

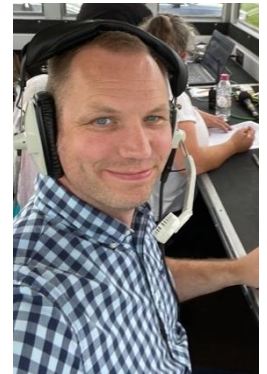
Hi all,

My name is Richard Connelly and I am the controller for Defender Kentucky 4* & 5* in 2026. This will be my third year as Controller at Kentucky and I am very much looking forward to returning. For those who were with us last year, can I just say that it was an excellent day and you all did a great job! For those of you who were not with us last year, as you will hear when we speak on the radio, I am from the UK, where I control for both national and international (FEI) competitions as well as controlling at events across the World.



I will be joining you for the fence judge briefing on Friday before the cross country and look forward to meeting many of you there. I love the briefing as I always take the view that we are one team and, as I cannot do my job without you, I always enjoy meeting the fence judges and getting to interact with you all before we work together. If you are on site before cross country day and see me, please do come over and say hello, it would be great to speak to you.

I know many of you have been loyal volunteers at the event for many years and will have a great understanding of the event. However, I have put together this short note as I suspect there are things which I would like from you that may be different from your usual controllers. I will also go through this at the briefing on Friday.



The Start of the Day

I will be doing radio checks to make sure you are all hearing me (and vice versa) on the radios. When we do this, I will also ask for the **first name** of the radio operator. I will typically refer to you by your fence name, but it is also good to be able to use your name when we speak.

PLEASE make sure you **keep your radio with you at all times**, even if you run on to the track to help a rider, take your radio as I will likely need to speak to you.

What I Want to Hear

- I would like to **hear every horse over every fence**. Hopefully that will be along the lines of “Number 30 clear at Fence 6”;
- but of course this is a major event and there will be penalties and problems for riders, so please do also **tell me about those as they happen**;
- if a rider has a refusal, **please tell me about it even as they are turning for their second (or third) attempt**, so “Number 35, first refusal at Fence 11”. Update me with each attempt they make at your fence;
- if you have a combination fence (with AB, ABC or ABCD elements etc.) and a horse jumps it all clear, then you do **not** need to say “Clear at 10 A, B and C”, please just tell me they are **clear at Fence 10**. However, if they have a refusal, fall or have any other issues, please **do** let me know which element these occur at, for example “Horse 40, first refusal at Fence 10 **B**”);
- also, please report all the usual other things which occur, such as breaking Frangible Pins and MIM Clips, missing flags (9 penalty rule) or any other issues which each competitor has at your fence;
- you can get Fence Repair through me too. If a horse has damaged a fence then please do tell me whether you believe it is **safe** to jump or whether the course is blocked by an unsafe fence. If you have a Frangible Pin or MIM clip replaced, please tell me **as soon as the repair is complete** and the team are back off the course;
- please also tell me of other things that happen, **including retirements and eliminations**. If a horse retires at, before or just after your fence, please do tell me;
- In all cases, **I will confirm back key messages** (penalties, retirements, eliminations etc.). If I do not confirm your message, please **do tell me again**.

Rider or Horse Falls

If you have an unseated rider or a horse fall, please do try and use the word FALL when reporting this to me. I will be dealing with lots of things over the course of the day, but the one word that will get my attention will be FALL. So, for example, “Rider fall at Fence 12A” or “Horse fall at Fence 21”.

If you have a fall, please try and **give me other information as quickly as you can**:

- 1) Is the course blocked or clear, i.e. if another horse comes along, are they going to be able to safely jump your fence; and
- 2) What assistance do you require, do you need Medics or Vets or any other assistance (fence repair)?

If you forget to give me this information, then please **keep a listen out** as I will immediately be asking you these questions. This is why you must take your radio with you to help horses and riders.

Finally, if you hear a fall of horse or rider at another fence, please **keep radio silence yourself** until I have spoken to the fence. The **only exception** being if you also then have a fall at your fence and need to get that message to me too.

Stopping/Holding Horses

For both the 4* and the 5* this is a really important event for the riders and there is a lot at stake. Stopping a rider can break the flow of their cross country and, with so much to play for, we do not take the decision lightly.

Therefore please, please, please **DO NOT** stop a horse unless I explicitly ask you to do so.

- You may be aware of problems elsewhere on course, but there are a number of reasons why I may still want to let a following horse continue to run.
- I will choose where is best to stop a horse and so fence judges must not stop horses without being asked.
- The **ONLY** time to stop a horse without me asking is if you have a problem at your fence, it is not safe to jump, and you have not been able to get hold of me.
- Please **DO NOT** ask me if I want you to stop a horse (for example “I can stop the horse at Fence X, should I stop them?”). If there are problems on course, I will make the decision on where to stop horses, but **do not want people asking questions like this** as it means I cannot talk to the people I need to as it blocks the radio.

We have nominated stopping points which are not generally at fences, but history shows that sometimes a rider has just passed one of these when I need to stop them, so **I may come to any fence to stop horses**, so please be familiar with what you need to do if I ask you to stop a horse, including writing down the stop and restart times (hours, minutes AND seconds).

For the **stopping point stewards**, the same rules apply. **ONLY** stop a horse if I positively ask you to do so and please do not ask me if I want you to stop horses, I will come to you, just wait quietly until I speak to you. I may also ask you to “prepare to stop..” a horse, which means stand up and get ready, but I will then confirm if I definitely want to stop it or let it run. If I ask you stop a horse, or to prepare to stop a horse, please do acknowledge back that you have got the message, such as “Stop Point 2, confirm we will stop the next horse”.

If I do hold a horse with you, please **do not restart it until I ask you to** do so. You may think a problem ahead has cleared, but I will be getting other information on other networks so may not restart horses immediately.

Finally....

Hopefully we will all have a good and safe day and I look forward to speaking to you and working with you all. Please do not hesitate to ask me questions if you need to, or to ask for help. We have a great team of Coordinators, Stewards and Technical Advisors that I can send to you if you have any queries or issues that I cannot resolve.