

The

December 2015

SLIDER

Official publication of
Reining Australia

**We are
Family**

**QLD State Reining
Championships**

Mel

Pekarra Dazzling Deputy and Ben Ryan
2015 Queensland Open Futurity Champions
Photo: Mel Cruden

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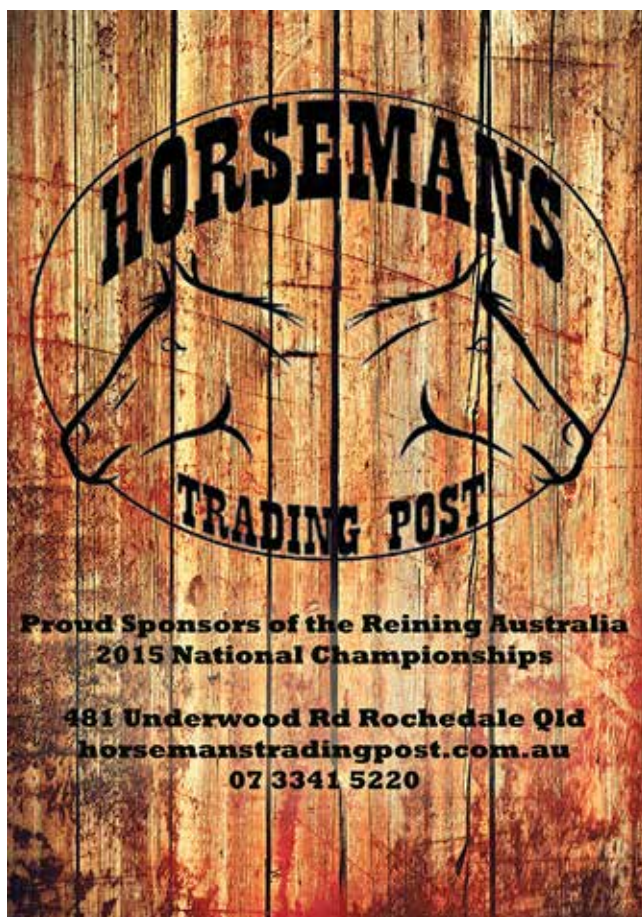
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WELCOME TO OUR 2015/2016 SPONSORS

This is the first issue of The Slider for the Reining Australia sponsorship year of 2015/2016.

We would like to welcome our 2015/2016 sponsors to the reining family and express our appreciation for their support starting at the Nationals in 2015 and continuing through a new and exciting year in reining.

The contributions of our sponsors make it possible for Reining Australia to stage a great national show and to maintain our programs - member services, youth camps, judges' seminars and promotions - throughout the year.

Thank you all for being an important and vital part of the sport of reining in Australia in 2015/2016.

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

- Queensland State Reining Championships
- We are Family

COMING UP IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- 2015 Gold Buckle Futurity and Reining Australia National Championships
- 2015 Reining Australia High Point Awards
- 2015 Reining Australia Standings
- Mare of the Year
- New NRHA Patterns



QLD STATE REINING CHAMPIONSHIPS

QRHA Committee

Photos: Mel Cruden

There was plenty of action under beautiful blue skies when the Queensland State Equestrian Centre at Caboolture and QRHA hosted the Queensland Reining State Championships and Futurity of 2015. Under the watchful eyes of judges Don McLaughlin from the USA and Australian judge Rob Lawson, competitors came from near and far to compete over four days for a share of \$40,000 worth of cash and prizes.

Reining continues to grow at all levels across the nation and this event saw record numbers of horses and competitors. There was also an international flavour with a number of riders and owners from New Zealand and New Caledonia supporting the show.

Queensland beginner riders are keen and 30 of them entered the spirit of a big show in the first class on Wednesday's warm up program. Tracee Sharp and Kurt Melling tied for first place, narrowly defeating Amelia Baker by half a point. Only half a point separated Amelia from the 6 fellow competitors who lined up together to fill the remainder of the minor places and toss for the ribbons.

