Clarification on the Securing Down of Portable Cross Country Fences

All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that portable fences are secured in a way that will minimize the risk of them moving if hit by a horse. A "Belt and Braces" approach (too many fixings rather than too few) is a good one to have as fences lifting or moving may increase the chances of a fall.

In order to achieve this there are various ways of securing portable fences to the ground, the two most common ones are the Spirafix Ground Anchor system and the use of posts.

In some situations, such as lined water jumps or all weather arenas, posts or Ground Anchors cannot be used so the fences should be weighted down commonly with ballast, concrete or containers full of sand or water. Please seek advice from your Technical Adviser for the most appropriate option.

Spirafix System 50mm "C" type Ground Anchors

This is a very good system but there are some key points to consider in their use:

- The anchors must be at the front of the fence rather than at the back, or at the front as well as the back. At least two must be used.

- Where fences with small base spreads are to be fixed down extra ground anchors may be required at the front of the fence.

- There are two lengths of anchors available (460mm and 620mm) and it is important that the appropriate one is used depending on the soil type. i.e. long ones in sandy soil.

- The anchor brackets must be securely fixed to the frame of the fence so that the fence cannot break away from the brackets under a large impact.

Posts

These should be substantial in size and well dug or knocked into the ground. A depth of 0.75m in the ground would be the norm but ground conditions could require them to be in the ground more.

- Posts should be at the back of the fence and if set below the highest part of the fence should be put at the front as well to stop the front lifting on impact.

- Try to avoid using posts with lots of knots as this can weaken the post.

- Using a mixture of posts and anchors can be useful and is quite acceptable.