

DARWIN SHOW JUMPING CLUB Inc.

PRESIDENT: Gary Amory
SECRETARY: Karen Ruzsicska

Dear members, this month I am doing a fill in newsletter for the "girls". Grade 10 has kicked in (in a big way) and spare time is not so abundant any more.

Only a few more weeks now, and we are back out in the paddock kicking them over fences. Yippee, 'bout time. Probably just in time for the monsoon to decide "better late than never". But we will give it a good go anyway.

In this Newsletter:

- Notice for the first Freshman's Day for the year. We are trialing a new start time. We can't run on Sunday because of Pony Club, so we will see if Sat am works ok
- Updated grading's for Top End show jumpers
- Explanation of why we need to bring in a roster system.
- Write up of the Work Cup Final in Sydney.

Members are welcome to use the newsletter as a forum for their ideas, and thoughts. If you have anything you are chasing, or would like to sell, please feel free to advertise anything at all from kittens to horses in this newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP, HELPERS AND ROSTERS

This year we are going to have rosters for all of our fixtures. We are still going to have the girls at each of our shows, course crewing. But there are other jobs at those, and other fixtures that the club runs that need taking care of also.

The committee has decided that for the club to keep on going, the usual old workers cannot keep bearing the brunt of doing all of the work. There are others out there that have enjoyed work free jumping for years, and now it is time for those people to do their share.

The bigger the membership, the less often your name will come around. The earlier in the year your name can get on the roster, the more spaced out your jobs will be. **This year, no help – no ride.** It is as simple as that. Once everybody takes a job on once in a while, you will all see that if everybody helps, there isn't a job that is huge, except course crewing, and that is taken care of. The jobs are going to be alternated, so you will not get stuck with the same job each time your name comes around. Some jobs are over pretty quickly, others are a bit bigger, it will all be in the luck of the draw.

This year as well, we have taken a leaf out of southern clubs books, and no riding if you are not a member. Day membership will only be offered to riders from another town.

So ze moral of ze story, is to be gettink your membership in asap!!

DARWIN SHOW JUMPING CLUB Inc.
FRESHMAN'S DAY

12TH & 19TH MARCH
FRED'S PASS RESERVE

MEMBERS ONLY.

Freshman's Days are run by the club for the members to get their horses out and get them ready for competition. We start at a low height so that everyone can get their little or green horses going. From there the heights will keep on going up until every one has jumped whatever they want to.

Your entry money buys you 3 rounds at each height. We will have plenty of practice fences set up also, so that if your horse won't have a bar of a fence, then you can go back to the practice fences and come out again once you have prepared him again. The jumps in the course will not be lowered for you to jump or changed in any way if you can't get round, if this happens to you, it's back to the practice fences until you feel ready for another shot.

If you are not a member, you can join on the day, but you must join before you can ride. Forms will be available on the day. Forms are also available by e-mailing: darwinshowjumpingclub@telstra.com or by phoning Tracy, 89831853 or Karen 0417848545.

START TIME: 8.30am

COST: \$5.00 PER HEIGHT

DRINKS WILL BE ON SALE

**ROSTERED ON MEMBERS WILL BE ADVISED WELL IN ADVANCE,
IF YOU CAN'T MAKE YOUR TURN, IT IS UP TO YOU TO FIND A REPLACEMENT.
ABSENT ROSTERED ON MEMBERS WILL HAVE TO TAKE THEIR TURN AT
ANOTHER FIXTURE BEFORE THEY CAN RIDE.**

- - - - DID YOU KNOW? - - - -

St Valentine's Day has grown to symbolise the world's view of love – kisses, chocolate, romantic music, poems and pledges of devotion. It represents love's soft side. It's sweet, but not too strong.

In reality, nothing could be further from the truth. St. Valentine was a Roman priest and physician who clung to his faith in spite of persecution by Emperor Claudius Gothicus. It cost him his reputation. It cost him his career, it cost him his livelihood. Ultimately, when he refused to recant, it cost him his life.

The test of true love is not what is gained, but what you are willing to deliver.

ANOTHER WORLD CUP FINAL.....