A total of 52 and 33 horses respectively made use of the practice opportunities in the Senior Horse and Junior Horse classes. Noel Watson on Einstein Flashy Jac and Jason Melling on Predator, Warren

Backhouse on Lil Nu It All and Rod Osborne on Kitten Revolution won the Open and Non Pro divisions of these non-sanctioned events.

Thursday saw the start of the Championships proper with the Novice Horse, Non Pro, Prime Time Non Pro and Green Rider classes. In the Novice Horse Open, Noel Watson won both Level 1 and 2 with Fancy Stepping Hart Throb. Little Hootchy was piloted by Greg Walker to take the buckle in the Novice Horse Non Pro Level 1. Kylie Norman riding Ronlea Docs Fancy Magic took out Level 2.

In a field of 32 riders, Brooke Sestero on Jessies Dreamchaser won Green Rider Level 1 followed by Christophe Coulson and Amelia Baker in a tie for second place. Grace Christoffel and Lethal Katie won the blue ribbon in Green Rider Level 2. Thea Griffin and RKN Whizz Bang trounced the field in the Prime Time Non Pro.

Friday proved to be the big day of the show. From early evening into the night, the grass area alongside the QSEC warm up pen took on a festival atmosphere with strappers and family gathered to watch and encourage the riders in two of the highlights of the Queensland Championships, the Non Pro Futurity and the Derby. This year, the Open was run concurrently with the Derby, adding to the excitement and expectation.





Erin Neylon and Lilmissnoital won the Non Pro at the Queensland State Championships with a score of 143.5.



Above: Grace Christoffel and Lethal Katie won Green Rider Level 2 and went on to win the champion's buckle in the Youth 13 years and under class.

Right: Noel Watson and Fancy Stepping Hart Throb took out first place in the Novice Horse Open Level 1 and Level 2. Success evaded them by half a point in the Open Futurity later in the week.



Above: Greg Walker and Little Hootchy, winners of the Novice Horse Non Pro Level 1.



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Photo Julie Wilson

Julie Wilson



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QLD STATE REINING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Non Pro Futurity and Joyce Olsen Memorial trophy was won for the second year running by Errol Thomas, this time on Shiney Lil Jack. Greg Peters came from New South Wales to take out the Intermediate and Limited divisions of the Non Pro Futurity on Okies Fancy Step.

The feature event on Friday night was the combined Thomas Arena Products Open Derby and the Backhouse Training Stables Open. And what a feature event it was with the young horses taking on the seasoned campaigners.

Tania Powell on Tanalous Fancylikemedad won the Intermediate and Limited divisions of the Open Derby. Showing he has lost none of his class over the summer break, last year's Futurity winner, Lil Nu It All, ridden by Warren Backhouse took out the Open Derby title.

Lil Nu It All also won the Open champion's buckle with Scott Burnett on De Termination and Yves Cousinard on Spicy Little Step sharing the reserve position.

Lil Nu It All was bred and is owned by Dennis and Erin Neylon of Neylon Performance Horses. Erin had earlier in the week taken out the prestigious Non Pro event on the dam of Lil Nu It All when she rode Lilmissnoitall to one of the show's high scores with a powerful run to blow away a top class field.

The Non Pro Derby went to co-champions Melanie Lindsay riding Determinated and Rod Osborne and Kitten Revolution. Kitten Revolution and Rod Osborne also picked up first place in the Intermediate division and Kathleen Murphy on Checkout Hollywood took home the buckle for the Limited division of the Non Pro Derby.



Above: Brooke Sestero and Jessies Dreamchaser.

Below: Greg and Carolyn Peters and Okies Fancy Step with their sashes and buckles from the Non Pro Futurity Limited and Intermediate divisions.



Above: Errol and Gita Thomas and Shiney Lil Jack with the Champion's trophies after winning the Non Pro Futurity.

