

## **International Mounted Games Exchange 2012**

### **New South Wales, Australia**

#### **Tayler Vick**

My name is Tayler Vick from the Medicine River Pony Club based out of Benalto, Alberta which is in the Alberta Central Region. In September of 2011 I attended the selections camp in Guelph, Ontario along with 9 other girls. We spent two very busy days showing our skills, being interviewed, and enjoying great food and making new friends. Sunday I boarded a plane home and waited until Monday night, on pins and needles, for the email stating who had made the team. I was so excited to see my name on that list however now I knew it was my responsibility to practice long and hard on my own to be prepared with my skills to compete in Australia. I knew I would have to be able to ride any pony and play with unfamiliar players.

After several months of training and preparing I finally boarded a plane in Edmonton with two girls from the Alberta North Region and headed to Vancouver for training camp. Emma's family hosted us for the training camp and we had some really productive practices and went shopping and kayaking which really helped us build as a team.

When we first arrived in Sydney we met up with the other teams. We all got along really well and had an awesome time touring. While we were in Sydney we went to Bondi and Manly beach, shopping at The Rocks and Market Place, walked around at the Royal Easter Show, toured around the Opera house, and Climbed the Sydney Harbor

Bridge. We also stopped at the Featherdale Wildlife Park and got to pet Kangaroos and Wallabies and see all sorts of Australian wildlife.

We then drove out to the Blue Mountains and toured the caves and went to Echo point and looked at the beautiful view of the mountains. We also went to scenic world where we went down the steepest incline railway in the world, walked around on the scenic walkways and took the skyway across from cliff to cliff to look at the waterfall.

We finally got to get out of the city and go out to Hill End where the girls stayed in cabins and the boys got to stay in an old train. We played red rover, saw some wild kangaroos and had a campfire. We went for a tour through bald hill mine and got to climb up a shaft that was 30 meters high. Then we went gold panning and a few people were able to find some gold.

We then drove to Dubbo and got to stop at Horselands and do some shopping. Then continued on our way to Roseville Park sheep farms where they made us awesome meals. While we stayed at the sheep farm we got to go to the Taronga Western Plains Zoo, watch a demo on sheep shearing, did sheep mustering, and had a games practice on mixed teams.

Once we left the sheep farm we drove to Bungendore and went to the Pony Club Camp and then split off into our billet families. While we were in Bungendore we drove to Canberra and toured the War Memorial and the Parliament House. We also had our friendly competition in Canberra and my mixed team tied for second.

On our last full day in Australia we had our competition and played our best. We got 4<sup>th</sup>, Australia got 3<sup>rd</sup>, Great Britain got 2<sup>nd</sup>, and USA got 1<sup>st</sup>. That evening we went to Penny's house, from the Australia team, and had a BBQ and said our final goodbyes to the other teams.

I can't thank Barb and Margo enough for all that they did for us on this Adventure of a life time. I also send out a big thank you to everyone in Australia who organized and helped make this possible. I will never forget the experiences I had and the people I met.

Thank You Canadian Pony Club for allowing us to have the opportunity to play Prince Phillip Games and travel Australia.

Tayler Vick