



The Show Horse Council Of Australasia proudly presented The "GALLERY EQUINE Grand National Championships" at SIEC Equestrian Centre from 5th to 8th April 2017. This year marking the 25th Silver Anniversary of the Grand National, A beautiful 25th logo was designed by Tova Youlden from QLD to mark such a special year. The Event again lifting Show Horse competition to another level. SHC members all over Australia and New Zealand spent the year chasing the qualifying win; the best of the best then coming together to compete for the coveted titles on offer.

Under the direction of our International Judges who arrive with no preconceived ideas, every horse and rider combination has the opportunity to show their best work in what was the most spectacular arena to showcase their horses. As a committee, we try to give them the best possible experience at the event, and I think we achieve that. Our three Judges visiting from the UK were Mrs Kirstine Douglas, Mrs Shelley Perham & Ms Anna Levy. All Judges were very impressed with the high standard of competition, being very complementary to the capabilities of our child riders and the level of presentation of our horses. Their highlight was the Saturday evening Grand Champion events.

This year the theme began with an image by Lorelle Mercer of last year's wining Saddle Horses that had a magical fantasy effect, from there the theme of the Arena was born. The wrought Iron Entry featured again and a spectacular Chandelier filled the huge ceiling area. Anna King based the horse shoe garden design to follow the soft curving lines of the back walled Mirrored Arches, complemented by a beautiful fragrant garden. As everything started to go into the arena the excitement grew, I cannot thank Anna and Steve enough for working with the Show Horse Council, they deliver exceptional designs of excellence. Sandra James created a special 25 year memory board that was on display during the event.

Leanne McDowall ran the BBQ on Tuesday night. The South Australian contingent dined, chopped and served; Bruce Flood did the shopping assisted by Helen Kirton with the meat order. This night was very well received by competitors with a really party atmosphere, Karaoke, a Photo booth, Popcorn & Fairy floss for all, made for a fantastic night and a great time to catch up and socialise in a fun filled environment.

This year we again held Children's day on Wednesday. Entries for these events had increased greatly from our 2016 event, and it offered our junior members a special day just for them. All classes were strongly supported and many happy smiling faces left the arena with beautiful gifts from Ponyella Design in Qld, ribbons, twinkling garlands and their trophy rugs.

The Announcing team of Chris King & Lori Howell never missed a beat over the four long days & nights. The Council also employed the services of Australian Equine Network to Live stream the four days of competition, this again proving to be popular with members who were not able to attend the event. Over 80,000 people viewed the Championships, allowing exhibitors, family and friends the opportunity to take in the atmosphere and see the results as they happen from their living rooms. Carol Heuchan in her role as announcer of the Livestreaming interviewed many experienced Show Horse Industry figures, this giving an insight into the action taking place on the arena.

The Saturday night Dinner had a record 240 guests to be seated, the area looked very inviting and I received some lovely comments from guests as they arrived. Thank you to Michelle Panetta who created the most stunning Floral displays on the tables. To think the busy little team put it together in a few hours is a feat to be proud of. I must say the best thing is to have happy, positive people around you, it's great to have a bit of a laugh and that keeps you going when you start to feel a bit flat.

The Evening entertainment started formally with Brittany Dalley performing a lovely rendition of Advance Australia Fair; a delightful & hilarious display by Hannah & her miniature ponies Crunch & friend followed. Country singer Kylie Gillies then entertained along with the unexpected appearance of a Flash Mob arranged with great secrecy by Carol Heuchan.

2017 saw the Five Grand Champions classes, & Mini Champion Pony included on Saturday night Final program, the culmination of four days of competition. The COUNTY SADDLES Night Of Stars was spectacular with Andrea Merry from SA winning a new COUNTY SADDLE, very generously supplied by Mel Waller QLD, and the Parade Of Champions

The "COUNTY SADDLES Night of Stars" was how we promoted it, and WOW but did the horses and riders deliver for us. Everyone was on such a high, huge congratulations go to all competitors who won through and put on such a show for the crowd that filled the stands at SIEC. The winners of the Grand Champions –The Douglas Family "Imperial Bonus" (Show Hunter), Sarah Ryan "Holly's Galaxy" (Saddle Horse), Tyler Kelly (Grand Champion Rider), Claire Schaefer "Picturesque Prince" (Champion Ridden Mini Pony), Ava Halloran "Gem Park Socialite" (Grand Champion Childs Ridden Show Hunter) & Tayla Berry "Calvin Park Dark Knight" (Grand Champion Childs Saddle Horse); all competitors delivering a polished workout to be awarded their Titles.