Below: Tania Powell and Tanalous Fancylikemedad, winners of the Intermediate and Limited divisions of the Open Derby.



QLD STATE REINING CHAMPIONSHIPS



Warren Backhouse and Lil Nu It All (Neylon Performance Horses), 2015 Thomas Arena Products Open Derby champions and 2015 Backhouse Training Stables Open champions with a score of 150.5.



Mel Lindsay and Determinated, 2015 Thomas Arena Products Non Pro Derby co-champions.



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QLD STATE REINING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Saturday night featured the Saunders Performance Horses Open Futurity. As usual the competition was very tight with Ben Ryan showing great composure in taking out his first State Open Futurity Championship on the very impressive Pekarra Dazzling Deputy. Nipping at his heels and half a point behind, the reserve position was shared by Fancy Stepping Hart Throb ridden by Noel Watson and Crystal Park Reys Time ridden by John Wicks.

Ben also won the Intermediate and Limited divisions of the Futurity with David Manchon and Moranjee Lethal Reward filling the reserve position in both these divisions. Congratulations to Ben and his partner Tamika Reid of Ryan Performance Horses. The win showed that all their hard work was paying huge dividends.

In other events, Angela Glover shone in the Michelle Halliwell Memorial Ladies event riding Snippin Cash to win the beautiful garland and prizes. De Termination showed his versatility by winning the Limited Open with Michelle Burnett before being handed over to Scott Burnett again for a win in the Intermediate Open.

Riding in one of her first big reining shows, 11-year-old Amelia Baker showed great style in winning the Freestyle and the Rookie Level 1. The more mature Paul Sharp on ME Lil Mercedes Chic took out the Rookie Level 2.

Bayley Lowe, riding the little champion horse Micro Chip, won the Graham Hargreaves Memorial Trophy for Youth 14 to 18 years for the second time. Micro Chip had earlier carried mum, Karen Lowe, to a comeback win in the Intermediate Non Pro. Grace Christoffel won the Youth 13 and under on her lovely mare, Lethal Katie.

All in all it was a fantastic show and one of the biggest held by the QRHA committee. The committee would like to thank the competitors, volunteers, spectators and sponsors who made it all possible. Until next year –

Keep Riding – Keep Sliding!



Above: Rob Lawson (judge), Kathleen Murphy and Checkout Hollywood and Don McLaughlin (judge).

Left: Kitten Revolution and Rod Osborne, Thomas Arena Products Non Pro Derby co-champions and winners of the Intermediate division of the Non Pro Derby.



Ben Ryan and Pekarra Dazzling Deputy (B. Ryan, S&T Reid), 2015 Saunders Performance Horses Open Futurity champions. The combination also won the Intermediate and Limited divisions of the Open Futurity.



Above: Karen Lowe and Micro Chip added to the buckle tally with a win in the Intermediate Non Pro.

Left: De Termination and Michelle Burnett with Tim Hoffmann (QRHA President) show off their sashes and buckles for wins in the Limited Non Pro and Limited Open classes.

QLD STATE REINING CHAMPIONSHIPS



Above: Paul Sharp and ME Lil Mercedes Chic.

Left: Tim Hoffmann and announcer Peter McCauley present the Graham Hargreaves Memorial Trophy for Youth 14 to 18 years to Bayley Lowe and Micro Chip.



Scott and Michelle Burnett with De Termination and the Intermediate Open champion's buckle.

Kyley Norman and Ronlea Docs Fancy Magic, winners of the Novice Horse Non Pro Level 2.

