



## In this newsletter

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Mallacoota Pony Club grounds were burnt out in the Gippsland fires

## A Land of Drought, Fire and Flooding Rain...



Some Pony Clubs around the country are doing it tough at the moment. As if the drought and the fire threat were not tough enough, just as it was announced this week that the NSW South Coast fires\* were finally out, parts of that state and Queensland were hit with their heaviest rain in decades, causing flooding and more damage.

We know some members, like Jeremy Kennedy, from Adaminaby Pony Club in NSW, and Stevie-lyn Osborne from Maryborough Pony Club in Central Victoria, were working hard in some of the fire-ravaged parts areas, in some cases along with family and friends. Well done to you both - it would not have been easy.

Jeremy worked as a volunteer with the Adaminaby Brigade, while Stevie was employed by DWELP for the fire season and has been very busy undertaking various jobs alongside the CFA teams. That's Jeremy above (photo courtesy of Big Horse Pics) and Stevie-lyn at left.

\* SBS reports earlier this week that NSW South Coast fires are finally out after burning for 74 days across 499,621 hectares

*What states are doing, new infrastructure grants - Page 2*



## What to Do With Horses in a Fire

The Country Fire Authority (CFA VIC) and former CFA member Katie Ladd from Animals Voice Equine and Canine Therapy offer the following suggestions:

If possible move your horses to a safer location before a Catastrophic, Severe, Extreme or Code Red day (depending on your state)

If you are having to leave due to fires and leave your horses and other stock behind, or find that roads are blocked and it is too late to leave:

- Turn off any electric fences immediately
- Strip your horses down to nothing; no halter, no rugs, no fly mask, nothing! You do not want the metal to burn or anything to get attached or caught.
- Horses need a large open space with minimal vegetation to avoid bushfires. They are quite good at avoiding bushfire if they have enough room to move freely. This might be a series of small paddocks with the internal gates left open, or a large sand menage, if there are no buildings or vegetation close by.
- Write your phone number on your horse's body with show makeup or similar, or plait a piece of leather or ribbon into their mane with your phone number on it.

More:

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/horses-and-bushfires?fbclid=IwAROGX3JcOib0j11Zk2oJEIzah3MTfaBdD22fwLnZmJptr7daP-l7DcDxfBI>

More suggestions for keeping your horses safe from the PCANSW website:

[https://www.pcansw.org.au/media/news/bushfire-information-and-property-register?fbclid=IwAR3rluwgm6bLBdWma3bRrnYhr5pYmLFhqXxOOtyxSDzdDRb\\_kCzJl1gk2Gg](https://www.pcansw.org.au/media/news/bushfire-information-and-property-register?fbclid=IwAR3rluwgm6bLBdWma3bRrnYhr5pYmLFhqXxOOtyxSDzdDRb_kCzJl1gk2Gg)

Biosecurity Tasmania has an excellent resource for all stock which is well worth reading:

<https://dipw.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/animal-biosecurity/animal-welfare/animals-and-bushfire/animals-and-bushfire-planning>

## Ways to donate or help

Recovery will take a long time in many areas.

Suggestions include approaching a Club and offering to donate, share or loan equipment and saddlery

Another good way is to donate to BlazeAid, who organise volunteers to head into affected areas when safe to rebuild fences. You can also make donations here, and buy merchandise to help raise more.

[www.blazeaid.com.au](http://www.blazeaid.com.au)

## Ways You Can Help Affected Clubs

### Victoria:

When the fires reached Mallacoota in Gippsland at the height of the tourist season, we saw images on TV of thousands sheltering on the beach, black skies when it should have been daylight, and thick, choking smoke. We also saw the armed forces sent in to evacuate many people by helicopter and ship.

The Mallacoota Pony Club's Facebook page says:

"We would like to reassure the community that our horses and our members are safe and well cared for. The reality of the devastation of our grounds and equipment is sinking in. We have lost everything - our clubroom, office, boundary fences, round yard, jumping and games equipment and arenas, ride on mower and all maintenance tools, and 40 years of photos, manuals and history."

A GoFundMe page set up by Pony Club Victoria to help rebuild Mallacoota and other clubs yet to be identified, has reached \$8000 and is still open. One hundred per cent of donations will go towards Pony Clubs in distress.