The Lion King, Phantom of the Opera, Robbie Williams, Destiny's Child and Pacific League World Cup Showjumping Finals, just some of the wonderful events to experience.... When you live "down south".

Karen and I are just back from 3 days of showjumping at Horsley Park (Where the Olympics were held). Once again, I recommend a weekend like this to anybody that likes wonderful cool weather, endless shopping, great food and fantastic jumping. It is just so good.

Unlike in the Cricket, we keep getting our backsides whupped in the showjumping, and even a little island like New Zealand can send 4 riders over and whupp us in the trans Tasman Teams event.....again. Oh well. The Kiwis were very good, and deserved to win, jings, I nearly enjoyed watching non-Maori men in jods doing the Haka more than the showjumping, I must say, this sight cracked everyone up, Karen and I included.

There are lots and lots of your standard ex-racehorse showjumpers around, and there are some at the sharp end that are mind boggling, but I have to tell you that I couldn't believe the number of warmbloods that are jumping now. They make up the majority of horses in the high grades, and I couldn't believe how many are imported. Showjumping here is definitely getting more professional. Big, big money is being spent, and it is fantastic for the sport.



Pic: Alondra and Chris Chugg



Pic: CP Argentina ridden by Emily Blinkworth, winners of the Junior Championship

The warmblood horses literally take your breath away, they just boof over the jumps, sit up and snap away from the front rail, effortlessly bascule over the back rail....where ever it may be. However.....they still don't cop pressure like the thoroughbred. In the classes where there are two full on Grand Prix rounds to decide the winners, this is in a 3 day show, with qualifiers etc. the warmbloods get a little "over it", they don't "butter up" so well. The thoroughbred, he will cop bad riding, bad spots, rough hands and hard ground, and still have the heart, stamina and courage to make up for his lesser ability, and get the job done and take home the money. But don't be mistaken, one day the guns will totally know how to produce these warmbloods for a hard slog, and then they will be the only horse to sit on.

But they don't yet, and this weekend the huge blue 400mm wide FEI sash went to a big old thoroughbred who was originally rescued from the doggers, the huge Mr. Burns ridden now by Rod Brown, he just jumped a treat, the only horse who was able to get over Leopoldo Palacios' huge swimming pool, err, open water jump without stepping in it, clear in the second round, he just went around making fun of the science fiction 1.60m x 2.4m oxers that Leopoldo shoved in front of him. It was a sight that made you realise just how wrong it was to rob him of a start at Athens.

I know I rave on about horses of this calibre, but truly until you have seen one in action, - in the flesh - not just over a few jumps, but class after class, up against an Olympic course designer, with maximum size of fence allowed, and tight time allowed, you can't get it. They are so special. And the saying goes, "Nobody owns a truly great horse, because a truly great horse belongs to everybody". And that is true. So many people get inspiration and pleasure out of a champion, they really are a blessing. You must remember Leopoldo is used to building challenges for the best in the world every weekend, so at a show like this, the courses are tough, Leopoldo is paid the \$1400 a day, precisely for his talent to safely flush out the best horse on the grounds. And everybody there believed he did just that.

Second was Kristy Bruhn's Murph, what a good little boy he was for her. He was clear in the second round as well.

The horses that stuck in my mind were fantastic creatures that nearly had their back ends overtaking their front ends, they were so clever, and jumped feet above the fences. The Future stars class was won by a beautiful Biscay horse "Dust and Bones", he was lovely. Chris Chugg's two mounts, Vivant and Elondro the grey horse, such an outstanding type, both imported from Belgium, mega, such clever horses. Jeff Bloomfield's mount, again imported from Belgium, wow. Michelle Barerra's new horse Kyak Van Het Gravenhof, yum yum. And of course Vicki Roycroft's two horse, the little paint Copabella Visage and the huge chestnut Infatuation, what a machine, both imported horses, both real serious showjumping horses, it was an honour to watch them in action.