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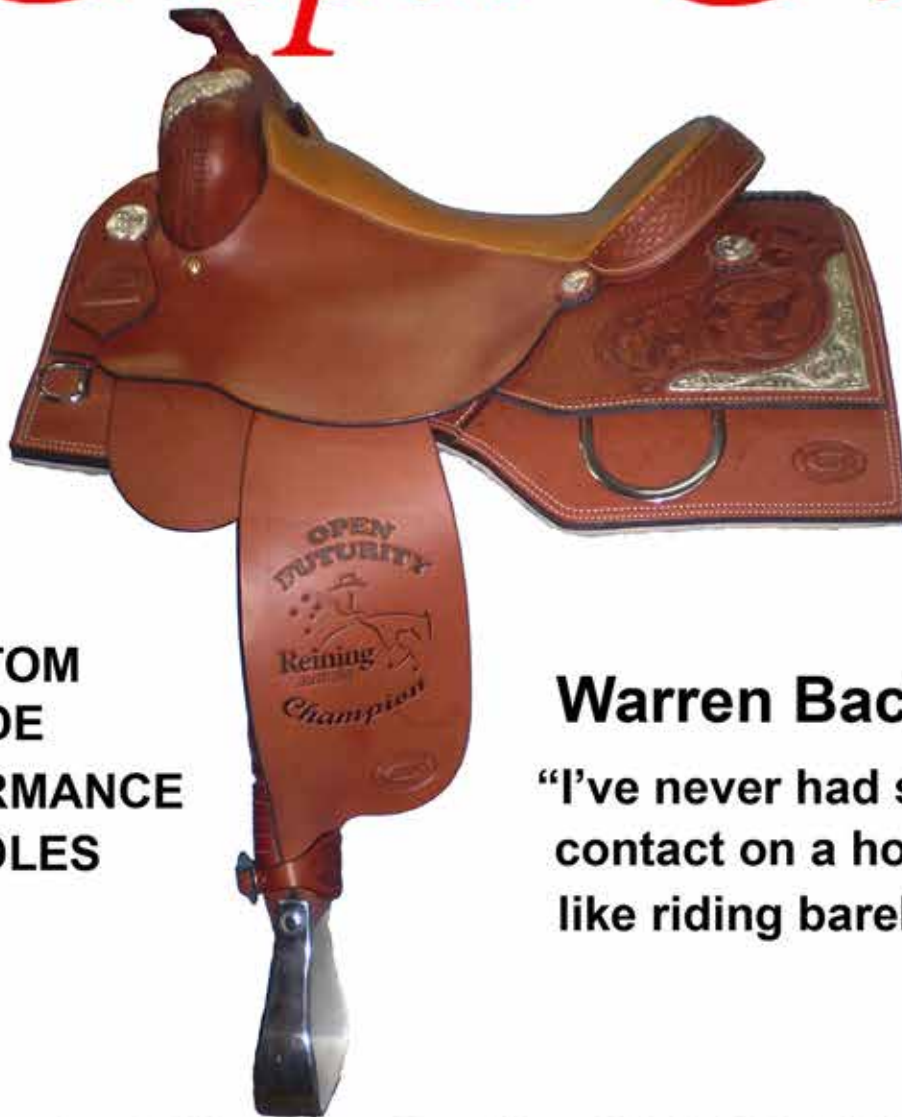
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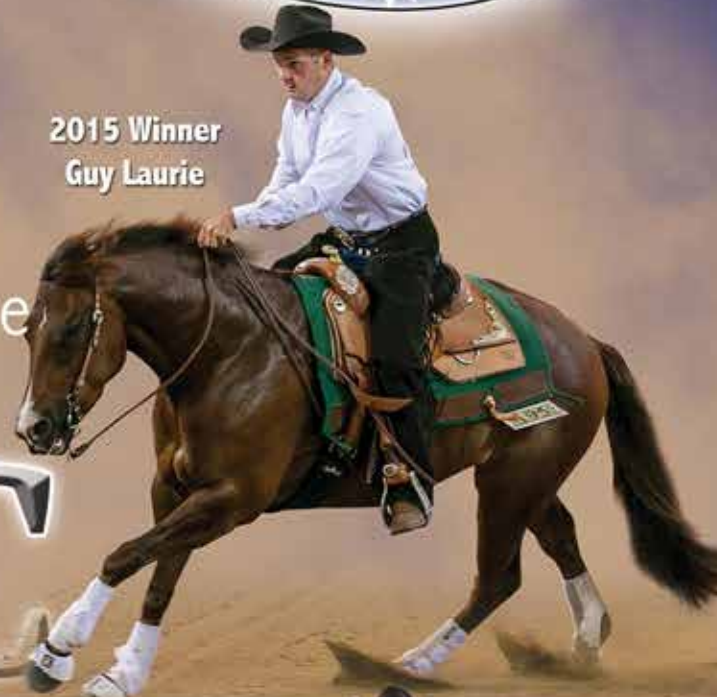
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WE ARE FAMILY

