



HUNTER VALLEY EQUESTRIAN CENTRE

Newsletter - July 2024

Hi Everyone,

The Equestrian events at the 2024 Olympics at Chateau de Versailles have been amazing. The venue at the Palace Gardens was absolutely beautiful. Please watch the replays if you missed them. There is a lot of other sad and ordinary stuff on TV, but not the Dressage, Eventing and Showjumping. So inspirational.

I would like to congratulate every rider in every discipline who dedicated their lives to riding and caring for their horses, on the pathway to the final selection and competition. The horse owners, the sponsors, the families and friends who have supported the horses and riders need a huge hug and congratulations. Without you, it would not be possible.

Congratulations to Christopher Burton on winning a silver medal in the Individual Eventing. He rode beautifully on his horse, Shadow Man. His interviews were truly Australian and lucky for Australia, he and his family are coming home.

To Shane Rose – you are amazing. I have watched your journey and I have been so inspired by your strength and ambition. I loved your interviews and your tears for Virgil said it all. Enjoy a break, you are an amazingly strong and talented rider & athlete.

To Kevin McNab and Don Quidam – we and the horses are living beings. The physical strength required is beyond belief and some times it just cannot keep up. You are Australian and driven and I'm sure we will see you represent Australia again. I would love to keep you closer and straighter to the counter canter transition at letter C, but for now relax and be proud of your achievements.

The Dressage was fantastic. I chose to sit at home alone and watch and concentrate as a coach on the fine details. Congratulations to Jayden, William and Simone. Everyone is so proud of you.

The Grand Prix Freestyle was so good to watch. The dream of all dreams to watch with the beautiful setting at Chateau



de Versailles. Congratulations to Jessica, Isabel and Charlotte. Thank you.

The Showjumping – so difficult, requiring so much experience. To Edwina, Thaisa and Hilary, congratulations on representing Australia.

I set my alarm for 11 pm and stayed awake to watch Thaisa ride in the Individual Final. A fantastic experience that will stay with you with forever and benefit each and every horse and rider that you train. Time to relax with your beautiful daughter now.

Now back at the ground level at HVEC. The School Holiday program was well supported. The young riders all stayed in the saddle and learnt so much about riding, control, dressage, jumping and horse management. They loved the days on the property and they loved being with their ponies and horses.

There were lots of celebrations in July. My grandsons Myles and Austyn turned 6 years old. Mum to be Vanessa had a birthday, and Christopher and Elyse celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary. Wow, Christopher is really behaving himself.

Welcome Miranda & Saturn and our new cat, Nyla.

On a sad note – vale Patsy Hopkins, mum of Cath Hopkins and many other brothers and sisters, and grandmother of many grandchildren. Patsy was a long time friend of my parents, Bruce and Joyce. A beautiful lady from the town of Merriwa. She had so much to give with her knowledge, education, discipline and love. I know you will be sadly missed by so many, but your legacy will live on and Cath and Chris Hopkins will be hearing your words for ever and ever. RIP Patsy.

Farewell Terry Snow AM. Thank you for supporting Australian equestrian riders and developing Willinga Park. Your dedication to excellence and contribution to the horse industry will be remembered for generations.

Bye for now, Shaun

