



GALLERY EQUINE

Grand National Championships 2014

“THE SHOW THAT EVERY BODY WANTS TO COME TO” was how the Grand National 2014 was described to me in a thankyou from a professional competitor following this year’s event and I think for the Show Horse Council that is the greatest complement you can receive.

Twelve months of planning by the committee comes together for four days of events; members take many days off work and spend thousands of dollars to make the trip to Sydney, the effort that goes into each horse and rider to qualify them to compete is a monumental task in itself. As a committee we try to provide all with the best possible experience at the event and I think we did achieve that. 2014 saw the introduction of the Grand Champions, this lifted the show to a much higher platform. Anna King and I first meet in January to start the concept of the arena, throwing around some ideas I contacted an events company who purchased the furniture from the Great Gatsby movie set. Thus the theme was in place to create the most beautiful elegant arena we have presented to date. The council is incredibly lucky to have the creative genius of Anna King Landscape, and her partner Steve Simpson who transformed SIECs main arena into something really magical. I had so many positive comments from sponsors and competitors and look forward to what we can present in 2015. Art work for the event was beautifully produced by Toni McMillan (Nettle)

This year we had three lady Judges visit from the UK, Jo Bates returned some 20 years after she first judged at the Grand National while for Sarah Chapman & Sarah Gwilliam it was their first visit to Australia. 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 events, all judges had such a thrill riding in the vintage car; the elegant setting for the Dinner adding to the more formal proceedings of the evening.



“Night Of Stars” was how we advertised it, and WOW did the horses and riders deliver for us, everyone was on such a high. Huge congratulations to all competitors who qualified and put on such a show for the crowd that filled the SIEC stands. The first three winners of the Grand Champions -The Labahn Family **“Owendale Mr Perkins”**, The Borg Family **“Sonos Park Skyes The Limit”** & Christine Lambert not only take home cash and prizes, but memory’s that they will have with them for ever.



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Thankyou also must go to the Grand Champion sponsors The Harcourt, McNamara Families & GCE, Horses In Action Competitors Assoc. S.A. and Graham Colvin from Salvage Solution who had faith in this new concept and put their financial support behind these classes.

Grand Champion Hack "Sonos Park Skyes The Limit"



Rider 12yrs & Under 15yrs – Winner Casey Russell



Special thanks go to Major Sponsor "Gallery Equine" and all our supporting Sponsors, Results were sent out to them on Monday and the number of positive emails back from both business and personal sponsors is a testament to all the hard work the committee and others put in to make the 2014 event such a success. This year we moved Children's day to the Sunday, Entries for these events nearly doubled from 2013. After three days of other events competitors were still very eager at 8.00am on Sunday presenting for a full day of events. Classes were strongly supported and many happy smiling faces left the arena with beautiful ribbons, garlands and rugs

Special awards on the night were made to Equal Winners of the 2013 SHC Volunteer Award - Amanda Peters & Nicola Donoghue & the Runner Up John Paget. We also honoured our long standing First Aid providers Bob and Annette Smart, who after many years have decided to retire. They have become good friends of the Show Horse Council and their presence at our events will be missed. The state of South Australia certainly stepped up and their assistance was invaluable in providing five helpers. Greg Trembath as Chief Measurer arrived on Tuesday and with Greg Crocker's assistance they measured about 60 horses besides filling many other duties. Denise Fenwick (backed up by Helen Kirton) was very busy escorting horses down to be drug tested- "29 Horses were tested over four days", Jill Feilden assisted in the ring, BBQ and any wherever help was needed.

Sandra James was BBQ queen on both Wednesday & Thursday night, the South Australian contingent diced and chopped, served, and collected money. Bruce Flood did the shopping assisted by Helen Kirton who picked up the meat. This night is always well received by competitors and is a great time to catch up and socialise in a relaxed environment prior to the completion starting on Thursday. Judy Chapman kindly ferried our judges around the sights prior to the show.

The Show office is always a busy hub of activity, and was very ably maned 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; with Sandra James carrying out her treasurers role throughout the event.



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The marshalling this year was very efficient under the direction of James Athanasoff, he was assisted by Adrian Stonestreet and Mark Leslie; this is such a vital task with these guys on their feet the whole time, out in the rain and heat, dealing with some challenging situations and trying to keep running to the tight timetable. The announcing team of Chris King assisted by Lori Howell kept things rolling and the mood high.

In the Ring Donna Button from WA, Geraldine Crocker from SA, Ashley Roberts and John Paget (Assistant Ringmaster) stewarded for the Judges for the 32 events, all under the watchful eye of our Ring Master Bruce Flood who co-ordinated everybody to ensure the smooth running from ring control. Amanda Peters was event time-keeper, Nicola Donoghue Chief ribbon & Prize steward.

The nicest thing is to have happy, positive people around helping you, to be able to have a bit of a laugh keeps you going when you start to feel a bit flat. Greg Trembath in particular didn't stop from the minute he arrived till he went home early Monday morning, never saying NO to whatever task I asked of him although I do think he really did enjoy doing the flowers for the Saturday night Dinner with Ashley & Greg Crocker the Florist extraordinaire .

The Grand National is a massive undertaking, growing bigger and I hope better every year becoming the most recognised Show Horse event in the Southern Hemisphere. Without the help largely provided by the people mentioned above, particularly from SA, WA, Hawkesbury & Hills, Central Coast & Lower Hunter Clubs in NSW I could never make all my own plans and dreams for this event happen.

The above images were kindly provided by Sponsor SWD Images (Suz Worsley-Deacon)with Suz & Lorelle Mercer both being on hand throughout the Event to capture each exhibitors ride while Scott Williams Productions (02.4393 2588)was recording dvd's of all rides also. Statistics from Sponsor Horse Deals website brought to readers via Southwood Saddlery were over 11,000 page views over the 4 days, the coverage included results throughout each day and Photo coverage each night by Julie Wilson. Facebook Photo's from the coverage were seen by at least 40,000 viewers each and 'shared' and 'liked'. For those not able to attend in person a 4-page spread from the Grand Nationals will be included in the upcoming May Issue of Horse Deals.

Personally I hope all members have had a wonderful experience competing and that our sponsors are proud to have their name associated with the event. It is hoped that The Show Horse Council continues to grow & thrive so that SHC members who want to qualify to compete at THE GRAND NATIONAL can continue to have the opportunity do so.

Leonie Roberts
Show Secretary.



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