Gita Thomas

Photos: Family and friends

There is one word that you can use to describe reining horse enthusiasts — and that's loud. They yell, they whistle, they laugh, they cheer and they passionately support their sport and the people and horses within it. Regardless of who is competing at the time, you will hear people from all over hollerin' and hootin' their enthusiasm and encouragement.

There is always plenty of laughter and shenanigans going on, and the fun and friendly atmosphere surrounding the reining family is part of the reason the sport is growing in size year after year.

So when something bad happens to a fellow reiner, what is the first thing that happens? Their mates rally. The reining horse fraternity digs deep, providing both financial and emotional support for their friends in the industry. Ready to help at a moment's notice, this special group of people go out of their way to ensure they can help with whatever hardship is being experienced.

There are stories of life-threatening illness, severe drought and the loss of cherished horses bringing together an already tight knit group of people to gather round and support their fellow reining horse enthusiasts.



Brendan and Joanna Manz: If it wasn't for the support of my hubby Brendan, family, close friends and my reining family I would not be where I am today.



Joanna Manz was determined to keep riding.



FIGHT LIKE A GIRL!

Joanna Manz and husband Brendan are strong supporters of reining in Queensland, serving on the South East Queensland Reining Horse committee, diligently working and taking care of the members.

A week after winning a buckle at the 2013 Pacific Coast Reining Spectacular, Joanna went for a routine mammogram check-up, or so she thought. Instead, she was blindsided with the news that an aggressive cancer had been detected. This was a diagnosis that would change their lives.

Only weeks earlier Brendan had lost his grandmother, and two weeks after that his dad passed away, followed by Brendan's mum receiving the news that she too had breast cancer. "Knock us down... God, this all happened in just a matter of weeks!" said Joanna.

Days after her diagnosis, Joanna was admitted to hospital and faced a month of successive major surgeries. Six months of chemo began, and Joanna had to bring herself to the heartbreaking realization she was about to lose her beautiful, long blond hair. "It took one round of chemo and at day 14 my hair was falling out in clumps," said Joanna. She had her head shaved, and began to wear wigs and head pieces to get her by.

Shortly after her treatment, Joanna and Brendan were at the Queensland State Reining Championships. Brendan had entered some classes and Joanna decided she was going to ride as well—on the condition that she would NOT fall off!

Brendan got her horse ready and Joanna got on at the gate with her breast cancer pillow, to ride in a class or two. "What a great horse he was, he never missed a beat and looked after me the whole time. I was still very sore but was determined to ride out there in the show pen."

The medical treatment and loss of work had taken its toll on Joanna and Brendan. During the Friday evening of the show, an auction was held to raise funds to cover some of the financial hardship the couple were going through.

Queensland Reining Horse Association President Tim Hoffman said "We don't leave even one of our reiners behind," and graciously hosted the auction that evening. Everyone pitched in and over \$2,500 was raised.

With another three years ahead of her before she can call herself cancer-free, Joanna is determined not to let it beat her and has a new project horse coming along. "If it wasn't for the support of my hubby Brendan, family, close friends and my reining family I would not be where I am today." Joanna continues to live by her favourite saying: "Fight like a girl!"

