



# NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

**APRIL 2013**

A Publication from RDA Australia Ltd

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## NATIONAL MEETINGS

### 5-7 APRIL, MELBOURNE

The RDA Australia National meetings were held in Melbourne over the weekend of April 5-7.

These meetings weekends are an opportunity for delegates from each State to get together and develop or consult on future projects, policies and resources for our RDA centres, coaches, volunteers and riders.

It was an extremely productive weekend with the Program Delivery Sub-committees consulting on an update to the Volunteer Information Booklet, new elective training modules for coaches and volunteers and a review of the Centre Accreditation process. More information from the Program Delivery committees will be included in the Coaches Newsletter this month.

State Presidents gave feedback to the RDA Board on future strategic directions for 2014 and heard a presentation from RDA's National Insurance Brokers, OAMPS.

The RDA General Meeting was held on Sunday and resolutions were passed regarding rider registration fees and payment of insurance for 2013 and 2014. There was also a presentation on changes to the RDA Constitution to assist RDA to operate more effectively in the future.

Sadly, at the conclusion of the meeting, RDAA Chair, Carol Bradley, resigned her position to take on the role of State Manager for RDA South Australia. We wish Carol the very best in her new endeavours.

Replacing Carol as RDA Chair will be John Stirk (NT) and Andrew Boeyen (SA) will replace John as Treasurer.

Congratulations to everyone on their new positions and the challenges ahead!

## CHAIR REPORT

I would like to publically thank Carol Bradley for her time as Chairman of RDAA. Carol's appointment to RDA South Australia means that she is unable to continue in her role. Her time as Chair has involved considerations of the respective roles of the state and national organisations and how we can best achieve our mutual goals.

There are undoubtedly challenges ahead due to the trialling of national disability insurance sites and a move to that legislation being implemented nationwide. It will undoubtedly impact on the provision of services at centres.

State delegates, staff of the state and national organisations and directors met in Melbourne on 7 and 8 April 2013. We are required to meet the challenges thrown up by governance protocols and need to be able to communicate effectively between all our members. The state bodies and national board were of a view that those are fundamental questions which need to continue to be canvassed and there will be time to do so over the weekend of the AGM on Saturday 19 October.

I look forward to the input of all of you so as to provide better services to our core constituency, the riders themselves.

*John Stirk  
Chair, RDA Australia Board*

## EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

I had the privilege last week of being reminded of what RDA is all about. Visiting a newly established centre in rural Queensland, I met the volunteers and riders of the Gemfields RDA Centre.

*Continued on page 2*

## EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT cont.

The Centre met with some difficulties recently when a small group of volunteers, frustrated with the policies and procedures of RDA, decided to break away from RDA Australia and continue operating as a separately incorporated riding club. The members of the Centre and the community rallied around to prevent this from happening, collecting 250 signatures on a petition supporting the centre continuing as an RDA centre. A Special General Meeting was held and I attended to speak about the benefits of operating as an RDA Centre. The vote to remain as an RDA Centre was passed by the members and a new committee elected. In speaking with people later that day, they all acknowledged the support and coordination efforts they receive from their State Association, the quality of training materials from RDA Australia and the guidance of the policies and procedures to help them set up and operate their centre. Most of all, they acknowledged the importance of being a part of RDA Australia and knowing that the policies are there to ensure that they delivered the best and safest service possible. I was very impressed with their eagerness to become a part of the RDA family and to prove themselves up to the challenge. Already they have schools with special needs students willing to travel a four hour round trip to participate in the RDA program. That alone speaks volumes about the value RDA provides particularly in rural and country areas and the reputation that has been established over 40 years of service to people with disabilities in Australia.

I was reminded recently that I have perhaps experienced all levels of the RDA organisation. I started out in a State Association as the Coaching Coordinator for South Australia and I am now heading up the RDA National Office. For a short time I was also an RDA registered rider following a serious accident in 2007 and it was the RDA program that made it possible for me to continue riding after recovering from my accident. Most importantly, it is my work as an RDA qualified coach that keeps me in touch with riders, parents and volunteers. Weekly I see the benefits of the RDA program and hear parents tell me about the progress they see in their child's abilities. I am grateful that I get to be a part of that process every week and I feel the same excitement as the volunteers of the Gemfields RDA as they start on their way to becoming an essential part of the community.

