



SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS CARRIAGE CLUB

OUR AUTUMN 2025 TRAINING WHEELS PROGRAM

Our Autumn 2025 program has been designed specifically for drivers new to Combined Driving Events (CDEs) or drivers with young horses or ponies needing more experience of CDEs. For newcomers to this area of carriage driving a CDE comprises three separate phases. It is based on the concept used in ridden eventing and was adapted to carriage driving by the late Duke of Edinburgh:

- Dressage
- Marathon – a test of endurance and ability to navigate through fixed obstacles at pace
- Cones (instead of showjumping) – no jumping but navigating through cones spaced just wider than the wheel width of the carriage

Competing in a CDE can be (and usually is) a daunting prospect for even an experienced driver but especially so for the newcomer. Our aim is to take out the mystique and prepare you slowly and methodically so you will be confident to take on the challenge of competing in a CDE.

The program includes the following:

- Feb 1-2 Mr Plod
- Mar 1-2 Noddy
- Mar 15-16 SHCC – CDE Beginners Class

The **Training Wheels Camps** will be led by two very knowledgeable drivers - Sue Plath and Gail Bain. Sue has been involved in carriage driving for many years and now heads up the NSW Dressage Panel whilst Gail has competed internationally at the highest level. The first camp **Mr Plod** is a true introduction to CDEs and will take you gently through each of the three phases of a CDE. On the second day you will take part in a very simplified CDE where you will drive a simple dressage test designed by Sue and be able to practise the two marathon obstacles and cones course beforehand on Day 1. There will be no timing and the winners will be the finishers with the biggest smiles! The **Noddy** camp will build on what you learnt at Mr Plod with a slightly more challenging dressage test and cones course and 3 marathon obstacles. This time you won't be able to drive the marathon obstacles or cones course beforehand so you'll have to work out your own routes. You will be timed but again the biggest smile test will apply.

If you feel the need to improve your driving skills then attending lessons with **Phil Marshall** is the answer. Phil is very popular and has been running clinics at the Club for many years. The next Phil Marshall Clinic will be held on 6 – 10 February and early booking is really recommended.

After completing the Training Wheels Camps you should be able to take part in a formal competition. The Club is running a CDE on 15-16 March and this would be the ideal opportunity. It will be running both a Level 3 event for more experienced drivers and a special Beginners Class for less experienced drivers. This special class will include a slightly more demanding dressage test, 4 or 5 marathon obstacles but a similar cones course to Noddy's. Sue, Gail and the SHCC team will be there for advice – so why not take the next step on your CDE journey?

You can download the entry form for Mr Plod and Noddy on the NSW ACDS website at <https://www.carriagedrivingnsw.org.au/events/training-wheels-mr-plod-southern-highlands/>

Entry forms for the Phil Marshall Clinic and the SHCC CDE will be available in the New Year.