How to Host a Pony Club Open Day

Photograph taken by Christine Kettlewell

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Pony Club Open Day guide

Each year Clubs are encouraged to host an Open Day. An Open Day is an occasion on which an institution, such as a sports club, is open for inspection by the public. The purpose behind holding an Open Day is:

✓ To raise awareness of your club in your local community,
✓ Create an opportunity for people to see what being a member of your Pony Club is all about.
✓ To increase memberships.
✓ Increase financial revenue for your club with increased memberships.
✓ Enhance clubs reputation. Your club’s image is one of your most valuable products or assets. A good image, created through effective marketing, attracts new members, appeals to potential sponsors and encourages people to participate.
✓ Enhance relationships in the local community. Enables the opportunity to form new relationships and build on current relationships with members and the community.
✓ Increased resources, both financially and through attracting more volunteers.

This state wide initiative is for Club’s to hold an Open day at a date that best suits the Club in that year. The Club will need to notify the State office if they are planning to hold an Open Day preferably at the end of the preceding year and before the 31st March of the proposed year. This enables the office to secure the required amount of merchandise and promotional material in advance.

Please refer to the following points as a brief guideline to holding an effective Open Day.

Open Day guidelines

Before the event;

Arrange date and venue for your Club Open Day. Notify the Marketing and Events Coordinator at the State office and provide a postal address for the Open Day pack to be posted to. Please do this as soon as possible, preferably at the end of the preceding year or early in the new year. (At the latest date before the 31st March of the proposed year.)

An Open Day pack will be posted to the address provided. The pack will include Pony Club NSW brochures, posters and other branded merchandise for your club to use in the promotion of your Pony Club.

✓ Arrange activities. Be prepared and ensure all club members are clear on how the day will run. Some examples of activities are;
  - Riding demonstrations
  - Vaulting drum for individuals to trial vaulting on
  - Bend and flag races running on foot
  - Educational talk, and demonstration, on horse health and proper care
  - Horse makeover class preparing the horse for show
  - Invite local businesses and industry representatives, e.g. horse masseuse, chiropractor, local saddlery
  - Sausage sizzle
  - Competition or raffle prize if able to secure a prize from local supplier
  - You could hold an Open Day as a part of a normal Rally day and invite members of the public to see what Pony Club is all about. Pony Club NSW now has ‘Come and Try’ Day memberships for persons wishing to participate in a Pony Club Rally day who are not registered riding members of a NSW Pony Club. Please find information relating to this and the necessary forms at the end of this document. This type of membership is for Club Rally Days only.
✓ Information desk – should be manned by volunteers who welcome individuals, provide brochure, membership form, answer questions and record contact details to follow up afterwards
✓ Develop and distribute flyers or posters advertising the Open Day. An example has been provided in
this guide for your modification and use. Possible places to position the flyer include; saddlery, feed store, local schools, shopping centre notice boards, library, internet cafe, swimming pool.

- Promote the Open Day through local radio. Most radio websites have a community switchboard allowing you to enter your event details online at no charge.
- Promote the Open Day through local television. Most networks publicise local community events at no charge. Simply check out their website for more information.
- Promote the Open Day throughout the club. Use rally days, your website or newsletter to let members know when it’s on.
- Write and email a media release to the local newspapers. Details on writing a Media Release have been provided in this guide for your modification and use. Be sure to send this out around two weeks before the event.

Please note: for insurance purposes only current financial members are permitted to ride at this event. Please note that Pony Club NSW now has ‘Come and Try’ Day memberships for persons wishing to participate in a Pony Club Rally day who are not registered riding members of a NSW Pony Club. Please find information relating to this and the necessary forms at the end of this document. This type of membership is for Club Rally Days only.

On the day;
- Conduct the Open Day as pre-arranged.
- Sign up members and then forward details to the state office.
- Promote the Open Day through local radio.
- Take photographs on the day.

After the event;
- Write a post event Media Release and send to local newspapers with photographs of the day. Follow up with those who attended but did not join on the day.
- Send the Marketing Co-ordinator any photographs or Media Releases. Complete the post Open Day questionnaire and return to the State Office. Notifying the Marketing Coordinator of how your day went, and how many new members signed up.

Writing a Media Release
Source: Catriona Dixon -journalist, The Daily Telegraph Following provides some helpful tips on writing a Media Release.

Presentation
- Must be typed on letterhead
- Identify it as a media release on the top left
- Date it top right
- Use a catchy headline
- Use one side of the paper only and keep to one page when possible
- Check for spelling and typos

Information
- Who, what, when, why, where and how?
- Short paragraphs. Clear sentences. Use layman’s terms
- Your first paragraph is short and punchy. It is the story in a nutshell
- Provide news angles (ie focus on what is news – check your local paper for ideas.)
- Use present tense and active language
- Include important facts and statistics but don’t overload
- Use quotes to support your release
- Have someone proof your release
- Keep a Media Contact Book. This will make getting media releases out easier eg;
NAME: Biff Reynolds  
ORGANISATION: The Weekly Telegraph  
ROUND: for example, social welfare reporter/housing reporter/transport reporter  
TELEPHONE: (02) 0978 34845  
MOBILE: 0411 111111  
FAX: (02) 9864 43453  
E-MAIL: biffreynolds@weeklytelegraph.com.au  
WEBSITE: www.writeaboute.com.au  
DEADLINES: prints 4pm Tuesday, prefers copy by 4pm Friday.  
NOTES: Is interested in sports politics and participation of children in sport.

