



Hi Everyone,

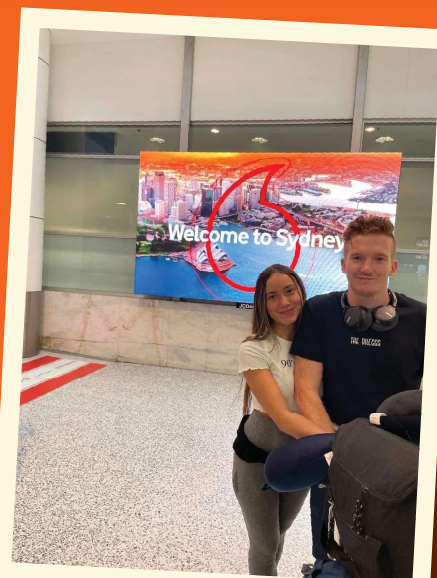
I hope you have all recovered from a very wet March. We have had an incredible amount of rain, but HVEC has kept going at a steady pace. It seemed like March was the month of visitors. The first to arrive from overseas was Lewis and Vanessa. They had been away travelling through Columbia, Las Vegas, Costa Rica and Miami. Their little dog Ecki toughed it out at the farm with the two Irish Setters and a Golden Retriever and he honestly had a ball. He was very happy though to see his Mum and Dad back home.

Many old and new riders and their horses came to use the indoor arena. They all appreciated the one hour of serious training, without the mud and rain. For \$11 an hour it is truly worth it.

The Airbnb dog friendly room has been very popular. It is ideal for travellers and is only \$77 per night. The location and space is a dream.

The flat above the stables is currently being renovated and should be finished by the first week in May. The experience of organising this job has been an adventure for me, and it certainly doesn't make me want to change my profession. I know that when it is ready for Airbnb it will look great and be extremely popular. People love coming to the country and seeing the horses, birds and kangaroos and have the freedom to walk around. HVEC is only 30 minutes to the beautiful beaches and restaurants in Newcastle, and 40 minutes to the Wine Country.

Hunter Valley Dressage held their first official competition for the year on March 20th. Molly Callinan and Tosh competed in their first ever Prix St George. For any rider it is exciting, but even more so when you are only 16 years old and you have trained your own horse to this level. The test went well despite Molly losing a stirrup coming out of the first canter pirouette and not regaining it until the end of the 4 time changes. Molly has been having lessons



*Lewis & Vanessa came home*



*Ecki washed off all the horse dirt and went back to Sydney*



*Molly and Tosh about to do their first Prix St George test*

with me for approximately 10 years. In April she will compete at the Sydney CDI in the CDI Young Rider classes on Tosh. I wish her all the best of luck.

Sally Hurt and Farrah also competed at Hunter Valley Dressage and scored well in their first Novice test with 70.179% and placing 4th. The hardy showjumper Bindi (with myself on board) and Hot to Trot Red with Orla didn't bring home any ribbons, but certainly worked hard on the dressage training. This competition set Orla and Izzy up well for the following weekend at Tamworth ODE where they went extremely well under difficult wet conditions.

Niccolo has returned and will be my next project. I thought I had retired from training 3 year olds but here I go again. He will be great, just like his parents and most of all, his grandparents (Negro and Jazz). Who wrote that song – "I will Survive"?

On a much sadder note I would like to send my deepest condolences to Pam, Rory and Brittany Farragher, and the four grandchildren, for the passing of John Farragher. John died suddenly on March 9th. It is extremely hard to deal with the loss of a family member, not only emotionally, but the days and weeks and years ahead bring about unexpected changes and require a lot of strength from within.

RIP Kaali, the little chestnut Arab mare owned by Yvonne and Andrea. Kaali was a sensitive little horse, who competed once with me at HVDA when it was still based at Rutherford. She lived at HVEC for approximately 15 years, most of that time with her other family Kismet and Zia (who have both since passed away). The one thing I remember about her was to not tighten the girth too much too soon, be careful of her delicate ears and most of all to mount her properly so as to definitely not kick her in the backside!

Bye for now, and keep riding,

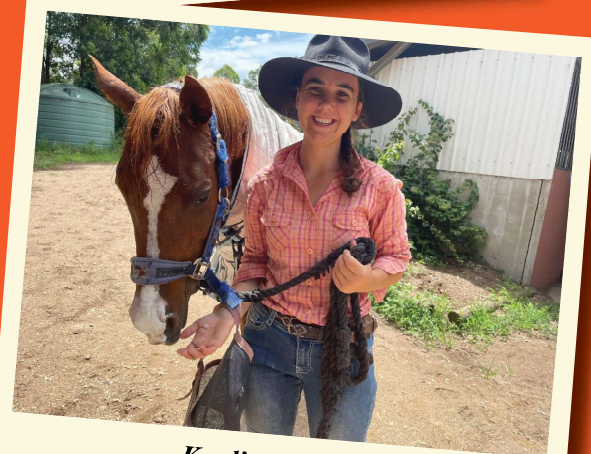
Shaun



*Orla and Red at Tamworth*



*Niccolo*



*Kaali and Ruby*