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LET'S HELP LARRY

The Queensland State Reining Championships in 2014 was a normal show for Jolene King, a long time reining horse rider and diligent volunteer within the Reining Australia community. Jolene was known for her tireless work with the youth riders and for the embroidered trophy rugs and clothing supplied by her company Smarty Rugs.

Jolene was competing on Smoke N Calboy (Larry), a gelding by her stallion Lethal Lil Calboy. Jo and Larry were a formidable team having won many Derby championships in the lead up to this event. They were second out in the class but when Larry was doing his right circles, his front leg buckled.

Jolene knew there was something terribly wrong and immediately stopped. Larry was taken by float out of the arena with a shell-shocked Jolene by his side. The reining community assured her that they would be there to help her and Larry in any way they could. Ben Ryan in particular offered to be there every step of the way.

The next morning, Peter and Gill Gould drove Larry to Westvets Animal Hospital at Anstead where the X-rays confirmed the worst—Larry had broken his pastern.

Although the prognosis was not good for Larry making it back to the show pen, when faced with the choice of putting him down or finding close to \$20,000 to fix him, Jolene did not hesitate to choose the latter.

Larry was her best mate. Jo felt she owed her mate the chance to live his life out in comfort and peace, as a treasured retired member of the family. If he was willing to fight—then so was she.

Right: Jolene King and Smoke N Calboy in happy times.



Larry had been in hospital for two months and the astronomical vet fees were beginning to overwhelm Jolene although she was trying to keep up with the costs. A Facebook page was formed called “Lets Help Larry”, aimed at assisting Larry rather than Jo; she is a proud woman and the reining family knew she wouldn't be keen to accept a handout.

Within the first week there were over 600 likes and an online auction was started. Bidding was done online so the reining family and horse lovers around Australia could join the support, and they did. It was amazing to see how many people followed Jolene and Larry's story.

Ben Ryan was true to his word. He stepped up and organised a clinic to raise more funds. Ben and his team arranged a schedule, Errol Thomas booked the Dalby arena, Ben contacted fellow reining horse trainers and they had a full blown Super Clinic sorted in less than 2 weeks.

There was a huge show of support and rider numbers had to be capped. Ben Ryan, Warren Backhouse, Shaun Saunders, John Wicks and Scott Burnett all donated their time to deliver the two day Reining Super Clinic on the 25th and 26th October 2014. All money from riders and fence sitters went into the Let's Help Larry fund and there was a Let's Help Larry Canteen to raise more money.





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LET'S HELP LARRY (continued)

Bidding for the online auction items closed on the Saturday evening of the clinic with Tim Hoffman hosting the evening and auctioning other prizes. Later that night the reining team was able to announce that the Super Clinic and auction items had raised \$10,000 and a larger-than-life sized cheque was presented to a tearful Jolene.

It was a bittersweet moment. The week prior to the Super Clinic Larry lost the fight. He had contracted support limb laminitis (his good leg had given out trying to support the additional weight from the injured leg) and Jolene took him home to Mondure to be laid to rest.

With so many people sharing this journey with Jolene, it was an emotionally difficult time for everyone. Westvets vet Kylie Schaaf collected some hair from Larry and I got it sent to Equinelox to make up a pendant for Jolene. Ada Ellis found the right silver chain and we gave the gift to Jolene for her birthday.

While the memories of Larry will be with Jo forever, so too is the knowledge that the reining family was with her for every step of the heartbreaking journey.



Above: Gita Thomas and Ada Ellis share the love with Jolene (centre).

Left: Gita Thomas (left) and Ben Ryan (right) present the cheque to Jolene on behalf of the Let's Help Larry group of trainers and supporters.



Our awesome trainers: Warren Backhouse, John Wicks, Shaun Saunders, Ben Ryan and Scott Burnett at the Let's Help Larry Super Clinic at Dalby.

