

THE SYDNEY CDI

Australia's Premier Dressage Event

7 - 9 May 2015 Sydney International Equestrian Centre, Horsley Park



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Elite judges travel Down Under for Sydney CDI 3*

Eight international judges are currently preparing to travel Down Under for this year's Sydney CDI 3*.

Australia's most prestigious dressage competition - held from May 7 to 9 - will see more than 200 competitors from across the nation and overseas compete for more than AU\$44,000 in prize money at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre, the home of equestrian sport at the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

Judges from Germany, the USA, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Belgium, South Africa and France will assist their Australian counterparts during the competition.

It will be the third visit to Australia for Munich-based 5* judge Katrina Wuest, who judged at Werribee in 2011 and Sydney in 2013.

Ms Wuest will cast a highly experienced eye over Sydney CDI competitors, having previously judged at Young Horse World Championships, Pony World Championships and four World Cup finals.

Later this year she will step into the role of Ground Jury President at the Aachen European Championships, as well as the inaugural European Championships for Children taking place in France.

While the visit to Sydney will be "hop-in, hop-out" for Ms Wuest ahead of a 5* show in Munich, she considers her trip very important as it gives local riders valuable feedback to compare their performance on a world scale.

"The international top judges know what the worldwide standard is and clearly express through their percentages where each rider stands in relation to competitors from other countries," she said.

"In Australia as well as in New Zealand, you can always feel that people - riders, trainers and judges colleagues - have a long tradition as horse people. On the other hand, due to the geographic situation, riders don't have the same chance to compare with other competitors and "grow" through this competition as riders in Europe have, unless the Australian riders make the effort and move to Europe for some time.

"This means making many sacrifices, not only from the financial point of view."

It is a sentiment echoed by Senior United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) and FEI five star judge, Lilo Fore, who will be officiating in Australia for the fifth time.

"Since I was in Australia the first time there has been a tremendous improvement," she said from her California base. "Horse and rider quality is 100 per cent better.

"The only way one can improve is to look, watch, learn and try to be surrounded by the best trainers and riders. The more information one has, the more options to improve one has. One can never know enough."

While the situation means that Australia does not have as many competitors as the leading dressage countries, it does not mean the nation isn't competitive, according to Ms Wuest.

"Dressage in Australia is continuously getting better and better," she said.

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Ms Fore, who has judged most international events and Championships bar the Olympics, says the role of the judges is multi-faceted.

“Our role is to make sure that the best rider comes out at the top. Our job is to encourage correct riding, good riding,” she said.

“Our job is to for the welfare of the horse and the encouragement to the riders in front of us and to help them to achieve their goal with good judging.”

Ms Wuest said she felt respect for her role as a judge.

“The fairness towards the riders and the responsibility to find out the right ones is the biggest issue for me,” she said.

The Sydney CDI will feature a packed program of elite dressage riding, five-star shopping, showjumping and entertainment as part of the 2015 event.

Australia’s future equestrian stars will compete in the CDI-Y (for riders 16 to 21 years), or the FEI Under 25 Grand Prix competitions. In addition, all will be looking for prospective horse champions in the NSW Young Horse Championships will be held over two days culminating in an exciting final on Saturday.

The NSW Young Horse Jumping Series Final and the Jumping Accumulator Stakes will also be held on the Saturday.

School Tours are offered on Thursday and Friday, where school children get to go behind the scenes, visit the stables and riders and learn about the sport.

The Sydney CDI will conclude for 2015 with the ever-popular Sydney CDI Apres Party in the indoor arena, and the event is renowned for its hospitality in the Top Spot Marquee where patrons can enjoy the CDI in style.

Passes are available for the entire event, and local pony clubs and adult riding clubs are most welcome to enquire about group bookings.

Tickets are available for the entire event, or day tickets are on sale each day at the event entrance. Local pony clubs and adult riding clubs are most welcome to enquire about group bookings.

Book online from the website to ensure a seat on Saturday as a sell-out crowd is expected.

VIP tickets are available daily, and on Saturday night tickets are available for the popular evening dinner where patrons get to watch the jumping and the Grand Prix Freestyle while enjoying a fantastic three course meal with Wild Oats wine.

The event attracts visitors from around Australia and overseas, and both international judges said they were looking forward to their visit Down Under.

“I look forward very much to coming to this wonderful country again,” Ms Wuest said.

An International workshop will be presented by Ms Wuest and Ms Fore on the art of dressage freestyle to music on Sunday, May 10 from 9.30am to 3.30pm, to which all are welcome to attend.

For more information about the event and ticketing visit the website, www.sydneycdi.com

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PICTURE CAPTION/CREDIT: Embedded in “file information”.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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