



Pony Club Australia National Awards 2016

The inaugural Pony Club Australia awards were presented in Adelaide on 28th May 2016, at the annual Gala Dinner, sponsored by Gow Gates. The Honorable Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education opened the event and paid tribute to the role of volunteers in Australian society, saying "The power of individuals that decide to give back to the community – this makes Australia a great place to live."



Senator Birmingham recognised the role of Pony Club as the entry point to learning to ride and succeed in equestrian activities. Pony Club teaches life lessons including "work hard, train hard, obey the rules and be conscious of safety". As Minister for Education Minister Birmingham valued that Pony Club taught many of the soft skills that help people contribute and succeed in life, such as how to engage with people and to pitch in and help others.

The awards were judged by a panel representing the breadth of Pony Club in Australia. The panel was made up of Michael Carlson, Secretary National Coaching Committee; Shannon Durrant, Director Pony Club Australia; Karina Johnstone, President Pony Club Tasmania; Sue Muirhead, State Council Pony Club Victoria; Deborah Spencer, President Pony Club Western Australia and Catherine Ainsworth, CEO Pony Club Australia.

Gillian Rolton Award for Pony Club Alumnus, sponsored by Pony Club Australia

Winner – Penny Dow

Penny Dow was a member of North West Pony Club in Tasmania. Penny competed nationally in showjumping, dressage and eventing, and internationally as a member of the Mounted Games Team that went to Canada in 1996. On that trip she visited the vet school at Guelph and was inspired to go on to a career in veterinary science. Penny now works at the largest equine veterinary hospital in the Southern Hemisphere, at Scone NSW where she leads the diagnostic imaging unit.

Penny said "This year I will travel to Rio as part of the vet team where I will treat and take care of the equine Olympic heroes. My 2 nieces in Victoria ride my pony Pocket, an orphan foal hand reared by my mother and broken in by me. I only hope that they share the amazing Pony Club experiences that I had, and that they fall in love with those amazing equine partners that make our Pony Club life."



Penny Dow with Pony Club Australia Chair, Carol Paterson



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The Pony Club Australia rider awards are for display of Pony Club values, rally attendance, club citizenship and improvement in skills through diligence and effort.

Rider under 17 years, sponsored by Horseland

Winner, Darcy Wade, Stratford Pony Club

Darcy has been a member of Stratford Pony Club since he was seven years old and has been awarded best clubman for two consecutive years. Darcy is a confident, capable teenager who recognises reward for effort and that it is just as important to be gracious in victory as it is in defeat. Darcy has actively participated in all Pony Club activities, representing his club at zone and state level in mounted games, showjumping and dressage. Darcy has recently been selected in the national team to compete in Tetrathlon in Ireland and is looking forward to 'riding for Australia'.



Rider 17-25 years, sponsored by Horseland

Winner, Lauren Clark, Merricks Pony Club

Lauren leads by example and is seen as a role model by all members – junior, senior and parents. She runs fun events such as the treasure hunt at the Christmas rally, actively participates in working bees and zone duties and was Captain of her school Equestrian team. Lauren publishes the club's monthly newsletter and arranges cross country training for members outside rally days.

Accepting the award, Lauren said "my best memories of Pony Club are being part of a community and a family. I meet great people who are passionate about what they do and I intend to keep giving back and being involved in Pony Club in years to come."



Darcy Wade and Lauren Clark with Senator Simon Birmingham, Federal Minister for Education

The Australian Government through the Australian Sports Commission recognises PCA to develop Pony Club in Australia.

The financial support of the Australian Sports Commission is gratefully acknowledged.



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Volunteer of the Year, sponsored by HorseWyse

Winner – Jim Page, Northern Metropolitan Zone, Victoria

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Jim joined Mooroolbark as a Pony Club father 40 years ago. Over the years he has been Club President, Zone President and a Cross Country Course Accreditor/TD.

Jim is now President of the NMZ and has assisted the clubs to maintain facilities that are often under threat in urban areas. Jim successfully steered the merger of the Mooroolbark and Lilydale Pony Clubs, working with club officials, local council and members, with the new amalgamated club now operating successfully for all.

Jim is currently busy finishing the grade 3, 4 and 5 cross country courses he built at the Pony Club Victoria centre at Gladysdale.

Club of the Year, sponsored by the Governance Institute

The award is for a club that has shown initiative to attract and retain members, delivers quality coaching, highest standards of safety and is focused on good governance at all times.



Winner – Merricks Pony Club



A small club on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria, Merricks Pony Club offers a diverse program of activities for competitive and non-competitive riders. It is proactive in seeking feedback from members and acts upon responses to ensure that it delivers the best for the future of the club.

Accepting the award, Club President Natasha Keetley said “We know it is important not only to offer young riders support but also the families as well.”

The Club runs training days and moot competitions so that new parents are comfortable to take on volunteer roles at events.

Natasha Keetley, President of Merricks Pony Club

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Kay Irving Award for Coach of the Year, sponsored by Wini Equine

The coaching award is for a coach that has contributed to the contemporary coaching program at Pony Club, is committed to personal professional development and demonstrates passion and resilience.

Winner – Tim Moreton, South Australia

Tim currently holds the positions of Chief Instructor The Gums Horse and Pony Club, Pony Club of South Australia Mounted Games Coach, has been the International Mounted Games Coach for 2014, 2015 and 2016. Tim travels to all clubs within the zone to fill in as instructor and provide mentoring to other coaches. Whilst Tim’s greatest passion is for Mounted Games, he is a coach with very sound knowledge of the Pony Club syllabus, instructs dressage, trail-riding and eventing, and maintains the high standards of Pony Club in all of his coaching.



www.wini.com.au

His own willingness to participate in all aspects of Pony Club often gives less confident riders the encouragement needed to “have a go”. He has the ability to connect with riders of all personalities to ensure that they reach their potential.

Accepting the award, Tim spoke passionately about the opportunities that Pony Club gives young riders to make great friends and develop skills as part of the Pony Club family.

“Pony Club is world-wide; it can take you anywhere you want to go.”



Tim Moreton with Mel Churches from Wini Equine.

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