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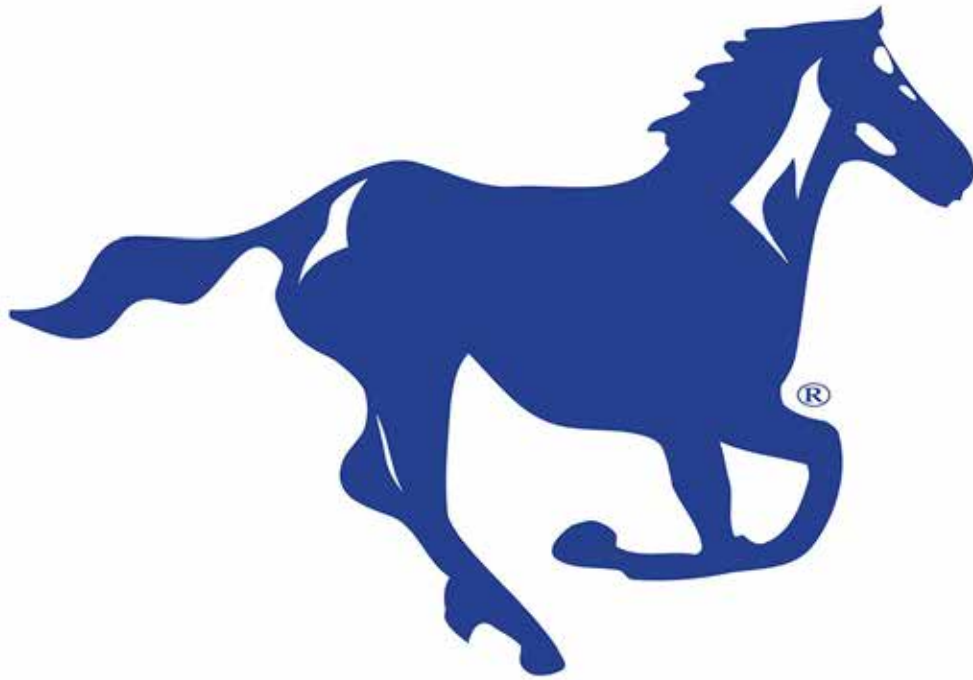
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BUY A BALE

Eastern states have enjoyed good seasonal rain, but parts of central and western Queensland are still in the grips of a crippling drought. Long-time reining horse competitors and breeders Cam and Julie Maxwell run cattle and sheep on Hazelwood Station, about an hour out of Longreach. They haven't seen worthwhile rain for nearly four years.

In February 2015, Warren Backhouse took a call from Cam, and from the way he spoke Wazza knew things were getting bad out there. Cattle and sheep were dying. Kangaroos were coming into their yard for water and dying. Their sheep were walking away from their newborn lambs.

Every morning and afternoon they would drive around the property to the dried up dams and shoot suffering animals bogged in the mud. The next day would roll around and they'd go out and do it all again. Julie and Cam had endured this day after day without complaint.

Warren called Errol Thomas and said, "I don't know what we can do, but we've got to do something to help out Jules and Cam." So the reining family once again swung into action.

Jolene King set up a secret "Buy a Bale" Facebook page to raise funds to buy hay for Hazelwood's stock.

The campaign started in early March. It only took a few days to raise enough money to buy 40 round bales of hay and to cover fuel costs for Wazza's Mack. Warren donated his time and the truck to deliver the load and Errol organised a donated trailer. By the 10th of March, the truck was loaded and on the road for the three-day round trip. Julie and Cam still had no idea what was in store for them.

There wasn't a dry eye in the house when Julie and Cam saw Warren and his infamous big blue-flame-painted Mack truck driving down their long driveway, bull dust kicking up in its tracks, loaded to the brim with life saving feed. In the truck were some special gifts: two baskets of personal items that Julie took around to her neighbours—to share the love with others struggling like themselves.

There were a few cartons of Coronas in the mix and some special wine for Julie. There was also a personalised package containing a pink embroidered rug along with many other little gifts for Julie to spoil herself. When Cam asked, "Why us?" the simple explanation he received was, "This is a hand up—not a handout."



