

Why fitness is key for horse and rider...

Getting your horse ready for competition isn't everything. Make sure you're ready to last the distance as well...

It can often go unnoticed, but all successful equestrian competitors are just the same as any elite athlete in the need to be at the very peak of their physical fitness. Just as football players need to be 'match fit', being 'competition fit' is equally as important for riders in the equestrian world.

A common mistake is that so much focus goes into getting your horse ready for the big day, that the rider's preparation can often be neglected. At Sovereign Equestrian we encourage all of our riders to maintain their fitness levels and ensure that they are ready to compete at the same intensity as their horse.

We have put together a list a list of top tips to ensure that you are able to perform at your maximum during competition time.

Develop a fitness plan

As with most things, it's a lot easier to achieve something if you've got a structured and regimented plan in place. Riders should look to develop a fitness plan that doesn't just focus on immediate gains but helps prepare you for the rigours of a competition. Tailoring the fitness plan to the schedule of a competition is also helpful as this will help improve stamina to ensure you're performing at your optimum level for longer.



Nicola Barry riding True Blue

Relevant training

One of the biggest challenges when training for a competition is ensuring that your training is relevant. Being 'physically fit' and 'competition fit' are different and it's important that throughout your training the

As a guide, a competitive adult rider should be engaging in cross-training activity three to four times per week for 60 to 90 minutes. The goals of training should include core strength, muscle strength balancing and symmetry, flexibility, and cardiovascular endurance. This type of training will simulate the activity that you're likely to go through during a

competition and should help you prepare in the correct manner.

A holistic approach

Mental preparation is key. All top level athletes have spoken about how the big moments in sport can often come down to mental preparation and focus. Getting mentally prepared for a competition is usually deeply personal and the routines that you go through beforehand are probably only known by the rider themselves. However, it's incredibly important that riders take into consideration their mental preparation as well as their physical state.



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Learn from your mistakes

The beauty of competing is that you usually have the opportunity to put right any mistakes you've made in the next competition that comes along. It's crucial that when it

comes to your performance evaluation that you look at how your fitness (or lack of) may have had an impact on your results. The ability to identify and then learn from any mistakes in your preparation is often what sets riders apart.

Hopefully these tips will help you in your preparation and Sovereign Equestrian would like to wish you good luck with your upcoming competition!

Paul Barker riding Happy Boy



About Sovereign Equestrian

At Sovereign Equestrian, we train, maintain, and care for our horses so that they become exceptional performers across all disciplines. We know that a fit and healthy horse is a happy horse, and a happy horse is a successful horse. We want to share some of our techniques with you because, with the right care your horse can reach its true potential.

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