

NATIONAL PRINCE PHILIP MOUNTED GAMES HOBART 2003

For a period of five months I was lucky enough to be involved as the Tasmanian Coach for the National Prince Philip Mounted Games Team, an annual event that has been held across Australia since 1991. Over that time it has been a pleasure to be involved with a committed group of young riders from across Tasmania, who all enjoyed the honour of being ambassadors for their State.

Anzac day is the date set aside for Team selection, where each zone can have up to six representatives trying out. In 2003 we had three representatives chosen from the North West Zone in Anna Hill, Anna Murton and Asha Rahel. One rider from the Northern Zone in Adrian Walton, and Simon Wilkinson from the Southern Zone. The two reserve riders who were selected to train with the Team were Rose Tasker (North) and Ele Carroll (South). Once the Team was selected the only piece missing from the puzzle was a Team Manager or Chaperone. Carol Tasker applied and was welcomed by all.

Training commenced on Sunday 8th June and basically ran every fortnight from there right through to the competition on the 27th September. With Team Members coming from all over the State, we let all zones accommodate training, an area which in itself helped the squad to bond and work together. Carol Tasker and all parents of the squad worked tirelessly throughout the training period to find mounts, gear and grounds to utilise. I cannot thank them enough for their support throughout.



Above: Here we see the enthusiastic squad of seven riders at the Inglis Pony Club facility. From left Anna Murton, Rose Tasker, Ele Carroll, Asha Rahel, Adrian Walton, Anna Hill and Simon Wilkinson.

As the host State for the Prince Philip Cup the Tasmanian Team welcomed all States on arrival to Hobart on Wednesday 24th September. Over the coming two days we toured the city and its surrounds, inspected the Antarctic Adventure complex, became indulged in chocolate at the tour of Cadbury's Chocolate Factory and mingled with Riders from over the country.



Above: Carol Tasker and Riders enjoying the views from the historic Richmond Bridge on day one of the tour.

Friday afternoon saw everyone preparing themselves for the official dinner that was to be held at the Lindisfarne Yacht Club, a perfect spot for the occasion with a picturesque look over the river at Mount Wellington, the Tasman Bridge and Wrest Point Casino. After shirts had been ironed, hair styled and ties straightened we embarked on the bus trip to Lindisfarne. On arrival official team photographs were taken (see below), after which we were shown through to our tables. As the host Team we were the first to speak and introduce ourselves to the many families and honourable guests present at the dinner. Tasmanian riders all spoke well and followed on to enjoy the evening, the exceptional catering and hospitality. Once desert had been devoured we all travelled back to our accommodation at Wirksworth, Bellerive for a good nights sleep before the competition.



Above: Definitely a neat and tidy outfit taken soon before the dinner commenced

The Tasmanian Team behaved exceptionally and were great ambassadors for their State. They enjoyed the honour of competing and mixing with the best riders in the country. The result of 5th only comes as a bigger incentive for the majority of the team to attempt success next year. The Team members performed and handled themselves well considering it was their first experience in State colours. An insight into what sort of competition they are up against, next year holds high hopes. One area that I wish to implement next year would be direct competing against the Senior Team maybe twice throughout the training period. This would give more affiliation with competing as on games day. The Team's Manager, Carol Tasker was of great assistance in all aspects. Carol organised funding, correspondence, media coverage, training assistance and ponies along with the general welfare of the children. Carol was highly respected by me and all team members.



All in all the four months of training was an enjoyable time, we carried it out together as a squad of seven riders, Carol and myself. The tour was very successful and I would like to thank all involved in its organisation. The representatives of Tasmania had the “time of their life”, it is a period of their life they will never forget and I strongly advise any young riders currently involved in Pony Club to make the National Prince Philip Mounted Games an aim in their career.

Craig Turner
Tasmanian Prince Philip Coach