

My Week at the YOUTH WORLD CUP

By Sarah Black

Tuesday June 22nd- Caught my first ever flight leaving Toronto heading to L.A at 6:00 p.m. Then, we left L.A at 10:55 that evening and arrived in Sydney Australia at 6:50 in the morning on the 24th. By this time the team had been all together during the 14 hour flight from L.A to Sydney and had gotten to know each other a little better. Everything seemed to be going smoothly as far as everybody having their luggage with them, this was until we tried to clear customs in Sydney. Being as we were the first of 12 countries to check our luggage through, the officials at the Sydney airport were caught off guard and unprepared when we arrived with boxes full of tack and horse equipment. They decided they were going to detoxify everything that related to being used on a horse. Soon the airport was flooded with unpacked Canadian tack that was sprawled all over the floor. Everything of everybody's was unpacked, and lying on the floor either drying from already having sprayed or in the line to be sprayed. It was quite a scene to see! When that excitement was over we met up with our coach, Scott Neuman, who had been visiting friends in Brisbane the previous week. Then all together we were going to take a 6 hour bus ride to get to Dubbo (where the horse competition was to be held). As a federal law throughout Australia, luggage cannot be stowed within a vehicle; it must be placed in a trailer behind the vehicle. Knowing this, we ordered a very large trailer to go with the bus we had rented, only the trailer wasn't quite big enough. So we rode the bus, with a full trailer and luggage packed down the aisles and on the empty seats. We arrived in Dubbo, 7 and a half hours later, and proceeded to check into our hotel. Unfortunately something had gotten messed up in the booking of the rooms and we were not booked for that evening. So we got back into our little bus and spent the night at another hotel.

Friday June 25th- In the morning we moved back to the Cattlemans Inn (where we would stay for the duration of the youth world cup competition). It was really neat because all the teams for the competition were all staying at the same hotel. All the 7 girls on our team got to stay in one big room together. We had a house! There was a kitchen, living room and dining room downstairs and upstairs there were 2 rooms with double beds in it. 1 room with two single beds in it and another with one single room in it. We also had three bathrooms with two that had showers. The first night, the team members decided we would save money on food and cook dinner for everybody. So we went to the grocery store across the road and bought food to cook for dinner. That night we spent talking forever with the whole team, parents, Judy and Scott.

Saturday June 26th- Today was a pretty relaxing day for the most part, we walked down to the main street of Dubbo and went shopping and touring in the morning. We ate leftovers from the night before as our supper before we left for the evenings event. That evening at 6:00 we had a formal introduction to all the other teams, and spent a while mixing with them and getting to know them a little better. After that we went to bed and prepared for our week of waking up at 4:30 and going to bed at 10:30-11:00.

Sunday June 27th- Woke up at 4:30 am, ate breakfast at 5:30 am and caught the bus and was on the way to the zoo by 6:00 am. We arrived at the *Western Plains Zoo* at 6:30 and took part in a behind the scenes walk through the zoo to see the animals in their feeding and rising process. Breakfast was served at the Zoo. Following breakfast we drew for our pool of horses. Matt Hudson from our team went up and drew 'H'. After that we spent free time seeing more sights of the zoo. At 12:30 we caught the bus to travel to Dubbo showground where we were served lunch by T.J's catering and had a welcome by the Town's people of Australia. After that we went to find our group of horses and spent time setting up the tack stalls and our stall curtains. Then the competing team members took the horses out to try them out and see what we had. We had drawn a young bunch of horses, with barley two senior horses. We rode them all, and so far things were going good! We left the fairgrounds at 5:00 and went back to the hotel to get ready for dinner that evening. After dinner we had to perform our skit to help inform other countries a little more about your country. Everything went well, all the countries were quite creative and entertaining. We left the RSL Club resort at 10:00 pm and were in bed by 11:00.

Monday June 28th- Every morning for the rest of the week was the same. Wake up at 4:30, breakfast at 5:30 and on the bus by 6:00. At the Dubbo show grounds the first clinic of the day was showmanship. I took Blue in it, and it went not too bad. The clinicians were Holly Hover and Sandy Arledge, they were also the clinicians for the entire week. Later that morning was the horsemanship clinic, I took Chic, our 12 yr all around horse. It went pretty good and we were pretty certain that I would show her in the horsemanship class. Following the clinic we ate lunch (which seemed to have a repetitive trend for the entire time we were there of curried chicken and lasagna). Following lunch we had free ride time and then barn chores. We left the fairgrounds at 3:00 and caught the bus at 4:00 to take us to the Dinner which was held at the Old Dubbo Gaol. We took a tour of it, to see what prison life was like 200 years ago. Once again dinner was served by T.J's catering (for the entire week their dinner menu

was cold chicken and pasta salad) Before dinner we were delayed because we had to wait for the mayor of Dubbo to show up. While waiting the teams began performing impromptu dances and songs in front of everyone to pass the time. An hour and a half later the mayor arrives, after delivering a half hour speech about their upcoming election, we FINALLY got to eat!