It is accepted practice that over time organisations must change to stay afloat in an ever changing environment. RDA is not alone in that regard and as a National organisation we must consider the coming changes and predict the impact of these changes on the organisation. Changes to the Workplace Health and Safety laws in each state and the introduction from 1 July of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (now known as Disability Care Australia) are just two changes that must be prepared for. Last month, the State Presidents and State Managers of 6 States met in Melbourne to discuss the future and strategic direction for RDA. There were many different opinions in the room about the way forward and more than a few contentious issues. There are many opportunities for growth and development in the future but before that can occur, RDA must become a more cohesive organisation with aligned strategic goals at every level of the organisation. The Gemfields RDA Centre has clear goals for the next 12 months and they will be relying on their State Association and National organisation to support those goals. Every year, like RDA coaches around Australia, I set goals for my riders. Those riders need a well governed centre with trained volunteers, supported by their State Association to achieve those goals. I envisage a future where all volunteers, centres and their State Associations work cohesively with the National organisation for the betterment of RDA. At the end of the day, this is what our riders deserve.

*Karen Aspery  
National Executive Officer*

### Diary Dates

April 30	Wintec Saddle Trade-In Promotion ends
May 13-19	National Volunteer Week
<b>May 15</b>	<b>RDAA Board Meeting</b>
May 18	RDA SA Mounted Games
May 31	RDA SA AGM
<b>June 14</b>	<b>National Volunteer Award Nominations Open</b>
<b>June 19</b>	<b>RDAA Board Meeting</b>
June 21-24	RDA Q State Conference
<b>July 17</b>	<b>RDAA Board Meeting</b>
<b>July 29-Aug 4</b>	<b>RDA Awareness Week</b>
July 31	National Volunteer Award Nominations close to State Offices

## COACHING REPORT

We have had a great response from almost 300 Coaches sending in their annual coach registration forms for 2013. In return they have received their 2013 Coach Registration Card and a brand new RDA specific Coaching Log Book to keep track of their updating activities. With the new database the National Office has adopted we will be able to better keep track of our current coaches as well as generate vital statistics for future planning.

April has been a busy month with national meetings held in Melbourne. We decided to combine the State Delegates meeting with the Program Delivery Meetings to save on costs and allow information to be shared across both meetings. It was a lot of work running both meetings back-to-back but well worth it.

The Program Delivery Committee (formerly known as the Disciplines Committee) is responsible for the development and review of coaching procedures and resources. The 2 day meetings were very productive with many outcomes being decided on, such as a new-look Volunteer Handbook and Volunteer Elective training packages, more user-friendly Accident Report Forms and standardised ramp designs and specifications to name a few.

The next event is a National Assessor Training Workshop. Date and venue is yet to be decided.

The new Coaching Syllabus has been selling like hotcakes which means lots of new coaches for RDA! Keep up the good work everyone!

*Sharon Nichols  
National Coaching Coordinator*

## NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

### CHANGE OF DATE

Due to a scheduling error at Werribee Park National Equestrian Centre, the dates of the RDA National Disciplines Championships have been slightly altered.

The competition will now start on Tuesday 12 November and finish on Thursday 14 November.

After the success of last year's 'Vaulting Come and Try' Vaulting has now been added to the program along with Dressage, Prix Caprilli, Jumping and Le Trec. This year we will also see a demonstration of Carriage Driving. The same night as the Carriage Driving demonstration will be the BBQ theme night and, following on from the demonstration, the Fancy dress theme of the evening will be 'someone who would use

a Carriage'. We look forward to seeing some great costumes!

Keep an eye out for more information about the Championships as it comes to hand. Entry forms will be available later in the year, but you can talk to your State Office, Centre or Coach about joining in.

## JUROX WORMERS



RDA Partners, Jurox, recently sent a delivery of 200

Promectin-Plus Mini wormers

for distribution to RDA Centres. This new 'mini' size wormer is an ideal size for smaller hands and makes worming simple and effective.

A share of the wormers was sent out in February and March to the State Offices who submitted their rider registration fees on time.

We are soon to receive our third shipment of wormers and these will be distributed to financial State members shortly.

Jurox are donating 10c from the sale of every Promectin Plus Mini Wormer to RDA. So far this year the donation has been \$1464.00.

All RDA Centres that have used the new mini wormers are invited to give feedback to Jurox on their Facebook page: [HealthyHorses](#)



## ASC STUDY – NEW WAYS TO ATTRACT

### MEMBERS



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

Australia's sporting clubs have the potential to recruit an

additional 3.8 million members if they consider new ways of delivering sport to Australians who want to get involved in club-based sport according to a new report released today.