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/pony-club-bush-fire-recovery-fund>

### South Australia:

PCASA has circulated a survey form to create a database of help in times of disaster. They are seeking clubs with facilities suitable for evacuations, eg yards, stables or paddocks available; to be a deposit point for emergency feed/tack donations; or provide overnight/emergency space for people to bunk down in an emergency. Great initiative, SA.

Well done to the clubs holding fundraising events - Jupiter Creek Pony Club raised just over \$15,000 for the SA Fire Affected Families last weekend with their Quiz and auction.

### New South Wales

The PCANSW website has lots of useful information about during and after fires

<https://pcansw.org.au/media/news/bushfire-information-and-property-register>

The NSW government is encouraging bushfire affected communities to apply for funding in the next round of Infrastructure Grants, with projects that focus on the repair, rebuild and repurposing of local community assets to be prioritised

[https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/838496/](https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/838496/)

# Safety Speakers Make a Great Impression



## *What you said:*

*"Thank you . . . such a wealth of experience and knowledge."*

*"Very organised and well put together. Pleased I was able to be involved in such an important aspect of Pony Club."*

*"A wonderful experience. Thank you so much to PCA for running these two days. The information, collaboration and networking has been invaluable."*

*"Just like to say a big thank you to PCA for the brilliant seminar on National Horse Safety . . . Great speakers, very informative & very well run. Looking forward to more of the same in the future."*

## **National Safety Conference for Horse Sports 2020**

The calibre of speakers at the ground-breaking conference and a diverse, very interested audience keen to help create a safer sport, made for a very successful event in Melbourne of February 1.

Participants found the speakers' topics very relevant to the focus of the seminar and it was evident a common goal in the equestrian industry is to keep our great sport as safe as possible, and that we all need to keep working on reducing injuries for riders, horses and spectators.

For our part, PCA policies and procedures and the risk management of horse-related activities will be considered and reviewed regularly, and where possible, changes implemented to continue to improve safety. It was a highly productive, informative (and at times confronting with some of the data and findings shown) conference and the aim is to run more conferences in future years on issues of critical interest to Pony Club. [#saferhorsesports](#) [#equestriansafety](#)

BELOW: Over 60 Pony Club members representing various roles from all states and territories gave up their Sunday - the day after the National Safety Conference for Horse Sports - to take the safety conference topics forward and discuss horse sport safety in our past, present and especially the future.



# Your Top 10 Safety Tips



To coincide with the National Safety Conference for Horse Sports hosted by Pony Club Australia earlier this month, we asked you via Facebook and Instagram to tell us your favourite safety tips. Here they are!

10. Be aware of how you load and unload your horse onto the float and do up the rear bars/doors; don't stand behind them. They might want out in a hurry!
9. When on foot near your horse don't run, don't yell and scream or make sudden movements
8. Learn how to read body language of the horse. Watch a horse's facial expressions, and their ears and legs
7. Always wear your boots around horses. Family, friends and spectators should too, or they should keep back a safe distance.
6. Always be aware of your surroundings, make sure you are keeping an eye out for anything that may put you or your horse in danger.
5. Make sure your horse has great ground manners, for your safety and the safety of others
4. Pay attention to what you and the horse are doing. Be present with your horses - put the phone away. Your training can only kick in if you are mentally present.
3. When jumping, wear a safety vest.
2. When you ride, especially if you are alone, tell someone your estimated time of return, don't just rely on a mobile phone which could go flat or out of range
1. **And your No 1 tip (which we agree with)**  
**Wear a helmet when riding and handling your horse. PLUS - it's all very well having an approved riding helmet but it's of no value if it isn't the right size, and the chin strap is not adjusted properly.**

## Applications Open for International Teams 2020



Applications are now open for the Pony Club Australia International teams competing in France in the World Club Tournament of showjumping in July 2020 and the International Pony Club Quiz in the UK in August 2020.

Applications are also open for several trips planned for China in 2020, with the first trip in late April. The age group for China this year is 15 - 18 years.

Details of eligibility criteria and application forms are on the PCA website under 'Events'

*LEFT: Australia sent a quiz team to Canada in 2017, to compete with Canada, the US and the UK. The team was Sarah Hilet, Vic; Georgia Laird, Qld; Rachael Perkins, WA; Rebecca Thaller, Vic and team manager Kim Ward, Vic.*

## Online MyPonyClub portal explained

Well done Londonderry Pony Club for creating a video explaining how to navigate online Pony Club Membership, and for Pony Club NSW for sharing it.

