

“THE WORD HAS GOT AROUND”

With apologies to Banjo Patterson and The man from Snowy River!

The past decade has seen the Connemara Pony being used to a greater degree as a performance pony in Australia with both the Pure bred and Part bred competing in various pony and open disciplines. Not only are these ponies performing well but in many cases they are out classing many of their opponents of all breeds. Below are just a few of these ponies that are competing throughout Australia with great credit to the breed and their owners and riders.

STRICKLAND PARK JO'S REBEL – Greenhills Rebel – Ballantrae Jaffa This Stallion Pony has competed whilst performing Stud Duties for a number of years. “Rebel” has competed in Ridden, Dressage, Hunter, Combined and Show jumping.

He has taken the Ridden Connemara class at the Melbourne Royal from 2003 – 2007. He won the 2005 - 2007 Ridden Mountain and Moorland class at the Melbourne Royal. In 2005 he won the prodigious Barastoc Ridden Saddle Stallion class and went on in 2007 to take out the Barostoc Ridden Show Hunter Mountain and Moorland section. He had dominated the APSB (Australian Pony Stud Book) shows with best performed Mountain and Moorland and Best Show Hunter classes winning each event from 2004 – 2007.

“Rebel” received a bad leg injury in 2007 and has not competed since that date. He has a son “Strickland Park Duke” who is now showing the same qualities as his Sire in both dressage and Show Jumping. “Rebel” is based in Victoria.

CAPPARIS HIGH ROLLER, a pure bred gelding (Domo Cavallo Praize – Glengarry Patsy Malone (Abbeyley Finbar) is performing extremely well in Dressage and was the 2007 Official Dressage pony of the year. In 2008 he was awarded the State Pony Club Elementary Championship and also reserve Champion Official Elementary Pony of the year. “Roller” is owned and ridden in Queensland.

NOWEDDIE NICHOLAS – (GI Clanaboy O'Neill –Rainey Island Jo) is another Connemara pony that is performing well in the Dressage field. In 2008 he was awarded the National Pony Preliminary Dressage Champion and the National Pony Novice Dressage reserve Champion ship ribbons.

RIVERDELL PARK CAPELLA – (Glenormiston Slipper – Colaur Colleen) has been performing extremely well at Pony Club events. In 2008 the mare was awarded the PC Zone Showjump and Equitation Championships – 1st in both 17 – 26 yrs Equitation rounds, Champion 17 – 26 yrs Equitation, 1st in all three classes of Pony and Galloway Showjumping, Champion Pony and Galloway Showjumping. Together with the above, the mare was awarded 4 State Pony Club medals from 4 appearances in Show jumping and combined training. Not bad for just one years activities! But of course, she is a Connemara so what else would you expect!

Both Nicholas and Capella are Queensland based.

Finally – the classic performance!

GLENORMISTON CONNAUGHT - (Domo Cavallo Praize - Glenormiston Fionnuala) a 6 year old gelding recently arrived in South Australia and is resident at the Dawkins Stud and being ridden by Alice Dawkins.

On his arrival Connaught had very little training and had an adversity to the jumping game as Alice quickly found out. Connaught's training went to back basics and in a short time he quickly indicated that he had considerable ability in the performance field.

His first appearance was at the *All breeds Ridden Show* in Gawler South Australia on 25th January 2009. This was Connaught's first ever outing. The results speak for themselves:

First place :

Led overheight Connemara
Ridden Overheight Connemara
Best presented Horse and Handler
Champion Ridden Connemara.
Open Galloway 14 – 15hh
Pony Club Mount 14 – 15hh
Champion Pony Club Mount.

Second Place:

Rider 12 – 16 yrs
Pony Club rider 12 – 16 yrs
Ridden Pleasure hack
Maiden Galloway 14 – 15hh
Galloway 14.2 – 15hh.

At the Mt Crawford Dressage Club meeting 28/2/09

1st Junior class EFA test 1,1 with 66.6%
Third Junior Class for EFA test 1.4

Strathalbyn Dressage 1/03/09

3rd Open class test EF 1.3 and 4th EFA test 1.1

At Black Hill Pony Club Eventing 15/3/09

7th PC grade 4 event.

At Reynella Horse Trials and competing with open company riders and horses, in a class of 25 competitors – placed 3rd dressage, clear Show jumping, and because of his experience, a quite cross Country where he finished without penalty Placed 9th overall.

The combination heads to Naracoorte 17th May for the Naracoorte One day event and then in June to Monarto, One day event. I for one will be interested in the results from these two Events.

Once again this indicates the ability of the Connemara pony to compete extremely well in the Performance arenas, and given the right training and with a competent rider, the combination can and usually does perform equally well as, and in fact better than, most other competitors. Which of course, we Connemara owners and breeders have know for a long time. As the heading states - the word has got around... !