Contacts  
- Provide a contact telephone, mobile, fax and email for more information  
- Make sure the contact person is available and returns calls promptly

The Media  
- Identify the media you are targeting  
- Take time to find out how they prefer to receive information (email/phone/fax) and what their deadlines are  
- Don’t be pushy, instead willingly provide information and be prepared to assist the journalist in their pursuit of a story  
- Follow up your release with a short phone call: “Just wanted to ensure you received our release and let you know we are available to help you in anyway possible”  
- Develop a relationship with the journalists you regularly deal with

Useful Media Contacts  
- If you have a particularly great story then email it to the following equine sources;  
  Horse Deals -gallery@horsedeals.com  
  Horse Yard -editor@horseyard.com.au  
  Virtual Equestrian -admin@cyberhorse.net.au www.cyberhorse.com.au  
  The Land -theland.saddleup@bigpond.com

Photographs  
You don’t have to be a professional photographer to take good photo’s. Most digital cameras will be appropriate. Photo’s should be around 1MB in size or larger and in JPG format. Photo’s should be attached as separate files to the email with captions in the body of the email detailing who is in the photo’s and the who is the photographer. Attaching high resolution quality photos to your media release will greatly increase the chances of your story being published.

Examples  
Please find examples of Open Day Media Releases in the following pages. You can use these as the basis for writing, and sending, your own media releases. For more examples head to the state website under the Publications tab. To assist you with the designing a flyer for your Open Day you will also find an example of a flyer in the following pages.
**Open day a smash hit**

YOUNG riders in Gunnedah improved their skills and picked up a host of new talents as well as a host of event.

Show jumping, dressage, and cut and groomer were all on offer at Gunnedah Pony Club's first ever open day.

Dozens of local children took part in the event, part of a Pony Club NSW NEMC at a host of the sport.

Club main instructor Maree Hardt says Gunnedah's first-ever event has been a success with the children picking valuable skills in the area.

"We were happy with how it turned out," she said.

"The children got to learn a few new skills and got generally improved their riding.

"It worked well, the kids enjoyed it and it was a great success.

"This event provided the day before with a show jumping and dressage class, led by experienced coaches Andrew and Ginni Gardner.

"The horsebacked-guided tour of the children through the skills and drills, offering advice based on their own movement riding capes.

Sellers said the day would help the children develop their talents in the sport ahead of both its national and state competitions.

Many of the children are likely to be in action at that event, enjoying the different disciplines on offer.

"We were hoping to further the riding standards at the club," Bickford said.

"We hope the skills they have learned will help them in the Gunnedah Show," she said.

"I think the children took a lot out of it overall and it was a really good event.

**Dressage**

GUNNEDAH riders enjoyed success and advanced to new heights as the New South Wales Association's first-practice day of the year.

Various riders were boosted by local riders at the event, which attracted competition from across the region.

Dazzle Dooland, who finished second at the Junee Festival of Horses, was one of the highlights.

"It was a very good day," Bickford said.

"The riders were very happy with their performance and we are looking forward to the next event.

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**Bridge**

GUNNEDAH Bridge competition last week was a four-handed match against the Marulan Bridge Club.

Elizabeth Friend and Mary O'Connell scored well and nearly won. Leanne chilly and Marja Stenreid both won with Pamela and Lesley Stenreid for second place, while Gabrielle and Lisa Hocking scored well for third place.

"It was a hard-fought battle with the duo edging out the other players and Charles and Sonja on Wednesday with six different players.

Eleven pairs played a round on Monday. Lisa Wheeler and Mary Washington had a good win for North South, finishing well ahead of the field. Only one point separated Mary and Jean Brown in second place, with Caroline Purcell and Carol Bradford in third.

"It was a very good day," Bickford said.

"We are looking forward to the next event.

Players are reminded that this bridge will take place as usual on Easter Monday.

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**Golf**

**Pony Club**

**Humphries is the top dog**

MARK Humphries reigned supreme while Rae Long and Wayne McLean were also reinstated as members of the top 15 at the opening round of the Gunnedah Golf Club.

Humphries took a grade at Saturday's single-stable competition with a score of 36 points.

That effort was enough to see Humphries in the best score of the day.

Rae Long played the second event to finish as the division winner.

Long took the grade on a come-back week from Sunday Champion and the former maiden Macleay and New South Wales Champs.

Macleay held the NAAGA and the NRGW for the first time.

There was also a good day played at the event, which was sponsored by SERTA Electrical and the NRGW of 84 players.

Humphries won the day in the 19th hole.

The match was won by Wayne Somerville (second), Dylan and Andersons Regan (third), Mitchell and Andersons Gurr (fourth), Peachy Wilson (fifth), and Andersons Grass (sixth).

In the 19th competition, both were also won by Ray Dooland, Peter Moore, Peter Maddox, Matt Crampton, Don Eaton, and John Eden.

The first place was taken by Robert Edmundson, Peter Wilson, and Don Jones.

Sunday was the qualifying round for the 21st national tournament. Chris and Pams Reading (44 points), Ian Jones and David Coyle (43 points), and Garry Zeger and Jack Frank all qualified for the 21st national on Sunday.

The championship will be a single-round event for club players.

Monday is the Gunnedah Open for 99.9. It will feature a single-stable event for men and ladies competitions.

All players will play for 24 handicap.

The event is open to all local players.

**Biography**

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