



MEDIA GUIDE



Photos: Nicole Bartleet

The 2014 Equestrian Grand Final is presented by:



Supporting Sponsors:





2014 EVENT INFORMATION

OFFICIAL EVENT NAME

Equestrian Grand Final

VENUE

Melbourne Showgrounds, Flemington, VICTORIA

PRESENTED BY

Equestrian Australia & EQUITANA Melbourne

SUPPORTING SPONSORS

IRT, Gow Gates Insurance Brokers

WHEN

Thursday 20 – Saturday 22 November 2012

COMPETITION SCHEDULE

Exhibition Eventing	Thursday 20 November – Dressage 12:30pm, Jumping 6pm
Jumping	Friday 21 November – 1 st Round 10am, Final 7:30pm
Dressage	Friday 21 November – Grand Prix 9:30am; Saturday 22 November – Freestyle 7:30pm

MEDIA CENTRE LOCATION

The Media Centre is located in the Commentary Booth Shed that is situation next to the outdoor arena.

MEDIA CONTACT

Michelle Cook, Equestrian Australia michelle.cook@equestrian.org.au 0414 702 697

MEDIA ACCREDITATION

To ensure you are able to access the competition arenas, please fill in a media accreditation form <http://www.equitana.com.au/media-accreditation.html> or contact Elia Lom on 03 86982000 or email media@equitana.com.au.

PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED TO MEDIA

Equestrian Australia will have pool photos from the Equestrian Grand Final available to all media outlets, free of charge. **Images will be strictly for editorial purposes only.** For any photography requests, please speak to Michelle Cook from Equestrian Australia.

BROADCAST

A one hour highlights package will be shown on Fox Sports on Saturday 20 December at 11am.



Fast facts

How many riders?

43

What disciplines are being contested?

3 – Dressage, Jumping and Exhibition Eventing

How many years has the event been held?

4 – The inaugural event was staged in 2011

Is this an open event?

Athletes must qualify or be awarded a Wild Card position in order to secure a spot in the Equestrian Grand Final.

What's on offer?

The title of Grand Final Champion in each discipline and a total prize pool of more than \$70,000 is up for grabs. A full prize money breakdown is provided under each discipline.

Previous champions

Jumping

2013 Tim Clarke and *Caltango*

2012 Alison Rowland and *Bickley Brook Bella*

2011 David Dobson and *AS Akon*

Exhibition Eventing

2013 Sam Lyle and *Carson Hill*

2012 Shane Rose and *Virgil*

2011 Shane Rose and *Il Vici*

Dressage

2013 Heath Ryan and *Regardez Moi*

2012 Heath Ryan and *Regardez Moi*

2011 Heath Ryan and *Regardez Moi*

Are there any Olympians competing?

- Sonja Johnson (2008, Beijing Olympics – Eventing, Silver Medallist)
- Megan Jones (2008, Beijing Olympics – Eventing, Silver Medallist)
- Shane Rose (2008, Beijing Olympics – Eventing, Silver Medallist)
- Dirk Schrade (GER), (2012, London – Eventing, Gold Medallist)
- Mary Hanna (1996, 2000, 2004, 2012 – Dressage)
- Heath Ryan (2008, Beijing Olympics – Dressage)
- Vicki Roycroft (1984 – Eventing, 1988, 1996 – Jumping)
- Russell Johnstone (1996, Atlanta – Jumping)

What is the Equestrian Grand Final?

In 2011 Equestrian Australia joined forces with Definitive Events, the organisers of EQUITANA in Australia, to develop a national annual Equestrian Grand Final for Dressage, Jumping and Exhibition Eventing.

The vision for the Equestrian Grand Final is to bring together Australia's leading competitors in Dressage, Jumping and Eventing in one spectacular event. This concept provides a unique opportunity to showcase the very best athletes from the Olympic disciplines in a professional and dynamic competition environment.

Equestrian Australia would like to thank official partners Influence Equestrian Grand Final Gow Gates and IRT – as well as EQUITANA, whom without this competition would not be possible.

This event aims to help EA achieve many of the sport's long term goals including attracting new members, sponsors and fans as well as creating more profile for our athletes and the sport as a whole. For all the latest initiatives the sport is undertaking please visit www.equestrian.org.au.



Dressage

CDI-W Grand Prix: Friday 21st November 9:30am, Grand Pavilion

CDI-W Grand Prix Freestyle: Saturday 22nd November 7:30pm, Grand Pavilion

What is Dressage?

