

The Show Horse Council Of Australasia conducted its Sydney based Grand National qualifier on the 3th, 4th of February at Hawkesbury Showground Clarendon. Over 330 horses and 150 Riders entered this year. The first year we held Pacific Coast at Horsecworld we only had 175 horses, so it is very rewarding to see the popularity of Pacific Coast growing each year after year. With the Weather Bureau forecasting very high temperatures on the Sunday, the decision was made to condense the show into a two day programme, starting earlier and with Sunday's classes being held into the night. This proved to be a popular move with members with the Hack competitors expressing their gratitude with the committees forward thinking strategies. Precautions were taken by the Council with a Vet & First Aid services being in attendance over both days, it's great to report there were only minor incidents recorded.

Friday's events Newcomers, Preliminary and the Children's classes held in two rings, Classes were well represented in quality and numbers with the children's classes being very strong, congratulations to the children winning classes and qualifying early for the 2018 GN event. The two Leading Rein classes held at the conclusion of Friday events had good numbers in both classes, these were then followed by two riders & Two Hack classes; the lights were only on for an hour and we were finished by 8.30pm. Friday's cool day & light rain was welcomed by all whom attended; some of the numbers were affected however by the forecasted weather conditions.

This trend did affect Saturday's numbers but Classes were still well supported; the weather was very pleasant in the morning until the cloud burnt off at Lunch time with the afternoon heating up; overall this was managed with planning & care taken to avoid overheating of all connected to the competition. Saturday classes finished by 8.00pm allowing competitors to travel home and enjoy their Sunday of relaxation.

Each competitor in the horse classes was given an individual work out, emulating the conditions the horses would face should they compete at the Grand National. The Judges expressed the standard of Horses & Riders was extremely high which showed as final results in several classes being very close. Four judges officiated for the show- Mrs Rosie Metherall (Vic), Mrs Lisa Cleary (NSW), Mrs Julie Crisp (NSW), & Mr Terry Van Heythuysen (VIC), all working very hard over two very long & full days of events, the four judges cut a very elegant figure out in the arena having gone to so much trouble to dress for the occasion. The Show Horse Council thanks them for giving up their weekend to spend with us.

Thanks must go to our Major Sponsor Karen Hendricks from SAIGE Accountants & Financial Planners, whom sponsored this event for the fourth year. We also have loyal class sponsors whom donate in many ways to offer great Class winner prizes and products; the Skinner Family even donating carrots for the Children's ponies. I think everyone will agree the Garlands, Rugs & Ribbon combinations looked amazing, HM Garlands from Queensland produced some exquisite pieces for the very lucky class winners. Without this very generous sponsorship from businesses and individuals the SHC could not run such great events for all our members.

The show is run by a dedicated committee who work tirelessly to deliver this event. Many people giving up three days to ensure the smooth running of the event. My personal thanks go to Nicola Donoghue, Jodie Winning, Tina Harding and Demi Sams for stewarding. Roseanne Bowerman ensured the results were displayed quickly and accurately, and James Athanasoff who did an amazing job out in the marshalling area over two very long days. Joe Charnock assisted Helen with measuring & drug testing, Amanda Peters & Chris Chapple were on timing of classes. Michelle & the Sam's family spent many days behind the scenes, their help is very much appreciated by myself and the Council. Special mention to Bruce Flood, Roma Stonestreet & Helen Kirton who all put so much of their time into the running of all of the Councils events. The Show Horse Council is lucky enough to have people who give up their time for the love of the sport.

Finally, thank you to our members for supporting the Pacific Coast Championships, by travelling such a long way and bringing your beautiful horses you have helped this event become a truly prestigious event to compete at. I hope you enjoyed yourselves and congratulations to those combinations that qualified to compete at the 2018 Grand National.

Leonie Roberts, SHC Show Secretary.