



Queensland - New Zealand Exchange Program 2010 Report by April Lamb

I was very excited to be chosen to participate in the 2010 New Zealand scholarship Queensland Polocrosse exchange program. After the phone call I was eager to tell my family and friends how much the opportunity to play polocrosse in New Zealand meant to me. As the time grew nearer I was keen to find out who my host family would be and we made contact with them. Before I departed to New Zealand I was in touch with my host family, the Reiche family from the Redvale Polocrosse Club near Auckland. When I arrived at Auckland airport Kim and Kristy were there to meet me, I had to leave my saddle at the airport quarantine to be fumigated.

As soon as we left the airport we went to the town of Orewa where the Reiche family lived and also went to the Cummings family farm where I tried some horses for suitability. The sun doesn't go down in the NZ summer until about 9pm, so there was plenty of time to ride and work horses in the afternoons.



The first polocrosse carnival we went to was Taumarunui; it was near Lake Taupo which is five hours south of Auckland. I played in the B grade for Redvale as a number 3; I rode Johnty an old experienced gelding. On Saturday we played two games, the first one against Te Mata and the second game against Otorohanga, it was enjoyable and Johnty was a perfect gentleman, I enjoyed riding him. On Sunday we played Tuwheretooa, it was a hard game; they are very good players and have very strong teams. We had to play hard defensive polocrosse, it was exhausting and we lost but it was also lots of fun. There was a professional photographer at the carnival 'Lime Light Photography' she took heaps of photos and they are on her website www.limelightphotography.co.nz enter the gallery; go to Polocrosse and to 2010 Taumarunui; Field 1 Redvale V Otorohanga 2nd Chucka and also; Sunday Field 3 Redvale V Tuwheretooa 2nd Chucka.

After this carnival we stayed with Tony Shrafft at Pio Pio an hour north from Taumarunui. At Tony's I stayed with two other Australian kids, Kristen Hunt who was on scholarship from NSW and Lachlan Downs who was in the NSW intermediates team. We spent the week working horses up and down the hillsides.



We had a little bit of down time at the swimming pool. We also worked horses on the beach which was awesome fun as it was something that I had never done before. We also went to the hot pools at Wairau which was very good for polocrosse bruises and just good fun.

The next carnival was the Redvale home carnival. I played for Counties Club B Grade team as a number 2 and a number 3. We played Redvale, Te Mata and the Auckland intermediate teams.

I played Johnty again and enjoyed riding him as much as ever, we had just clicked and everyone was impressed how I was able to get him to perform to the best of his ability as they hadn't seen him perform so well for a couple of seasons as he was tiring of men's A grade and international competition. I was told that he was responding to my kind approach. We had a great weekend; we won one game and lost two.



Kristy and I also did a little bit of shopping and sightseeing. After all, Girls just wana have fun! We also did some house work for Kim to show our appreciation for all her running around. It was time again to clean and pack for the coming weekend.

During the week I was disappointed as Johnty developed a sore wither and I was unable to continue working him to play him in the upcoming carnival at the Juniors and Colts carnival.

We travelled to Counties Polocrosse grounds at Glenbrook for the carnival and I tried out another horse Wendell, he seemed strong and I felt I was going to experience a little bit of difficulty. I was chosen to play for Central Plateau Juniors, and Saturday morning we played Kings Country.

I had trouble with Wendell and as a result he was vetted out and I was then given a horse from Russel Tie called Podge. I played a number 1 and a number 3.

During the weekend we also played a mixed club team and the Auckland Juniors. We unfortunately lost each game, by only a few goals each time but our team won the best presented in the march past.

JUNIOR & INTERMEDIATES CHAMPIONSHIPS 2010
Held in Glenbrook on the 23rd & 24th January 2010

Junior Division

Runners Up	King Country
Winners "Malcolm Trophy"	Waikato/Wanganui-Waimarino Combined
Best No 1	Taumai Duff-Marshall
Best No 2	Chikana Marshall
Best No 3	Kiriana Butler
Best Pony "Errol Gloyn Trophy"	"Hannah Montana" ridden by Kristen Hunt owned by Tony Schrafft
Best Junior Horse & Rider Combination	Jack Kinder and "Flash"
"Bombers Trophy"	
Best Junior Player "Bombers Trophy"	Taumai Duff-Marshall
Best Turned Out Team	Central Plateau



I found polocrosse in New Zealand to be easy going and relaxed, all the people were very friendly and I felt very safe and well looked after. I would like to thank Queensland and New Zealand Polocrosse Associations for allowing me to participate in the Junior Player Exchange Program. I appreciated the chance to stay in New Zealand for 3 weeks, and be billeted by my host family, and play at carnivals and have a fantastic experience!



During my exchange I realised that I have not only improved my horse, horsemanship, polocrosse skills and abilities but also my self confidence around new people. I made new friends and probably lifelong contacts, and learnt to play with several different people of all ages and abilities. I also experienced riding many different types of horses and playing in different positions.

I would recommend this once in a lifetime experience to any aspiring young polocrosse player....it was a chance to grow not only within the sport but also within myself. Thank you Queensland Polocrosse for these fantastic life long memories. I was so excited to have a new sister who loved horses and polocrosse as much as myself, and I am still excited about the opportunity to host a Junior from New Zealand later in the year.