The word “dressage” is French for “training.” It is considered the classical foundation for all equestrian training. Dressage tests the ability of horse and rider to display both athletic prowess and supreme elegance. It is often compared to ballet. Dressage requires precision, technical excellence and harmony between horse and rider.

The Basics

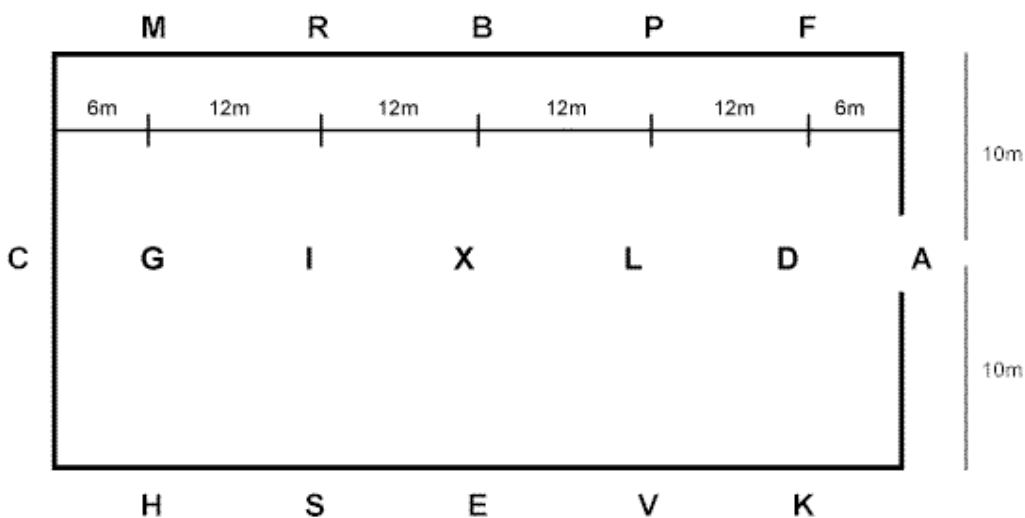
In modern dressage competitions, the horse and rider perform a set series of movements known as a Dressage “test”. The tests are performed in a 60m x 20m arena before a panel of seven judges, who award marks out of 10 for individual movements and for the overall routine.

The highest level of the sport is known as Grand Prix. On average it takes between 6 and 8 years to get a dressage horse to the Grand Prix level. Grand Prix horses usually range in age from 10 years to 20 years. Warmblood horses are the most popular breed for dressage due to their athletic aptitude for the sport, including extravagant paces, power and temperament.

There are three “tests” at Grand Prix level, the Grand Prix, the Grand Prix Special and the Grand Prix Freestyle, also known as the “Kür”. In the Grand Prix and the Grand Prix Special, all riders and horses perform a set test. Only the best performed combinations go on to compete in the Freestyle.

The Freestyle is a favourite for the spectators as it allows riders to choreograph their own routines set to their choice of music. The scores in the Freestyle decide the winners of the individual competition.

Below is a 60m x 20m Dressage arena. The horses and riders enter at A. The letters mark where the “movements” must be performed. Riders must memorise the test. A Grand Prix test consists of 33 movements.



**Dressage Grand Final**

The Dressage Grand Final has gathered some of Australia's best Grand Prix dressage combinations of the moment to compete for the 2014 title. Each combination will perform a Grand Prix test on Friday before the 12 highest ranked progress through to the Freestyle competition.

The Freestyle sees riders perform a test which they have choreographed to their choice of music making it a popular spectator event.

The competition is held as an FEI Pacific League World Cup Qualifier (CDI-W) and will be conducted under FEI rules.

How did the athletes qualify?

Five significant Australian dressage competitions acted as qualifying events for the 2014 Dressage Grand Final. The combinations that recorded the highest Grand Prix Freestyle scores from these five events automatically secured a position for the Final.

Combinations were permitted to compete at multiple qualifiers but only their best result was counted.

The qualification series included:

24-26 Jan	Boneo Park CDI3* (Boneo, VIC)
13-16 Feb	Dressage with Altitude CDI3* (Orange, NSW)
27-30 Mar	Dressage with the Stars (Werribee, VIC)
1-3 May	Sydney CDI3* (Sydney, NSW)
26-28 Jul	Brisbane CDI-W (Brisbane, QLD)

What's on offer?

The 2014 Dressage Grand Final crown and more than \$26,000 in prize money with the winner of the Grand Prix Freestyle to receive \$6,000.



