

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW Team prepares for Toowoomba Pony Club Nationals



The NSW Team has been named and will compete at the Pony Club Australia National Championships in Toowoomba later this month.

NSW will be sending a team of over 50 riders to the Pony Club National Championships in Queensland next month.

The Championships are being held from the 17th – 22nd September 2017 at Toowoomba Showgrounds where riders from all over Australia will compete in Dressage, Showjumping, Eventing, Tetrathlon, Mounted Games, Formal Gymkhana and Quiz events.

NSW has a very promising team with Senior, Junior and Sub-Junior Teams in all disciplines. The last Pony Club National Championships were held in South Australia in 2015 where NSW placed 2nd Overall, however NSW President Wayne Pernice is positive the team can go one better.

“I am very confident that our riders will do us proud. They are some of the best young riders in NSW and I am sure they will all give 110%. The other States and Territories will need to work very hard to beat us,” he said.

“While I am confident our riders will do well in competition, I am just as certain that they will be wonderful ambassadors for NSW. It is a great honour to represent your State at a National competition and I am sure our riders will act accordingly. While the competition is important, ensuring all the competitors are safe and have fun is more important” added Mr Pernice.

For many of the 2017 NSW Team, their performances at this year’s State Championships held in Tamworth were a deciding factor of earning a place on the Team for the 2017 National Championships. Dannica Whitty from Mangrove Mountain in Zone 24 achieved great results at the State Championships, landing herself a position in both the Dressage and Formal Gymkhana Teams. Dannica says she was delighted to be selected for the Nationals: “It was after my Elementary test on the first day of State Dressage where I was sitting in first place that I had a great feeling I would make the team”.

“I’m really looking forward to competing for NSW, we have such an amazing team and I cannot wait to spend time with them all” she said.



Dannica Whitty competing at the State Showjumping Championships in July this year. Photo: Julie Wilson

Since the NSW State Championships in July, several Zones have organised Regional Schools with top Pony Club Instructors to provide extra coaching for riders. The schools provide an excellent opportunity says Dannica: “I was fortunate to be able to attend 2 excellent regional schools organised by Zone 24, including a Showjumping school coached by George Sana and Dressage coached by Sarah Venamore. I gained so much knowledge from both coaches and came out feeling very confident and ready to compete”.

Another NSW rider, Jessica Towns from Northern NSW is no stranger to the Pony Club Nationals, having competed in the Junior Showjumping Team at the most recent Championships held in South Australia in 2015. After placing 3rd at

the 2015 Nationals, Jessica has had a successful two years claiming both Runner Up and Champion at the NSW State Showjumping Championships in 2016 & 2017. This year, she will represent NSW in both Showjumping and Formal Gymkhana at the Toowoomba Nationals.

2017 marks the first year that Formal Gymkhana will be included as a National Championship discipline, Jessica says she is excited to give it a go: "This year's Nationals will be different for me as I will be competing in the Senior division for both Showjumping and Formal Gymkhana. I am really excited to compete in the Formal Gymkhana at Nationals to show the versatility of my horse and enjoy other events that I don't usually get to compete in".

This year's Pony Club Nationals will also host the AQUIS International Showjumping Challenge where teams from Australia and France compete for the International title.

Pony Club Australia announced their Team consisting of 4 riders including Jessica Towns, who says she is looking forward to the challenge: "Representing Australia is an amazing opportunity and I cannot wait. I have competed with the other successful riders in the Australian team before and am confident that the team will perform well".

"Practicing for an event where I will be riding an unfamiliar horse is a little tricky, however I have been working closely with my coach to quickly adapt to different horses by figuring out the changes in strides and ways to change my riding to suit each individual horse" she said.

The NSW Team will begin their travels to Toowoomba from mid next week, with the opening ceremony to be held on Sunday 17th September. Results, updates and photographs from the Nationals will be available through the Pony Club NSW Facebook page and website.

For more information, visit the Pony Club NSW Facebook page or website on www.pcansw.org.au

For more information:

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Jessica Towns will compete for NSW in the Showjumping & Formal Gymkhana Teams and also represent Australia in the AQUIS International Showjumping Challenge.
Photo: Julie Wilson