

PCA NATIONAL COACHING CONFERENCE

93 Pony Club Coaches from all over Australia and China along with Queensland Zone representatives and members of the State Chief Instructors' Panel for the 2018, Biennial, Pony Club Australia National Coaching Conference at Southport Pony Club on Queensland's Gold Coast.



Pony Club Australia has been working with China to establish Pony Club in China for the past four years. PCA and China Pony Club share a rider exchange program and coaching experience for knowledge transfer.



Participants at the conference were treated to a feast of information, demonstrations and practical skills that



will see them ready to embrace and adopt new disciplines such as Tetrathlon, Vaulting & Stockman's Challenge. The new PCA Coaching Syllabus, designed to take riders, clubs and our State Association forward into the future, as well as the latest information on horse parasites and their control.

Day One Presenters - Dr Andrew Mclean, Dr Portland Jones and Sophie Warren introduced the new Pony Club Australia Coaching Syllabus, featuring Equitation Science, as the most humane, safest and effective method of training horses and other large animals.

Dr McLean is recognised around the world for his work on equine behaviour, holds a PhD in equine cognition and learning. Andrew has been an accredited coach for over 30 years writing 5 books, including an international Best Seller. Andrew is a past winner of the Eureka Prize, which is the highest science award in Australia. He also won the Gawler 3-Day-Event and competed Nationally in Showjumping as well as holding a racehorse trainer's license. Andrew, who established and is currently a director of the Australian Equine Behaviour Centre, was elected to the board of Pony Club Australia.



Dr Portland Jones is a horse trainer, coach writer and rider having competed at Advanced Level Dressage and lectured extensively on equine behaviour at universities and other training institutions. Portland has written widely for equestrian press and has worked with Dr Andrew McLean for the past 15 years. Her first novel "Seeing the Elephant" was shortlisted for the Hungerford Prize.

Portland collaborated with Sophie Warren, to co-author the first Equitation Science book for young riders 'Horses Hate Surprise Parties'. This Book provides

simple explanations of equine science and offers an extensive insight into how horses process information, learn and behave.

Sophie, who is a professional event rider, horse trainer and coach, has had many successes at the highest level in eventing. She also represented Australia as a young rider, was Western Australian Young Rider of the Year and has ridden at FEI Dressage Level.

The trio used local riders to demonstrate the effect of a scientific, factual approach to horse riding and control. All riders and horses demonstrated marked improvements that carried forward through the various phases of the demonstration. Horses were more settled and relaxed and riders appeared more confident and effective.

After lunch participants enjoyed an interesting session on the Stockman's Challenge with Doug O'Neill.



Doug, who came from Richmond Pony Club, educated and trained racehorses for many years, eventually becoming President of the Horse of the

North Stockman's Challenge and the Australian Stockmans' Challenge Association.

Doug assisted by Raymond Stacey, holder of the Pony Club A certificate and former Queensland State Chief Instructor. Demonstrations of components of Stockman's Challenged enlightened Delegates to view elements of this

exciting horse-sport with a clear understanding of how it is conducted and scored. It is something that will offer a challenge to the practical horsemen in our associations.

The second afternoon session continued Andrew, Portland and Sophie presenting practical demonstrations on how equitation science can be applied in flat work and jumping applications. This was enlightening especially as to how it carries across from one to the next.



Days end saw nearly fifty participants attending the renowned 'Outback Spectacular', which provided great food and great entertainment, while pony club participants ensured great company and a lot of fun.

Sunday saw the arrival of much needed rain and more great presentations, where Participants divided into manageable groups, enabling them a more intimate presentation with time for questions which enabled them greater insight into each topic.

Tetrathlon presented by Pony Club Queensland Advocate, Barry Dossetto, championed the sport in Queensland since his daughter was able to compete in it at the PCA Nationals in Western Australia.

Dr Petrea Wait thoroughbred breeder, horsewoman and NSW Government District Veterinarian discussed parasites and the latest findings on effective management. In particular the 20/80 Rule.

Vaulting was the subject of NSW National Coaching Committee member, Sarah Venamore. Sarah was joined by members of the Ella Springs Vaulting Group, who demonstrated the techniques, positions and beauty of the sport.



Participants then joined together for a Pony Club Quiz managed by South Australia's Ann Olsen. The quiz tested the knowledge of participants, who between them had over 2,000 years of Pony Club experience.



The weekend culminated in the Presentation of three very Special Awards, all centred around retiring PCA Chair Carol Paterson. Carol, a member of Pony Club



for over fifty-five years, joined Pony Club NSW as a child, before moving to Qld and holding various and numerous

positions at Club, Zone, Regional, State

and National Levels. PCA and her peers recognised her outstanding contribution to our association.

This was also very evident, when she was presented with a special award from the Pony Club China for her services to their association.

PC China also presented PCA with a beautiful hand painted



scroll of a horse in appreciation for the support over the past four years.

This is the first-time such a large contingency from PCQ has been able to attend this amazing event, which has in the past been held in Southern States. However, thanks to the National Coaching Panel; Chair, Michael Carlson Qld, Denise Legg WA, Kate Wilson Vic, Sarah Venamore NSW, Marissa Hall Tasmania, Diana Birmingham SA and Debbie Theil Northern Territory, we were given the opportunity to host the event in Queensland.

Thanks, in no small way also, to State CIP Members Rachel Lornie and Jan Morland who along with members of the Southport Pony Club ensured we were catered, transported and organised.



I am sure I speak for every participant when I thank Michael and the all those that assisted him for the dedication, willingness and hard work that was needed to ensure the event ran as well as it possibly could; IT IS SO VERY APPRECIATED



Megan Wray & Michael Carlson
Queensland