Warren Backhouse and Cam Maxwell and the truck with the bales before they were unloaded.

BUY A BALE (continued)

Supporters back home on Facebook were eagerly waiting for news. The feedback they received was heartfelt and humble. "It was so touching to think that others were thinking of us in this time of drought and that we aren't alone, even though we live so far away," said Julie. Cam added, "This has been so wonderful for Jules and I, we just go about doing what we need to on the farm day in day out and this load of hay has helped us stop for a minute and take stock of life, like there are people thinking of us out here."

The donations kept on coming, so another load of hay was funded and once again Warren jumped in his Mack (straight after competing in the ARBC and Reining Australia National Derby in Dalby over the Easter weekend) and drove out to deliver the hay to Julie and Cam.

With still no rain in sight, the next step was finding agistment for their remaining cattle. The call was put out on the no-longer-secret Facebook page and Cam was able to find agistment for all of his breeders. With lambing season over and the cattle on agistment, Cam and Julie had some welcome breathing space knowing that their stock were safe and fed.




Warren and Cam roll out the hay.

Below: Cam enjoys a rest in the shade.



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SPLASH ROCKS AND ALWAYS WILL

Since a little girl I've had ponies, competing from the age of four right through into my mid 20's, and like so many of us, our careers take us away from the things we love.

Just four years ago I started back with my horses, taking up the sport of reining. As a surprise, my husband Errol bought a special little horse for me called Splash from Julie and Cam Maxwell. This beautiful boy arrived in Cam's body truck with a load of sheep, stepping off looking a million dollars.

Splash was to become a loved member of our family and an inspiration for me to get back into showing horses. With the help of Errol and Warren Backhouse, Splash and I had a year and a half of learning, fun and winning along the way.

He was so gentle with my little three-year-old boy Tobin who had never been near a horse and Splash looked after me every time I stepped on him. You know that bond you get with a special pony? Well, we had that.

In January 2013, Splash came down with colic and was rushed to Oakey Vet Clinic for treatment. We made the decision to operate after a 72-hour-long wait to see if he would improve. The operation went well but Splash didn't make it through his recovery, and we had to say goodbye. It was one of those gut wrenching moments in time that you hope will never happen to you, but for me it did.

The first person to call was Carol Backhouse. The Backhouses had trained and cared for Splash since his futurity year and were just as devastated about losing him. The day after we lost Splash, Errol said, "We are going up to see Wazza." All Warren said when he called Errol was "Bring Gita up to see us... and bring a float."

Right: Gita Thomas and her boy Splash.



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SPLASH ROCKS AND ALWAYS WILL (continued)

The following weekend, we headed up to the Backhouse stables. Cam and Julie Maxwell were there and it was fitting that they were witness to a very special act of kindness. Warren grabbed my hand and said, "I want you to meet a special pony." Warren in his kind way said, "She isn't going to replace Splash, no horse ever will. She's just a little kick around futurity pony called Bubbles." The little buckskin reached out of her stable to say hi to Tobin. How could I not fall in love with this beautiful kind-natured filly?

The kindness of Warren, Carol and their daughter Ashleigh was overwhelming; Ashleigh had been training Bubbles to show her in the 2013 Reining Australia Gold Buckle Futurity, and here she was stepping forward with her mum and dad to give me a well-bred, fully trained reining horse. That day I rode Bubbles and got to know her a little.

We stayed the night and I rode her again the following day before we loaded up and brought Bubbles home to Dalby. When I asked how this works, Warren and Carol just said, "She is yours, she will look after you," and this little mare did. We placed in every futurity that year and she is now a part of our family here at Sheron Park.

I know that Splash made an impression on everyone with his cheeky and loving nature. A fitting goodbye to such a beautiful pony is that "Splash rocks and always will".

Left: Gita and Splash.

Below: Tobin and Splash



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