to be extremely fit and calm. Penalties are picked up by knocking down the deliberately balanced fences, refusing to jump a fence or not completing the course within the optimum time. The competitors jump in reverse order, so the leader after the cross country is the last to jump, giving a nail-biting finish to the event. Many events are won or lost on this final day when the pressure is on in front of the 13,000 spectators filling the arena.



### Example of the results table

No.	Horse	Rider	Dressage		Cross Country				Show Jump		Total	Diff.	Place
			Pens.	Place	Jump	Time	Pens	Place	Jump	Time			
32	Vanir Kamira	Piggy French	26.0	(4)	-	0.8	26.8	(2)	-	-	26.8	-	1
97	Ballaghmor Class	Oliver Townend	21.1	(2)	-	0.4	21.5	(1)	4	1.6	27.1	0.3	2

### The history behind it

The Badminton Estate has been in the possession of the Beaufort family since 1608. The family itself is descended from John of Gaunt, son of King Edward III. The house and parkland date from the 17th and early 18th centuries. The prize money for the 1949 event was £150 to the winner and a total of about £500 in all; by 1965 this had 'progressed' to £250 and £750 in all. By 2018 the winner took home £100,00 and the overall prize fund (including competitors placed to 20th position) was £360,750. Badminton House is now the family home of the 12th Duke of Beaufort, Harry Somerset who has always taken an active role in the event. His Grace's father, David, who passed away in August 2017, was President of the Horse Trials and was himself a very successful rider in the sport, being placed second here in 1959.