

Securing of Portables April 2011

As everyone knows, all portable cross country fences must be fastened securely to the ground so that if they are hit by a horse they will not move. All officials need to satisfy themselves that this is the case when they are inspecting the cross country courses and if they are not satisfied that the fences are securely fastened they must please request that this work is carried out before a course is accepted.

There are various ways of securing portable fences, the two common ones being the use of the Spirafix system and the use of posts.

1. **Spirafix system 50mm 'C' type Ground Anchors:** this is a very good system but there are some key points that we need to be aware of:-
 - a. The pins must be at the front of the fence rather than at the back or at the front as well as the back; there must be at least two pins used.
 - b. There are two lengths of pin available and it is important to understand which is suitable for the prevailing ground conditions.
 - c. The brackets affixed to the fence: these must be securely screwed to the actual infrastructure/frame of the fence using at least 3 of the holes in the bracket, not just attached to the side of the fence. This is very important and TAs and Stewards should not be afraid to ask the course builder how the bracket is attached to ensure that it is attached to their satisfaction.
 - d. The brackets themselves: the brackets must show no signs of weakening from 'abuse' and so please can you check that the brackets are seemingly sound? It is felt that the brackets are possibly being weakened inadvertently when the fences are moved around and the brackets are perhaps being bent or not cared for as well as they might be which then causes them to weaken.

2. **Posts:** clearly posts which are used to secure portable fences must be of sufficient substance, must be well into the ground and must be secured to the actual fence. There should be posts at the back of the fence and also on the front. It is recommended if possible that posts are driven in using a tractor-mounted post driver because they are firmer than when dug in.

3. **Spirafix v Posts:** when the base spread of a fence is smaller than its height it is recommended to use posts if at all possible although it is recognised that this is not always possible.