It covers the basics of the My Pony Club system including registering, adding a horse, and entering events.

Even if you are in a different state, it is easy to follow!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVBFhGYd-OU&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR3BfkbMP199Zf7z4ANXKjV2uVK6hnr3YbUuK1zFAmc5yM4w0NWepvKDJGg>

# National Championships Survey - What You Told Us

Pony Club Australia wishes to thank all those who responded to the recent survey about the 2019 PCA National Championships in Sydney.

It is a real achievement to qualify for and compete at Nationals. We are glad so many of you enjoyed the experience but note the issues some of you raised, which can often go with an event of this scale and length.

The main issues raised related to consistency of rules; communication; and event scheduling, scoring and presentations.

## Consistency of rules

This issue is being addressed in 2020 as PCA starts working with the states and territories to standardise gear and competition rules across all Pony Club disciplines.

## Communication

Communicating with a large number of competitors and their support crews before and during a major event, in a timely and accurate manner, is a major undertaking. We have noted that generally it worked well. Your feedback and suggestions about the preferred communication channels to use, including a central notice-board, daily team manager briefings, a reliable phone app, and having one designated 'official' results source were useful. We also note that in two years' time there will likely be different options to throw in the mix.

## Event scheduling, scoring and presentations

There were some difficulties with scheduling due to unavoidable things like the power blackout, but also the number of competitors. We note the suggestions on the best way to manage the presentations for disciplines and teams and the long time taken on the last day. PCA will be seeking to make this more efficient in the future.

Again, we thank those who took the time to respond to the survey - we all want the PCA Nationals to be a smooth-running, enjoyable event that showcases our best riders from around Australia.



Photo: Julie Wilson

## Still time to join major survey on horse behaviour

Pony Club members are reminded there is still time to take part in a major survey - the **Equine Behaviour Assessment and Research Questionnaire (E-BARQ)** mentioned in the December newsletter.

That's because the E-BARQ team recognises that owners know their horses better than anyone else and that pooling and sharing that knowledge can help horses all over the world.

This University of Sydney study is free, and will reveal invaluable information on how our training, management, horse behaviour and welfare are inter-related. Your horse's stats can be compared to thousands of others through your personal dashboard and you can add details every six months for an ongoing picture.

E-BARQ is expected to help:

- participants obtain a new insight into which areas their horses are performing well in, and where they may require help
- monitor the consequences of different training methods over time
- inform evidence-based judgements on the ethics and sustainability of horse sports
- reveal the true impact of ancient traditions and modern trends. You can access E-BARQ here: <https://e-barq.com/>

You can access an E-BARQ how-to video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBKry6Wz2gc>

Let's see how many more Pony Club (and family and friends' horses we can get signed up!

*"The horse-lore that has accumulated over the centuries is a rich mix of both useful practice (approaching horses from their left side, making them slightly less reactive) and unsubstantiated myth, such as the one that chestnut horses are especially difficult to deal with."*

**- Prof. Paul McGreevy,  
International Society  
for Equitation Science**



## Big excitement as the first Pony Club accredited centres start syllabus

The Equine Club in Cranbourne South (Vic) launched their 'Pony Club' recently with great excitement. The new members are seen here with their E Certificate manuals. The Equine Club told us, "It was worth the wait to see all the smiling faces and the kids living their riding dreams. (This is) our beginner E Certificate group of kids and ponies. We are launching our Adults Pony Club riding syllabus starting next month. This is the same program the children are doing, teaching horsemanship, riding, anatomy, health, safety and everything to do with caring for your horse. We are looking at holding this during school hours subject to numbers."

Equitation Science for Children in Flaxley SA (right) is proudly promoting their Pony Club groups too, for children who don't have their own pony.

Do you have riding centre near you that may be interested? Please let our Participation Manager Kirrilly Thompson know via [centremember@ponyclubaustralia.com.au](mailto:centremember@ponyclubaustralia.com.au)

If and when riders get their own horse they continue their Pony Club journey at a Pony Club —maybe yours!

Most Pony Clubs are approached occasionally by families who don't own a horse. If your club cannot cater for them, (and most cannot) now you could point them towards an accredited centre - more centres are signing up each month!

