

8th CIAT Ksiaz Castle, July 17th and 18h, 2021

Traditional driving is the central idea, which forms the pivotal point of all efforts made by the Association Internationale d'Attelage de Tradition, or AIAT. The AIAT supports all activities pursuing traditional driving i.e. using horse breeds bred specifically for driving such as: Kladrubers, Lipizzaners, Mecklenburgs, Moritzburgs, Oldenburgs, Schlesiers etc, with traditional harness (made by traditional craftsmanship from quality leather contrasting sharply with modern harness mass produced in plastic), and with traditional historic types of carriages. This ideal is to preserve the traditional coachmanship handed down through history to us by such experts as the coachmen working for the grand families, or by the military of all European states and, last but not least, by the authors of such books as Fairman Rogers, A Manual of Coaching, Francis T. Underhill, Driving For Pleasure and Benno v. Achenbach, Anspannen und Fahren.

Attelage de Tradition pursues the art of driving as it was practised daily in the era of the aforesaid personalities that was not only gained from the humane treatment of horses and the everyday practice of driving in the days when all traffic was horse drawn, but also from the pride sportsmen and sportswomen took in the art of driving their immaculately turned-out horses and carriages.



In Poland the people of Silesia still remember Daisy, Princess Pless, née Cornwallis-West. She lived in Ksiaz Castle - formerly Schloss Fürstenstein - and was not only an icon of beauty and elegance in her day but, English by birth, the very model of a noble sporting lady who could drive her dogcart as safely and in the same perfect manner as she drove her Break de Chasse to her five Kladruber Greys.

The people of Silesia still admire her and love the traditional way of driving and this may be the reason for the large crowds that gathered at Ksiaz Castle on July, 17th and 18th to see the 8th CIAT held there. The turnouts taking part in this event were turned out and driven according to rules of the AIAT.



These rules include firstly the competitors being presented to a panel of judges who award points based upon the perfection of the turnouts in respect of the principles mentioned above. Next they have to complete a drive of some 15 kilometres, keeping to a given speed and managing five difficulties (PCs, Passages Contrôlées) along the way offering challenges which a driver may meet every day when driving in town traffic or in the lanes of a forest or along country paths, (e.g. reining back, passing a musical band, keeping the carriage to a narrow lane etc.).



Driving between cones forms the third part of the CIAT. There the drivers should be able to drive their horses safely and skilfully along a course between set up cones without touching them, a task any driver must be able to perform in everyday traffic.





The courses were laid out in the park at Ksiaz, on the way to and through Swiebodice, a small town nearby, and in the show ring next to the State Stud of Ksiaz. It is a charming route in the shadow of the deciduous forests belonging to the park. The route through the forest, however, turned out to be rather steep. The horses constantly had to hold back when walking down to the town and, vice versa, the way back demanded a strenuous pull uphill back to the castle. The drivers had to calculate a slower speed on these sections of the route. The obstacles were situated in the streets of Swiebodice and in the show ring. The drivers managed these obstacles well.



Several of the turnouts were well known to the judges (Enzo Calvi (I), Eduardo Cruz (P), Hartmuth Huber (D)), but they were pleased to see some newcomers, especially young ones. There was a fine town turnout, that being a pair of Friesians to a well-restored Landaulet built by Gläser/Dresden and driven by a young lady of seventeen, accompanied by a friend serving as her groom. There were several turnouts driving Polish bred horses to locally built rural carriages, there drivers wearing national costume. There were also sporting turnouts to be seen of a more international character e.g. a tandem of Spanish horses driven to a Tandem Cart built by Brewster/New York. The judges were able to offer advice and critique and glad to note that both were readily accepted.



The weather being fine on Saturday the drivers were glad to bring their turnouts dry and free of dust in the best of condition to the areas where the judges inspected the horses and carriages. As heavy rainfall had woken them up during the night, everybody expected muddy going and rain on Sunday but were very glad when the damp morning developed into a sunny day of pleasant temperatures keeping the turnouts unspoilt by mud and rain.



The 'Maniabilité' (cone driving) turned out to be agreeable. No sharp bends and no confusing sequence of cones to confuse both horses and drivers. Nevertheless, there were several balls down. The course of the cone driving gave evidence of the fact that the AIAT rules guarantee a fair redress between agile sporting models such as the phaetons and the long and heavy town carriages like the Landaus. All of them likewise successful, depending on the skill of the whip.



The prize giving ceremony was held immediately after the cone driving in the show ring. All the turnouts lined up to receive their prizes and rosettes. These prizes were handed out by the President of the AIAT Poland, the Mayor of Walbrych and other VIPs. The playing of the winning nation's national anthem was a moment of pride and high emotion. The assembled turnouts from several European countries under the trees in the show ring was the very picture of a cultured equine sporting event and a symbol of the universal validity of the art of tradition driving. The public clapped their hands enthusiastically when the traditional tune: 'Good bye, my little officer of the Guard...' was played.



The winners were:

Ponies single	1. Rafal Zielinski	(PL)
Ponies pairs	1. Günter Drumm	(D)
	2. Cseslaw Trzos	(PL)
Horses pairs	1. Roman Kusz	(PL)
	2. Sabine Ernst-Recknagel	(D)
	3. Jiri Hladik	(CSR)
Tandem	1. Urbain van de Voorde	(BEL)

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