

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**5 May 2026**

# **Australia Claims Trans-Tasman Challenge as Sydney CDI 2026 Delivers Elite Competition and Future Stars**

The 2026 Sydney CDI has wrapped up at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre, delivering four days of high-quality competition across CDI, CDI 1\*, CDI 3\*, CDI Under 25, CDIY, CDIJ and national competitions, with strong international representation from Australia and New Zealand and a clear pipeline of emerging talent on show throughout.

Held from 29 April to 2 May, the event brought together leading combinations from both nations alongside the return of the Trans-Tasman Challenge — a team-based format that added a compelling new dimension to the competition programme.

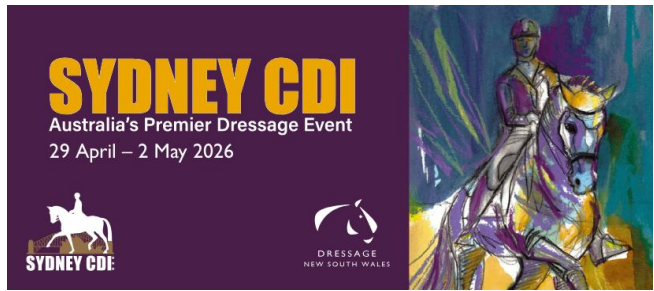
Australia claimed victory in the Trans-Tasman Challenge, underscoring the depth and quality of the nation's competitive ranks in a high-profile team environment.

Sydney CDI organiser Toni Venhaus said the event delivered both depth and quality across all levels of competition.

"The standard of competition this year has been exceptional, from our Young Horse Championships right through to Grand Prix. The return of the Trans-Tasman Challenge has added a new dimension to the event, and it's incredibly encouraging to see the strength of Australian combinations performing in a team environment."

At the elite level, Olympian Mary Hanna and Ivanhoe claimed victory in the CDI3★ Equidance Partnership Grand Prix, underlining Australia's strength at the highest level of the sport. Jodie Dunstan and Hollands Bend Highlander also delivered a standout performance, taking out the CDI3★ Equidance Partnership Grand Prix Special, while a series of high-scoring results across the junior and young rider classes reflected the breadth of talent across the country.

The AEIE NSW Young Horse Championships again proved a standout feature of the event, showcasing the next generation of Australian dressage horses. The



Championships highlighted the quality of locally bred and produced horses, many of which are expected to progress through to international Grand Prix competition in the coming years.

Saturday's programme was a highlight for spectators, with the Young Horse Finals, Stallion Showcase and Grand Prix Freestyle drawing consistent crowds and providing a fitting showcase for the sport. Attendance was strong across all four days of competition.

The Sydney CDI Organising Committee acknowledged the support of its partners and sponsors, whose involvement is integral to the delivery of the event. Key partners included The Equidance Partnership, Australian Equestrian Incentive Events (AEIE), Palm Beach Motor Yachts, Kohnke's Own and support from Equestrian NSW, and a wide network of class sponsors and industry supporters.

"The continued support of our sponsors allows us to deliver an event of this calibre and invest in the future of dressage in Australia."

With a strong field of competitors, the successful return of international team competition and a clear pipeline of emerging talent coming through, the 2026 Sydney CDI has once again affirmed its position as a cornerstone event on the Australian dressage calendar — and one with an exciting trajectory ahead.

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