

Scone Horse Festival

4- 14 May 2023



Known as the “Horse Capital of Australia”, Scone is halfway between Newcastle and Tamworth on the New England Highway and claims to be the second-largest horse breeding area in the world, after Kentucky in the United States.

The rural town is surrounded by world class thoroughbred studs and is rich in agricultural and equine activity. It is the home to the Australian Stockhorse Association. The district has some of the country’s longest established pony clubs; there is a thriving polo and polocrosse community; and the bronze sculpture, 'Scone Mare and Foal' by Gabriel Sterk, is prominently situated beside the highway in Elizabeth Park.



The region is also home to cattle and sheep grazing, cereal cropping, dairies, and boutique wineries. The town and the district have many significant historic buildings and there is real pleasure in driving around the district and admiring the huge horse studs.



Scone is surrounded by lush bushland including world heritage State and National Parks and it is the “Gateway to the Barrington Tops”. Within a few kilometres of Scone, on Moobi Road, there is petrified stump that is estimated to be 200 million years old. One of the best specimens in Australia, the tree was a type of Araucaria which is now extinct.

Every May is the Scone Horse Festival, a celebration of Scone’s cultural links to everything equine. The festival kicks off with the Horse Festival Ball and a parade in the main street.

This year’s theme was Kings and Queens of the Stable.

The organisers of the festival felt this theme was very apt for two important reasons. Firstly, everyone who is involved with horses, whether it be at the junior, weekend competitor, general lover or professional in the many equine disciplines, they are all the Kings and Queens of their Stables.

Secondly, with the recent passing of Queen Elizabeth II, it was a good occasion to pay tribute to her, and her enduring love for horses.

The Queen’s lifelong love for horses and the Coronation of His Majesty the King also occurred on the same day as the Festival Street parade – Saturday 6 May.



The festival started on Thursday 4 May with a “Thank God for the Horse Service” at the Uniting Church. The festival then officially opened on Friday and many of the favourite events then occur throughout the 10-day including the themed Street Parade, Equine Extravaganza, Jack Johnson Gala Day, Calcutta, Interschools Horse Show and Yarns Night.





The final weekend culminated with iconic Darley Scone Cup, Picnic by the Lake, and Finale Fireworks.

Thanks to Scone community for the great hosting and very entertaining time. We really enjoyed your incredible festival, and we hope to come back next year.

Author:



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Photos: Danuta and Bogusław Piotrowski and Public Domain

Links to videos:

<https://youtu.be/2xzHim2oUuU>

https://youtu.be/VsCNU_d5VsE

<https://youtu.be/W53c3JxbdT0>

<https://youtu.be/Xo-s9WggcLk>

<https://youtu.be/foI3IbJyAMM>