Tuesday June 29th- Once at the show grounds, the first clinic we had was the western pleasure clinic. I took Blue in it and, being he was only four, he had a lot of work to do before he was ready to show well. Sandy helped me work through transitions helping him to hold himself up without constant support from me. He started to catch on. It seemed that I really got along well with this horse. Following the western pleasure clinic I watched the trail clinic. Later that day was the hunter under saddle clinic. Again I took Blue, we knew he was more of a western horse but he loped cute enough and once he figured out HOW to trot, he was really cute. I worked with the clinicians about pushing out his trot and keeping his head more steady. That evening (like many others) we had a cold chicken repeat dinner at the RSL Club. Our evenings entertainment was poems read by Carol Heuchen and a whip cracking demonstration by Rex Baldwin and Andrew Thomas.

Wednesday June 30th- The first clinic today was the equitation clinic. I took our black horse in it. Things went pretty good although the horse seemed to get stressed once he had done a lot of patterns. The next clinic was the western riding clinic, which I watched. That evening we had dinner at a Homestead where we got a tour of the homestead, BBQ dinner and country music.

Thursday July 1st- The competition has begun! (well sort of) We had two riders that were going to do the cutting. Jessie Godin and Matt Hudson. Both had only ridden cutting 5 times and neither had shown it. Matt took part in the first cutting clinic, where the owners would help you and teach you how to cut on that horse. Following the first set of clinics the youth would return and compete in the first cutting competition receiving a score from two judges. The afternoon worked the same for Jessie. Following the second cutting competition everyone returned to the lunch room where the top ten placers were awarded their medals. Jessie received a 4th and a 6th place finish. That evening we had dinner once again at the RSL Club resort where our evening entertainment was a country singer Pam Spencer.

Friday July 2nd- The reining worked much the same as the cutting. Those in the first competition would ride in the morning clinic then show when the clinic was through. Those in the second clinic would ride in the second clinic and show when it was finished. Matt Brown took Blackie in the first clinic and everything seemed to be going good. However, when he went to show the horse - it took off! Matt had to forfeit his ride. Following the reining competition #1 the owner of Blackie came up to us and informed us that that horse does that every time he shows. (*well thanks for that!*) Jessica showed our broke all around mare, Chick, she did really well since it was her first time showing reining. Under one judge she received a 9th place. That evening we had to make a few rearrangements to replace Blackie with, since there was no way we were going to show an unsafe horse like that. So we compromised and arranged that I would show Blue in western pleasure, hunter under saddle and equitation. I would show Chick in horsemanship. That night we ate dinner at the Hogs breath café. It was so great to finally have a good meal! I think that made everybody feel better about the upcoming show tomorrow and the next day. At dinner we sat with the coach of the American Team, Debbie Cavalier and talked to her about everything.

Saturday July 3rd- Luckily today we didn't have to leave the hotel until 6:30. (that extra half an hour of sleep was much appreciated by everyone). We arrived at the show grounds at 7:00 and began show preparation. The class schedule was Showmanship, Trail, Western Pleasure, Horsemanship...lunch...Western Riding, Hunter Under Saddle, Equitation.

Showmanship placings:

Jessie Godin & Chick- 3rd

Jessica Conti &Blue- 7th

Emily Sullivan & Scotch- *finals*

Western Riding

Jessica & Chick- 7th

Hunter Under Saddle

Jessica Conti- 4th

Sarah & Blue- 1st

Western Pleasure

Emily & Chick-1st
Sarah & Blue- 4th
Matt & Tommy- *finals*

Equitation

Jessica Conti & Scotch- 2nd
Sarah & Blue - 7th
Jessie & Chick- *finals*

Things looked pretty good after the first day. We were starting to make a come back in points.

Sunday July 4th- and so it begins again!

Showmanship placings:

Jessie Godin & Chick- 1st
Jessica Conti & Blue- 8th
Emily Sullivan & Scotch- *finals*

Western Riding

Jessica & Chick- 4th

Trail Results:

Jessica & Chick-7th

Hunter Under Saddle

Jessica Conti- *finals*
Sarah & Blue- 3rd
Emily & Scotch- 10th

Western Pleasure

Emily & Chick-6th
Sarah & Blue- 5th
Matt & Tommy- 3rd

Equitation

Jessica Conti & Scotch- 8th
Sarah & Blue - 3rd

Horsemanship

Jessica & Chick- 1st
Sarah & Chick- 9th
Emily & Scotch - *finals*

Following the competition we quickly returned any borrowed items to the owners, packed up all our tack and said goodbye to our newly acquainted horses and left the Dubbo show grounds for the last time. That evening at 6:30 we gathered for the awards banquet at the Dubbo War Memorial Center. Canada finished third behind the USA and Australia. However, many awards were received by team Canada: I was the high point Hunter Under Saddle of the show, Jessie was the res. High Point Showmanship of the show and Emily was the res. High point Western Pleasure of the show. Also our older mare, Chick was the High point horse of the show. We spent the evening saying goodbye to everyone and had a lot of fun dancing to the entertainment by *Southbound* - Australia's leading country/rock music band.

The Youth World Cup was over, but the memories will last a life time. I have now made new friends from around the world. Those from the states I plan to meet up with at Congress and as for my Canadian team we agreed to all meet in a year. In 2006 the youth world cup competition will be held in Texas and I strongly encourage any one who is interested at all in it to find out as much they can and go for it!