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Photo: Dicky Jim

HRH Prince Philip driving his new home designed and built carriage at the Royal Windsor Horse Show BDS Meet, accompanied by Lady Brabourne.

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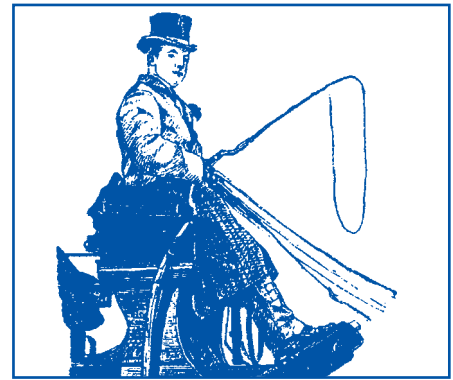
Front Cover: Gert Schrijvers with his home-bred Friesian cross Arab four-in-hand of horses on the marathon at the Land Rover International Driving Grand Prix.

Photo: Dicky Jim

The opinions expressed in Carriage Driving are not necessarily those of the Editor

Editor: Richard James • **Deputy Editor:** Stephanie Kill
Sales Executive: Ruth Harman • **Circulation Director:** Sally Boettcher
Production Director: Richard Hamshere • **Publishing Director:** Fiona Richards
Printers Pensord Press Ltd, Pontillanfraith, Blackwood, Gwent NP12 2YA
Published by A & D Media Ltd, Jesses Farm, Snow Hill, Dinton, Wilts SP3 5HN
 Editorial & Advertising 01722 716996. Subscriptions 01722 716997.
 Fax: 01722 716926. Email: edit@carriage-driving.com

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From the Box Seat

I recently had the pleasure of judging the presentation phase in Spain at the parade of turnouts that takes place before the six-day Seville Feria. Judging takes place in the streets, rather similar to the London Harness Horse Parade but old FEI style, before they enter the huge bull ring where the movement element of the competition is then judged.



It is a magnificent occasion and an opportunity to see hundreds, yes hundreds, of turnouts ranging from singles to five-in-hands (only royalty can use a six-in-hand), mostly Andalusian horses and mules, the vast majority being multiple turnouts. I judged only those turned out in English harness, some 50 multiple equipages. The Spanish have used our style of harness for years. The traditional colourfully decorated Spanish harness was originally used on mules, the Spanish mules being quite large. (Pictures page 56)

Understandably, the majority of the horses were Andalucian stallions, plus a few Friesian and the occasional Gelderlander team. Their behaviour is immaculate; I did not see a single stallion misbehaving, even when a team of mares drove by!

After judging, the turnouts parade through the streets of the town and then return again to attend some of the six-day Feria during daylight hours. Most of the ladies and girls are attired in their colourful and elegant Flamenco dresses, complimenting the presence and grace of the Andalucian horse, both ridden and driven. Everybody enjoys great hospitality and when night falls the Feria becomes a blaze of coloured lights and music.

We in the UK have no equestrian event that has any comparison with the Seville Feria, so if you ever have the opportunity to attend it is well worth a visit just to be immersed in the Spanish culture. Health and safety devotees would have had nightmares!

Happy driving,