



British Carriage Dog Society Show Class Criteria

The BCDS (British Carriage Dog Society) was established to help preserve the working heritage of the Dalmatian as a carriage dog. The Society would like to encourage event organisers for any driving club, group or event who wish to include carriage dog classes in their schedule. To help ensure a safe and consistent performance, the BCDS offer guidelines for the organisers and judges of carriage dog classes.

The purpose of any carriage dog class would be equivalent to any show class but with the added attraction of an accompanying carriage dog, whose instincts, abilities and training will be given substantial weight when considering the overall picture. The BCDS suggest that the classes are judged in accordance with these guidelines to help promote a clear picture of the modern working Dalmatian and to help maintain a degree of consistency with the carriage dog trials and the training of working Dalmatians.

Dog

- Only pure-bred Dalmatians over the age of 12 months are eligible, no other breed or part bred is eligible.
- No bitches in season should be allowed.
- All dogs should be covered by public liability insurance. This is not included in British Driving Society, British Horse Society or British Carriage Driving membership.
- Dogs should be trained for carriage work and ideally will have attained a minimum Bronze Carriage Dog qualification.
- The dog should be shown off lead, though when multiple turnouts are moving together, the organisers or competitors may prefer that the dog be shown on a loose lead held by the groom or passenger. Extending leads are prohibited and dogs should never be tied to the carriage.
- The dog may be held by a steward during the line up if required by the competitor.
- An authorised steward may be provided by the competitor, the show organisers, or the BCDS.
- If multiple dogs are entered with a turnout, they should be judged as one complete unit.
- Any competitor whose dog the judge considers to be showing bad behaviour should be asked to leave the ring.
- A competitor's representative should remove any fouling by the dog after the class has finished.

Competitor

- The competitor may enter as whip, groom or passenger, any of whom may be the handler for the dog. Every turnout must be accompanied by a groom at all times.

- It is recommended that carriage dog handlers are members of the BCDS. The Society may offer an award to the highest placed dog handler who is a member of the Society.

Carriage

- Depending on the schedule wording (e.g. Private driving, exercise vehicles, Concours d'Elegance etc) vehicles would be restricted to the class category.
- For a specific Carriage Dog Class, any suitable vehicle would be acceptable. This class can be split at the judge's discretion if sufficient entries allow for traditional and non-traditional turnouts.

Judging criteria

Turnouts may be asked to perform any individual show that may be deemed appropriate by the judge. The following criteria should be observed and will be balanced with the performance and suitability of the turnout as judged for any carriage driving show class:

- The dog's position in relation to the vehicle. * see correct 'axle' position below.
- The dog's obedience and response to commands.
- The dog's focus on and consistency of work.
- The dog's likely ability to keep up with the vehicle over long distances.
- The overall impression of the dog's willingness and enjoyment of its work.

*The correct 'axle' position for the Dalmatian as defined in the British Carriage Dog Society Trials rules states: "...that the dog shall be in a semicircle behind, under or alongside the carriage. Its position may be as close as practicable without crouching, touching, or otherwise encroaching on the movement of the carriage and within one carriage's length of the carriage. The dog should not forge forward, run wide of, or lag from this position. It is important the dog is running in a safe and comfortable position with a natural gait."

The following wording is suggested for schedules for the use of show secretaries to cut and paste:

Open Private Driving with working Carriage Dogs

This class is run under the auspices of the British Carriage Dog Society with all entries conforming to their guidelines.

It is recommended that carriage dog handlers are members of the British Carriage Dog Society and the society offers an award to the highest placed dog handler. Dogs should be covered by liability insurance.

Open to equines four years and over driven to any suitable vehicle (including traditional and exercise) and accompanied by a trained carriage dog.

The class is restricted to Dalmatians one year old and over and excludes in-season bitches.

Competitors may be asked to perform a simple task with dogs off lead for their individual display. To be judged on the combined overall turnout and the obedience and performance of the dog.

Dogs may follow the carriage in the arena on a loose lead (extending leads are prohibited) but will be expected to perform an individual display off lead.

Dog must never be tied to the carriage.

Additional authorised dog handlers may assist whilst waiting in line-up.

Concours d'Elegance

We strongly recommend the use of an authorised BCDS commentary for this class.

Normal wording for a typical Concours d'Elegance class should apply with the possible following addition:

This class is open to members of the British Carriage Dog Society with a purebred working carriage dog. Competitors should conform to the regulation of the BCDS. Dogs may follow the carriage in the arena on a loose lead (extending leads are prohibited) if required but may be expected to perform an individual display off lead. Additional authorised dog handlers may assist whilst waiting in line-up.