There is no beating Vicki Roycroft as the real deal rider. She is still the best rider Australia has to offer in the showjumping ring. She has a heart as big as the horse she is sitting on, never gets a wrong spot, and is just so focussed. And Chris Chugg still gets the Mr. Style award, he really could get a tune out of cart. Competitively he is not in Vicki's class, but he really has a handle on how to ride Warmbloods. Watching the good riders is good for you.

Vicki's horse snapped out of taking off over the third element of the treble combination in the world cup class, a 1.45m oxer, and flung her off, straight into the jump. A lot of horses stopped at this set of jumps, they were rustic rails and gear, with the wings made to look like big gum nut, seed pod thingies, they looked like big upright doggie doo's. Well we all know how much focus it takes to style up to a treble combination and have another go once your horse has spat you out stopping. Well she came out in the second round when it had gone up to 1.50m, and wider, it was oxer, two strides, vertical, on stride, oxer. She just sat up, clamped her leg on, and pointed that big chestnut horse at it, he jumped a and b, and slid into c. Around she goes again.....and this time he sails over the whole thing. Such good riding, such big.....er, strong nerves, all juniors should try and go and watch her ride if they ever get the chance. She is the real deal.

The Young Rider Championships was excellent with the young ones riding so professionally now, they really look good. The winner was a little girl whose dad had imported a horse from Belgium for her to ride. This is how serious they are. There was not beating that, it jumped everything mega, and then fairly galloped around to win the jump off. And I'm talking about 1.35m tracks for these kids. Gosh they were good.

Well that's all I've got to tell you all here about the show. Going to those shows makes you want to come back, sell all of the cockroaches and buy a decent horse. But then we all get over it, 'till next time.....

LAS VEGAS TICKETS

Tickets for the 2005 Dressage and Showjumping World Cup Finals to be held in Las Vegas at the Thomas and Mack Centre, April 20 to 25 can be ordered online at www.worldcuplasvegas.com. According to the organisers series ticket sales have already surpassed the total ticket sales from 2003, when the Budweiser Jumping World Cup Final last took place in Las Vegas.

HORSE GRADING

Hereunder I will list the current gradins of the horses that have been going around the last few years. If your horse's name doesn't appear, it means that it has nothing on the slate at all yet.

A few years ago, due to huge member demand, we increased the wins needed to get you from one grade to another. Maybe it's time to change, because 90% of horses have no wins at all in Elementary, yet compete in D grade. With our small numbers up here it is rare to find D grade class that qualifies as official, so therefore these horses have nothing on the board at all.

NAME	Wins	1m wins	Points	Grade
Barrakuda	2			Elementary
Count La Moola	1			Elementary
TS 21 grams (jumping jack flash)	1			Elementary
Manton Bekari	2			Elementary
Shancey (with Simon Jones)	1			Elementary
TC Warrior	1			Elementary
Trixie	1			Elementary
El gems Dante	3			Prelim D
Gumflat Cassanova	4		1	Prelim D
Just Curious	2	2		Prelim D
Pacman			3	Prelim D
Rivoli Miss Scarlet	3	2		Prelim D
Bob			4	D Grade
El Gem's Infinity Twist			12	D Grade
El Gem's Jiminy Cricket			11	D Grade
Miss Chico			0	D Grade
Poppy's Place			4	D Grade
PPP Fun & Games			5	D Grade
Rhaami			4	D Grade
Rush			7	D Grade
Specks Kootenai			15	D Grade

VALE PAUL DARRAGH

The show jumping world and especially the Irish equestrian community are mourning the recent loss of former show jumping star Paul Darragh. He died from a suspected heart attack at his home on January 3, aged 51.

He was a fierce competitor who was famous for being fearless against the clock when he was in his hay day. He was trained originally by the famous (for those learned folk out there) Iris Kellett, winning medals at three junior European Championships, including team gold at Hickstead in 1970. Miss Kellett was herself a legend as a coach, and horse woman.

Australians know of Paul Darragh because he was the rider to take on Peter Wagner's famous showjumping horse "WS Scandal" when it was sold to HRH Princess Haya of Jordan. Scandal was ridden in Australia by Chris Chugg and is said to be one of the best horses to ever grace a showjumping arena.

That's all for now.....Tracy.