Jumping

Friday 21 November – 1st Round 10am, Final 7:30pm, Grand Pavilion

What is Jumping?

Jumping requires horse and rider to navigate a course of jumps with rails that fall if knocked, resulting in penalties thus demanding precision, speed and perfect technique.

Jumping is a very exciting spectator sport with riders pushing the limits of speed and ability. Jumping riders must be incredibly measured and accurate, even under the enormous pressure of a jump-off. The smallest mistake can be very expensive.

The highest level in Jumping is 5-Star Grand Prix. At this level the maximum height of a vertical jump is 1.60m and maximum width of a spread (triple bar) can be 2.20m. At the Equestrian Grand Final you can expect the jump-off course to include 1.60m fences.

Jumping was the first equestrian discipline included at an Olympic Games.

The Basics

Held in an arena around a short course containing 12-14 fences, the event requires huge reserves of boldness, accuracy and nerves of steel, from both the riders and their horses.

Combinations are penalised for jumping faults and time exceeded over the optimum time. In a “jump-off” the fastest clear round wins.

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Jargon buster

Clear round: A round without any faults.

Fault: Penalty points awarded for making a mistake: for instance, knocking down a jump or exceeding the allotted time.

Jump-off: If one or more riders are tied for first place after the final scheduled round, there may be an extra round of competition, known as a jump-off which is ridden against the clock.

Refusal: When a horse stops at a jump, incurring faults.



Jumping Grand Final

18 Grand Prix Jumping riders and horses will compete in the Equestrian Grand Final. Spectators will be very close to the action in the spectacular indoor Grand Pavilion - adding to the edge-of your-seat experience.

The Grand Prix will be a CSI-W two-round competition held at night.

How did the athletes qualify?

Qualification for the Jumping Grand Final was held in conjunction with the Australian League of the FEI World Cup Series. The best placed combinations on the leaderboard following the first seven rounds of the season automatically earned a start at this year's Final. Equestrian Australia awarded wild card entries which brings the start list to 18.

The qualification series included:

27 Apr	Greater Sydney CSI-W (Sydney, NSW)
3 Aug	Gatton CSI-W (Gatton, QLD)
9 Aug	Caboolture CSI-W (Caboolture, QLD)
13 Aug	Brisbane Royal CSI-W (Brisbane, QLD)
31 Aug	Gawler CSI-W (Gawler, SA)
11 Sep	Adelaide Royal CSI-W (Adelaide, SA)
28 Sep	Melbourne Royal CSI-W (Melbourne, VIC)

What's on offer?

The title of 2014 Jumping Grand Final Champion, valuable World Cup points and \$20,000 in prize money with first place to walk away with \$7,700.



Exhibition Eventing

Thursday 20 November – Dressage 12:30pm, Jumping 6pm, **TuffRock Arena**

What is Exhibition Eventing?

Exhibition Eventing is an exciting modified version of traditional eventing which captures the spirit and skill of the traditional format all within an arena. Exhibition Eventing starts with a dressage phase and ends with a combined cross country and jumping component. Where a traditional eventing competition can span several days, Exhibition Eventing takes place on the same day and is completed in the space of a few hours.

Combinations start by performing a dressage test with results from this first phase to seed the riders for the Jumping phase. Riders then complete the jumping phase and pick up four faults for any rails they knock down however unlike traditional eventing they are not penalised for stops and run outs. This simply costs them time to re-present. Time is something that combinations cannot afford to waste as riders compete against the clock with one penalty awarded for every second a combination is over the optimum time. For the brave and the desperate there will be a joker fence - this is a show jump set much higher than any other fence and if jumped successfully wipes four penalties off their overall score. If knocked down it costs 8 penalties.

Australia has a rich history in eventing with many riders enjoying success on the world stage.

Exhibition Eventing Grand Final

The 2014 Equestrian Grand Final has gathered some of our top riders for a grand showdown.

How did the athletes qualify?

Athletes were provided with two opportunities to qualify for the Exhibition Eventing Grand Final. The top four riders from each of these events automatically qualified for the Final. Wildcard entries increases the startlist to 14.

The qualification series included:

16 Mar Wallaby Hill

21 Sep Melbourne Royal Show

What's on offer?

The 2014 Exhibition Eventing Grand Final title and \$20,000 in prize money with the winner to take home \$5,000.

There will be a \$500 bonus awarded to the winner of the dressage phase and \$1,000 to be split between all riders to jump clear within the time including the joker.