

Pryde's EasiFeed Victorian Dressage Development Squad (VDDS)
2019/2020 Half Yearly report

As the year draws to a close, we would like to update Equestrian Victoria on the activities of the Pryde's EasiFeed Victorian Dressage Development Squad (VDDS).

On August 10 the Squad met at Werribee Park National Equestrian Centre for our first official Squad day.

We used this first meeting to outline the various aims of the program and gauge the general expectations of Squad members.

At this meeting we discussed:

- Squad expectations
- Core Values
- Squad Goals
- The role of the Committee
- The role and responsibility of Squad members, and
- Squad activities

It was a valuable conversation to have to ensure that both Squad and rider expectations aligned. From this meeting we were able to construct the VDDS Athlete Agreement.

In the afternoon we enjoyed a presentation from nutritionist Bonnie Chivers from "The Well-Being"
<https://thewell-being.wixsite.com/mysite-1>

Bonnie provoked an interesting discussion about food labeling, food choices and the relevance of rider nutrition in relation to athlete performance and general health and wellbeing. Everyone came away armed with the importance of a healthy diet!

Our next Squad activity was held on September 7. "An Evening with Brett Parbery" was billed as an hour-long presentation on the Dressage NSW High Performance Model. Ever generous with his time and knowledge, this session soon morphed into an almost two-hour general discussion that also delivered competition tips, mindset management and general anecdotes about the international sport of Dressage. It was an inspiring night!

In order to help Squad members fine tune their test riding in time for the Serata Equine 2019 Dressage Festival in December, our final Squad activity for 2019 was a Protocol Day with Claire Ballantyne at Boneo Park on November 23. Claire is BHSI International Trainer, German FN Bereiter, German Silver Medal Rider and Grand Prix Judge. The riders that participated in this activity reported that the feedback was invaluable. Additionally, we organised for the riders to have a Q & A Session with Squad members and B level Judges, Keryn Connors and Ally O'Neill. This was also well received as a great refresher on test riding from a judge's perspective as well as a chance to clarify the requirements of various movements, the importance of reading the directives on your Test Sheets and the existence of the FEI Dressage Handbook!

On the administration front, we would like to advise that Matt Archibald has stepped down from the VDDS Committee and so we would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all of his help to date with the Squad.

It has been a wonderful and positive start to this new initiative, and we have enjoyed with the enthusiasm and camaraderie that has been displayed within the Squad.

So, as 2019 draws to a close, we would like to congratulate all of the riders on their input into the Squad and we send our best wishes to all riders competing in the upcoming Serata Equine 2019 Dressage Festival.

Rachelle Wilson, Sidney Hoffman and Fiona Anderson
Pryde's EasiFeed Victorian Dressage Development Squad Committee.