## ... and welcome to the latest centres to sign up

- Whitethorn Academy Greenhills, NSW
- Horsetalk Riding Farm Jiggi, NSW
- Kurshonbrooke Lodge Gumdale, QLD
- Horses and Humans Eumundi, QLD
- Splendacrest Stables Preston, QLD





# Around the Clubs



**Flinders Island Pony and Riding Club** has held their first camp for over 10 years.

They tell us they had a fantastic two days which included flat work, games, show jumping and cross country.

They also incorporated a community open day with lots of visitors. Many riders also passed proficiency tests during the camp.

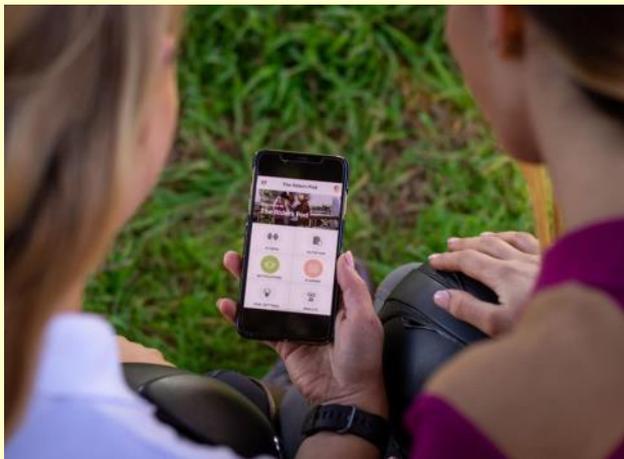


## Riders Pod Gets the Nod

Have you checked out 'The Riders Pod' mobile phone app yet?

Pony Club Australia has a partnership with The Riders Pod – created by a rider, for riders – with weekly exercises for riders, recipes, calendar and more. Pony Club members (all membership types) are eligible for a discount. The Riders Pod app is available for iPhone and Android. All Pony Club members need to do is:

- Download 'The Riders Pod' app
- Sign up. You will be directed to the promotion / discount section
- Apply the discount code (PCA20 (20%) for a monthly discount, PCA30 (30%) when you sign up for 12 months)
- Add your Pony Club membership number where indicated
- Enjoy the benefits!



#theriderspod @theriderspod

## Rules for Riding on The Road

Once you are confident riding your horse in an enclosed area like an arena you will probably want to try riding in other places too. It's really important that you only ride where it's safe for both of you and always let someone know where you are going, and when you expect to be back.

If you have to ride along the road, there are certain rules that are important to follow in order to stay safe.

- Ride on the left hand side of the road at all times
- Don't go faster than a slow trot
- If you are riding in a group stay together, either two abreast or in single file
- If you ride on the road often it might be wise to buy a simple reflective vest so you are more visible to motorists, or at least wear light colours
- Never ride your horse on the road at night and avoid riding at dusk as you may not be seen by other road users

- If you are riding with a friend have the most experienced horse closest to the traffic
- When crossing the road halt and face the traffic then check that all is clear by looking left and then right. If you are riding in a group always cross the road together
- Use your hand signals. Always wave to thank a driver if they slow or give way to you.



(From the new PCA D\* Manual (2019))

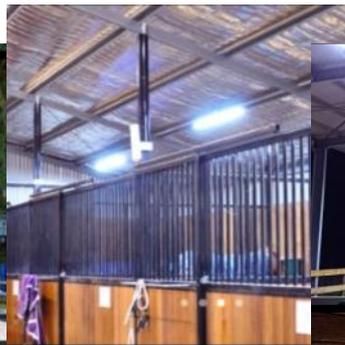


*Is this what they mean by a glowing report from your instructor?*

*We love the intense concentration from riders and ponies, at West Tamar Pony and Riding Club.*

## Sonaray Lighting Stands Out

Pony Club Australia was delighted to welcome Sonaray Equestrian as a sponsor of the National Safety Conference for Horse Sports. Their staff and display showed just what experts they are in the field of equestrian lighting. Sonaray are helping make horse sports safer with LED lighting solutions for arenas and stables that are horse and environment friendly. Sonaray understand horse people need brightness uniformity - no shadows and no glare. Sonaray also says their latest optic lens technology provides more angle options, increases aiming accuracy and reduces spillage waste - savings all round. <https://www.sonaray.com.au/equestrian/>



*Have you asked your local Mitsubishi dealer about the Pony Club discount?*



We are grateful for the support of national sponsors. The Australian Government through Sport Australia recognises Pony Club Australia to develop Pony Club in Australia. The financial support of Sport Australia is gratefully acknowledged.

