



Survive The Masters as a working amateur

Kady Hobbins

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How to survive the Spruce Meadows 'Masters' as a working amateur:

- . Take the entire week off. If you think you're going to get work done in the evenings, you're sorely mistaken.
- . Never forget your barn pass.
- . Embrace the fact that you'll likely end up being the only person in a warm-up ring without an Olympic, Pan-American or World Equestrian Games Medal under your belt on at least one occasion throughout the week.
- . Buy some Voltaren. You'll need it for your sore neck after gluing your eyes to aforementioned elite riders and horses as they work a few 1.50 oxer-oxer combinations into their morning school. No biggie - you were going to do that too, McLain. Later.
- . If you complete the course, give yourself a pat on the back.
- . If you don't complete the course, still give yourself a pat on the back. Lucky for you, the Masters serves food and alcohol from like, 100 different countries.
- . Try not to fall over if Bezie Madden, Ian Millar or Eric Lamaze says "good morning" to you at Time Faults Pub while you buy your breakfast sandwich. Instead, return the sentiment and freak out back in your non-FEI barn area where they definitely won't see you.
- . Don't go to the Thursday night riders' party if you show in the first class the Friday morning. If you ignore said advice, drink lots of orange juice.
- . Watch out for true-to-scale trolleys that look like CP trains, heavy horse carts, errant shopping bags blowing in the wind, and marching bands. All could mean disaster on your otherwise-peaceful hand walk with your horse.
- . Go shopping.
- . If it snows, never fear. Spruce Meadows has lots of shovels and golf carts to ensure the ring will be cleared efficiently. Taking part earns you a good time, some free pizza and maybe a few snowballs to the face.
- . It's a looooooong way from the barn area to the International Ring. Try not to incur an injury that requires crutches to get around. Possibly speaking from experience, here.
- . Horse coolers double as great blankets at the ring on cold mornings.
- . Enjoy the experience, regardless of how you place. Or don't place.
- . And most importantly, take in all of the international classes you are able to. Watching the BMO Nations' Cup, the ATCO Electric Six Bar and the CP International is probably every rider's dream, and you're living it. Enjoy!