Minister for Sport Senator Kate Lundy explained the report – Market Segmentation for Sport Participation – identifies the key motivators, needs and barriers that underpin Australians' decisions to participate in sport.

"Club based sports have lots of opportunities to grow," Senator Lundy said.

"Australians want different things from their sports clubs than they did 30 years ago and this research can help sport clubs to understand those needs.

For the full article, click [here](#)

## WINTEC SADDLE TRADE IN OFFER



Wintec Saddles, together with Horseland are proud to announce the hugely popular \$200 Wintec Saddle Trade-In Promotion commencing on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March and running through to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013. This promotion was last run in the middle of 2010 and generated huge interest and donations to local RDA Centres (over 150 saddles nationwide).

Wintec Saddles and Horseland both recognise that many Horseland stores have an existing relationship with a particular RDA Centre and unfortunately it is logistically and financially impossible for stores to coordinate saddle donations to all centres in each state.

Wintec Saddles is therefore generously donating a new **Wintec PRO All Purpose saddle (valued at \$1,149) to each of the state branches**, for a use the state branches feel fit, such as a raffle or auction.

### HETI REPORT

*\*taken from Spring 2013 HETI Newsletter*

Since the publication of the last newsletter, I flew to Taiwan with a multifaceted agenda. My first task was to go to the Therapeutic Riding Centre of Taiwan in Zhongli. I was there as a faculty member for HETI's Instructor training module. Once there, I met an incredible group of people who are dedicated to improving all aspects of life for the riders and, equally importantly, the horses, they serve. I am quite proud to say that I have made many new friends and cannot wait until we meet again for the next training module and certification!

Then it was on to meet with governmental officials in New Taipei City to confirm support for the XV

Congress followed by a meeting with the Sports Management faculty from Aletheia University in Danshui (the site for the XV Congress). We toured the University and confirmed meeting and gathering rooms. It is a beautiful campus and I believe everyone will be pleased. There are historic buildings to tour, lovely gardens and winding walkways - something for everyone on campus.

Once all of the official business was completed, my next task was to be a tourist! Could I purchase tickets? Could I navigate the train system? Were there sites and activities that I could walk to that would enhance the experience for anyone attending the Congress? I DID IT! The people were welcoming and helpful. The history was compelling. And the beauty of the area was unsurpassed.

I cannot wait to return to Taiwan for the XV International Congress. I hope you will join me.

*Ann O'Shallie  
President, HETI Federation*

## STATE NEWS

### RDA QLD:

#### **RDAQ State Conference**

This year's State Conference will again be held at Gillespie Grove, Shaftesbury Arethusa College, Burpengary. It will commence on Friday 21st June and conclude Sunday 23rd June and will include topics relevant to coaches and committee members (see attached program & registration form).

Some of the areas covered will be:

- Disabilities (including adaptive aids)
- Games – new and exciting alternatives
- Skill building – how to teach skills more effectively
- Risk Management—who manages the risks
- RDA Structure—what are your responsibilities, what does it mean to your centre
- Insurance—what's covered, what's not
- Codes of Conduct
- RDA Member Protection Policy
- Intellectual Property and Brand Management
- Volunteer Handbook update

#### **RDAQ State Championships**

The RDAQ State Championships will be held at QSEC Caboolture over the weekend of 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> September and will include jousting display and team fancy dress competition. Program and registration form will be available from the RDAQ office soon.



### RDA SA:

An action-filled State Coaching Workshop was held at Wallaroo in South Australia's Yorke Peninsula over the weekend of 13/14 April. We all had the opportunity to meet our new State Manager Dr Carol Bradley, and our new Coaching and Volunteer Coordinator Helen Eagan.

Until she joined RDA South Australia, Carol was the Chair of the national organisation, and previously served on the South Australian Board. She is married to a former RDA rider and has a background in business management, academia and disability. She also runs a boutique winery in McLaren Vale.

Helen is a professional horsewoman and has spent many years training, coaching and accrediting riding coaches in New Zealand. She has coached and trained nationally in Australia and New Zealand, Europe and the USA. Her most recent position was with the Hong Kong Jockey Club, where she was responsible for training and horse management.

The workshop started with some invaluable training given by RDA-SA President Jill Ribbons on reporting Child/Vulnerable Adult Abuse and Neglect. This is an important aspect of our work, and is of course central to putting our riders at the centre of our focus.

Horses were next on the agenda, when Emily Klopp from the local veterinary practice gave an informative talk on what to look for at a pre-purchase vet check for a horse, followed by a real life practical with non RDA horses at Level 2 RDA coach Andy Ford's

RDA Tasmania held their State Dressage Championships on the 20<sup>th</sup> April at the RDA St Helens venue.