The Grand Champion winners take home cash, prizes, and special memories that they will have with them forever. Thanks must also go to these great sponsors - The Harcourt, McNamara Families & HM Garlands, J & R Equestrian, MG Bridles, Bamborough Pony Stud & Mark Bullen, Imperial Welsh Ponies, who put their financial support behind these Grand Champion classes.

Results will be sent out to all sponsors, I have already received many positive emails from both business and personal sponsors as well as competitors, it is a testament to all the hard work the committee and individual helpers put in to make the 2017 event such a success.

The Draw for a new HONDA JAZZ CAR, supplied by SUTTONS HOMEBUSH HONDA, was carried out with all Winners & Runners Up being eligible for the Draw. The Fricker Family from SA being the lucky winners to drive home a new Honda Jazz.

This event relies heavily upon the support of our event sponsors, The SHC is extremely fortunate to have Gallery Equine and our individual class sponsors who are very loyal to us, and continue to sponsor this event. I cannot thank them enough for coming along for the ride every year. For the third-year HM Garlands, (Philippa Harcourt) became involved with the Grand National supplying the most exquisite Garlands for both our winning Horse and Rider Classes. Each piece was an individual work of art, adorned in special jewels, these garlands will be treasured by the lucky winners as a keepsake of their win.

It was wonderful that we had many of the States supply people to help us in an official capacity, their assistance was invaluable. Greg Trembath SA, Denise Fenwick SA, Jill Feilden SA & Donna Button & Oscar Graetz WA, Jo Moore QLD, Miranda Connaughton-Kerr, Nicole Morrison, Sharon Tipping, and the marshal area was very well manned on Friday & Saturday by team Victoria's Tony Norris and Dianne and Warren Worbys, with Di being injured after an accident at the back of the arena, we all wishing Di a very speedy recovery.

Leanne McDowall spent a lot of time assisting in the stabling office. The Bump in/bump out system was introduced and proved to be very effective for competitors and SHC, but it was made more difficult by the terrible wet weather on Monday & Tuesday, with the loss of the popular South Parking area.

The Show office is always a busy hub of activity, and was very ably manned by Roseanne Bowerman (who worked with me at SIEC from the Monday before the event) and Roma Stonestreet, who in my absence were the faces that dealt with all the competitors needs prior to getting into the classes. The Sam's family were there from beginning to end, still pulling down when everyone else had long gone.

The marshalling this year was very efficient under the direction of James Athanasoff on Wednesday & Thursday directing competitors; he was assisted by Jill Feilden, with Jo Maunder spending 4 days at the door, in contact with the announcer's booth. This is such a vital area, with these guys on their feet the whole time, out in the rain and heat, dealing with some challenging situations, trying to keep to the tight timetable.

Once they entered the arena our stewards Donna Button, Ashley Roberts, Tim Hadlow, & Greg Tembath assisted the Judges over the 35 events, all done under the watchful eye of our Ring Master Bruce Flood & assistant Ring Master Mark Kenzig who co-ordinated everybody to ensure the smooth running from ring control.

Nicola Donoghue was our chief Ribbon & Prize steward, sorting out many of the wonderful prizes the competitors took home as keepsakes from the Grand National, ably assisted by Jody Winning, Broni & Demi Sams, Jill, Denise & Greg.

Amanda Peters kept competitors informed with her handy stop watch & bell on timing. I had many lovely comments on Suz Worsley's background music. Lorelle Mercer Photography, Lisa Gordon & Danni Milligan & Horse Deals were on hand throughout to capture the magic moments while Scott Williams Productions captured all Classes on DVD.

A great variety of Trade Stands were on hand to supply a huge array of equestrian clothing & gear; in response to previous requests the Council hired an EFTPOS facility which dispensed over \$60,000 during the event; thus proving its value in benefit & convenience for patrons & stall holders.

The 2016 SHC Volunteer Awards went to Roma Stonestreet with Helen Kirton & Nicola Donoghue joint runners up; tallied by most days attended as volunteer at four different events over the year. All our volunteers are much appreciated for their support at SHC events.

The Grand National is a massive undertaking, getting bigger and I hope better every year, to become the most recognised Show Horse event in the Southern Hemisphere, without the help of the people mentioned from the States & Clubs I could never make all my own plans and dreams for this event happen.

We will be reviewing the timetable for 2018 to better deal with the numbers of Horses & Riders competing. Personally, I hope all members have had a wonderful experience, that our great sponsors are proud to have their name associated with the event, the Show Horse Council continues to grow & thrive with horse exhibitors aiming to qualify and compete at THE GRAND NATIONAL.

Leonie Roberts- Show Secretary.