

MEDIA RELEASE

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PCA Crowned Pony Club International Mounted Games Exchange Champions

Pony Club Australia has been crowned champion at the 2026 PCIA* International Mounted Games Exchange, defeating teams from the United Kingdom, the United States, New Zealand and Canada following two weeks of cultural exchange that culminated in competition at the Kentucky Horse Park in the United States.

The Australian team claimed the title after demonstrating exceptional teamwork, horsemanship and adaptability throughout the exchange, which saw riders compete on unfamiliar horses while building friendships with young equestrians from around the world.

The final placings were:

1. Australia
2. United Kingdom
3. United States
4. New Zealand
5. Canada

Representing Australia were **Bailey Logue** (Aberdeen Pony Club, New South Wales), **Chelsea Davidge** (Darwin Horse and Pony Club, Northern Territory), **Jack Hamilton** (Woodlands Pony Club, Victoria), **Ellie Steele** (Swan Valley Pony Club, Western Australia) and **Ruby Atkins** (Deloraine District Pony Club, Tasmania).

The team was coached by **Karen Pearce** (Leven Pony Club, Tasmania) and managed by **Edwina Hare** (Apsley Pony Club, Victoria).

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Pony Club Australia is the national governing body for Pony Club in Australia

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Pony Club Australia Board Chair MaryLou Hodges said the result was a proud moment for the entire Pony Club community.

“On behalf of Pony Club Australia, I congratulate this exceptional group of young riders and their support team on an outstanding achievement,” Ms Hodges said.

“To represent Australia is a tremendous honour, and to do so with such professionalism, humility and team spirit makes this result even more meaningful. They have done themselves, their clubs, their states and the entire Pony Club community proud.”

“Success at this level does not happen overnight. It reflects years of commitment from riders, families, coaches, volunteers and Pony Clubs across the country, all of whom play a part in helping young people develop as riders, horse people and leaders.”

Pony Club Australia CEO Matt Helmers said the victory highlighted the unique opportunities international exchanges provide.

“International exchanges are among the most rewarding experiences Pony Club can offer,” Mr Helmers said.

“These riders travelled halfway around the world, partnered with horses they had never met, adapted to unfamiliar conditions and competed against some of the best young Mounted Games riders internationally. That takes courage, resilience and trust in the skills they have developed through Pony Club.”

“While we are thrilled to celebrate the result, what makes us equally proud is the way the team embraced every aspect of the exchange. They built friendships across borders, represented Australia with integrity and returned home having gained experiences that extend far beyond the competition arena.”

The exchange also produced individual recognition, with **Bailey Logue** from Aberdeen Pony Club receiving the Best Sportsmanship Award, as adjudged by the Chief Steward.

Mr Helmers said the award was a fitting reflection of Pony Club’s values.

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“Sportsmanship is one of the foundations of Pony Club. We want our members to be competitive, but we also want them to be respectful, supportive and generous in the way they conduct themselves.”

“For Bailey to be recognised by the Chief Steward from an international field speaks volumes about the way he approached the exchange. It is a wonderful achievement and one that his family, Aberdeen Pony Club, Pony Club NSW and the wider Pony Club community can be incredibly proud of.”

The victory marked Pony Club Australia’s first International Mounted Games Exchange title since 2019, when **Karen Pearce** served as the Australian team manager. Seven years later, she returned as coach to help guide a new generation of riders to the top of the podium.

Pony Club Australia congratulates the riders, coach, manager, their families, clubs, state associations and the many volunteers and supporters who contributed to the team’s success.

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