The weather on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> was unbelievable with trying to set up the dressage arena with rain, wind and hail throughout the day.

Horses were being transported to the venue from Kingston (near Hobart) by Pauline Perry and Lois Evans and what a trip they had to deal with.

Saturday was much kinder with very little rain and wind. One horse had become lame overnight and this caused a few minor hiccups as changes were needed to be made for riders with one horse out of action.

All riders completed two dressage tests and a Prix Caprilli test from which the over-all champion on the day was Emily Pettit (Kingborough) and reserve champion Ashlee McBain (St Helens). All riders performed very well throughout the day and a state

property. Louise Lehmann another local vet gave advice on looking after the older horse and we discussed our revised policy and procedures around making the tough decision at the end of a horse's life.

Sessions on bushfire preparedness with Rod Cunningham from the Country Fire Service, and a review of the new SA legislation on Workplace Health & Safety were given. The workshop finished with Kim Whitehead from SA Child and Adult Mental Health Services on Managing Anxiety and Lib Bartholomew on using pictorial storyboards to communicate with riders. We gratefully acknowledge funding from the SA government's Be Active program for the Workshops.

Our huge thanks go to Karen Aspery who as the previous Coaching Coordinator for RDA-SA, with the help of the Coaching & Safety committee, had organised this final workshop event before Helen took over the reins. As you know, Karen is currently the EO for RDA nationally, but South Australia is lucky and very proud to have her as a Level 2 coach and assessor and to know that she will continue her invaluable voluntary work with us.

Watch out for more action-packed events coming soon!

- RDA-SA Mounted Games - 18 May at the Metro Showjumping venue, near Adelaide Airport
- RDA-SA AGM on 31 May at Country Women's Association, 30 Dequetteville Terrace, Kent Town, 7pm – 9pm.

### RDA TAS:

Team has now been selected to commence training in readiness for the RDAA National Competitions.

#### From RDA Kingborough:

Our latest equine recruit Goblin, who we introduced in the February issue of *Spotlight*, is still in Victoria furthering his education. His initial training with Andrew McLean and his team at the Australian Equine Behaviour Centre (AEBC) in Victoria was quiet a lot for the young fellow to take in. He was progressing well, but after 5 weeks he was starting to fall back on his training. It was recommended that he be given a 2 week break and then back again for another 2 weeks training to reinforce his education.

He was sent to Sue Harris for a well earned 2 weeks spell. His natural charm won Sue over and she was very sorry to see him go and has offered to have him back any time saying, "Goblin is s a real delight. I am seriously considering taking him hostage!"

Goblin has now completed his final two weeks training at AEBC and they were very happy with his progress.

His education included areas such as:

- trail riding;
- lunging;
- riders falling forward on him;
- riders falling off him;
- people walking either side of him whilst working; and
- wheelchairs being wheeled up beside him.

Arrangements have now been made for Goblin to go to Sally Francis for more training. It is hoped that Sally will be able to include some vaulting as this is something that RDA Kingborough would like to introduce in the near future.

Thank you to Andrew and his team at AEBC for all their hard work and dedication. Thank you also to Sue Harris for providing the perfect holiday retreat for Goblin. Finally, a thank you to Parsons Horse Transport for providing reduced transport costs towards transporting Goblin to and from Sue Harris and to Sally Francis.

## **LOOKING FURTHER AHEAD**

### **AUGUST**

**Aug 1**

Horse's Birthday

**Aug 31**

National Volunteer Awards Nominations Close to National Office

### **OCTOBER**

**Oct 18**

National Volunteer Awards Dinner, SA

**Oct 19**

RDA Australia AGM, SA

**Oct 20**

National Delegates Strategic Planning Meeting, SA

### **NOVEMBER**

**Nov 12-14** *\*amended*

National Disciplines Championships, Werribee, VIC

### **DECEMBER**

**Dec 13** *\*amended*

RDAA National Office close for Christmas Break (reopens January 13)

Please email [admin@rda.org.au](mailto:admin@rda.org.au) if you no longer wish to receive RDAA's bimonthly newsletter, **Spotlight**.

Next issue: 14 June 2013

## Mission Statement

RDA enables people with disabilities throughout Australia to experience enjoyment, challenge and a sense of achievement through participation in equestrian activities to improve their quality of life, attain personal goals and develop life skills.

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### **RDA SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS**



**Australian Government**

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