

# Looking further afield with Sovereign Equestrian...

## Why it's important for you and your horses to experience competition abroad

The Sovereign Equestrian team is comprised of a mix of different riders all with contrasting expertise and experience. It's fascinating to see at close quarters how each of our riders are always looking for new ways to learn and develop their skillset to help provide them with that extra edge when it comes to competition day. One of the key developments that the team has committed to over recent times is to ensure that whenever possible they are competing outside of UK competition and looking towards European and even worldwide events.



▲ Nicola Barry riding True Blue

This has resulted in an incredible amount of learning for our riders, and our horses, as they have had to adapt to all the challenges that come with competing abroad...

### Learning Logistics

A key element of operating with the Equestrian competition circuit is ensuring that you are 100% prepared when it comes to the logistics of each event. This can be a complicated and challenging process for UK based competitions, but the international factor adds in a completely new dimension. Travelling abroad can be stressful at the best of times, but adding your own horses into the mix adds a whole new set of complexities. From international FEI passports, to flu booster jabs right through to preparing your lorry for international travel, insurances, breakdown cover, supplies for human and horses, tack and equipment and fresh water, the process isn't a simple one but it will certainly put you in good stead for any future logistical challenges that you face.

Whilst many of the tasks are down to you, there are companies who act as equine travel agents, they can book

ferries, transport, overnight stopovers, route planning and customs documentation. It costs to use these specialists, but, with our own experience they are worth every penny.

### Getting outside your comfort zone

Competing abroad has traditionally been a challenge for UK athletes across many different sports, with teams and individuals often struggling to cope with the demands of performing at the very highest level whilst being out of their comfort zone. This is also true of the Equestrian sports, as riders can sometimes get comfortable revisiting the same venues and competitions each year. Whilst the competition itself is of the highest standard in the UK, it's always beneficial to test yourself against riders and horses from different nationalities and backgrounds.

### Learning new skills

International competition consequently means that riders will be coming up against different conditions to what

they're used to at UK based events. This can come in many forms, including the venue management, weather, surface performance, stabling and training facilities and different skillsets of the riders and horses. Competing in these environments and against new riders can often help boost your own performance and fine tune certain skills. Any new ideas can prove crucial and advantageous when competing in UK events against riders who don't possess that experience. The Sovereign Equestrian team share similar beliefs on how their own skillset and expertise has improved since competing internationally with and their overall results being a testament to that.

Whilst this article has looked at the benefits of trying out competition and experiences away from the UK shores, there are many small improvements to your own performance that can be made without competing abroad. Take a look back through our news and blog website archive to read through a whole host of interesting tips and tricks to help you gain those extra performance points.

Visit [www.sovereignequestrian.co.uk](http://www.sovereignequestrian.co.uk) or call +44 (0)7762 880800 for more information about our services



The indoor and outdoor arenas available at Lier, are a fantastic example of the facilities that are commonplace across international venues. The experience at these venues is a step up from the majority of UK based events, which provides riders and horses with the invaluable experience of competing in high-profile events. This is why, the Sovereign Equestrian team have been keen to utilise international events to prepare them for the headline shows and events in the UK calendar.

◀ Azelhof Indoor Arena, Lier, Belgium

▼ Azelhof Outdoor Arena, Lier, Belgium



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