

## **NATIONAL FINALS!**

Everything you need to know for the National Finals 2023!

## **AFFILIATES CORNER**

Chatting with our friends at Outback Barrel Horse Circuit!

## **RULE UPDATES**

Keep up to date on the changes to the ABHA rules.



Photo Credit: Jodie Adams Photography

# **NATIONAL FINALS 2023!**

There is a strong rumbling amongst the barrel racing ranks of Australia as the stage is almost set for the 2023 ABHA National finals. Online nominations have now opened and the AELEC Tamworth will be where the action unfolds from the 11th to the 17th of September, 2023.

From a pool of Australian Barrel Horse open and junior divisional competitions hosted by our hard working affiliates around the nation, qualified members are now throwing their hats in the ring to nominate and attend the biggest barrel racing event in the Southern Hemisphere.

The traditional, seven open division championship winners will be decided in half second splits from the two round average and will headline the program. Each divisional

champion will be awarded a Seven Saddle, along with a multitude of other prizes. The Seven Saddles are a revolutionary light weight custom made trophy saddle. These light weight performance saddles have taken the barrel racing world by storm internationally by designing a lighter more flexible approach to the design of a saddle. The concept of these saddles is to lessen the weight carried by the horse to increase speed and cut off the clock, the same approach akin to the race horse industry. These dream saddles are crafted to not only be advantageous to your riding and seat but aesthetically pleasing to look at also. Our youth champions will also be presented with a saddle for the winner of each of the four divisions, decided by one second splits on the average times over two rounds.

Back by popular demand and due to the great feedback from 2022 our top 50 rider and horse combinations from round one, will be back with their own exciting Fast Fifty performance streamed live to our audiences in prime time and brought to everyone by our long standing and committed sponsor, Katie B Western. This platform of the top 50 runs provided an exciting window into the sport where the runs were hot and the riders were pumped.

Board member Justin Gill has been instrumental in the devising of the Stallion Incentive which added a grand total of \$31,125 in additional payouts to riders and breeders for the first time at the 2022 finals. This incentive program has been embraced by the competitors and featured stallion owners alike and will be back in 2023.

This year 90% (the residual 10% used to market our line up of stallions) of monies raised from stallions represented in the bidding and whose owners have taken the opportunity to support our auction in the way of offering a stud fee to be auctioned on line. The pot of money derived from the auction is then split across the Open Divisional, Futurity and Maturity and paid out in bonuses to the winning stallion owner and rider. Last year the stallion role call included 22 stallions on offer, this year there will be a total of 28 stallions featured in the auction, they include a great mix of international and Australian cow and running bred studs. There are so many impressive studs on offer, it is almost confusing, one thing is for sure there is a wonderful selection available and all involved are helping with the growth of our sport.

This will be a great opportunity to secure a breeding to some very influential sires for the upcoming breeding season. Bidding is currently live on the ABHA Facebook page.

The 2D Futurity which came to fruition also in 2022 as a means of showcasing our “up and coming” barrel horses, ensuring that our 4, 5 and 6 year olds: along with those young horses that have limited preparation and outings to have a chance at some of the prize purse. We are sure to see a bigger field of futurity horses in 2023 which will prove a highlight of the program, in an exciting two round format with the Futurity champion also being awarded one of our champion saddles to compliment a swag of great prizes for this event. Seven Saddles donated the 2023 Maturity champion saddle, as this event will once again grace our program with a one round competition for our 7,8 and 9 year old contenders.

Pole benders have not been forgotten, so leg up your ponies and have them fit and ready to join in the action and all that this event brings to the finals.

A focus this year for the planning of the finals is the business and sponsor trade sites. Our ABHA President, Matt Burns takes a particular interest in the media and the fostering of new business partnerships and feels strongly about supporting our prospective trade sites operators in offering trade sites at an economical fee from \$89/day. There has been strong interest this year from businesses wishing to attend the finals so a little retail therapy and the opportunity to speak face to face with some of the business reps within our industry will add to the atmosphere of the finals. It is not too late to contact us to secure a trade site booking.

We are so looking forward to the qualifiers, their families, connections and spectators joining us at the iconic ALEC Tamworth, where stories, memories and legends will be made. All you need to do is set Tamworth as your destination IN your GPS and in true barrel racing lingo, SEND IT!!

**TRADE SITES  
STILL AVAILABLE  
FROM \$89/DAY!**





# ABHA NATIONAL Finals

11th - 17th September 2023  
AELEC, Tamworth NSW

## EVENTS

**\$10,000** Circle L Open Divisional  
(\$160 ENTRY, \$100 AB)

**\$5,000** Katie B 2D Futurity (4, 5 & 6yo)  
(\$180 ENTRY, \$100 AB)

**\$4,500** Seven Saddle Maturity (7, 8 & 9yo)  
(\$150 ENTRY, \$100 AB)

**\$2,500** Johnson's Natural Formula Junior 4D  
(\$85 ENTRY, \$50 AB)

**\$1000** Biolink Opti-Gut Open Pole Bending  
(\$75 ENTRY, \$45 AB)

**\$500** Wideland Group Tamworth  
Junior Pole Bending  
(\$50 ENTRY, \$30 AB)

**IN 2022  
WE PAID OUT  
\$150K +  
IN CASH &  
PRIZES!**

**ENTRIES OPEN MONDAY  
JULY 31ST &  
CLOSE SUNDAY  
AUGUST 13TH**

Late Entries 14th-16th. \$50 per person.

**2 RUN OPEN DIVISIONAL,  
JUNIOR DIVISIONAL FUTURITY!  
1 RUN MATURITY, OPEN POLE  
BEND, JUNIOR POLE BEND &  
LITTLE DRUM RUNNERS.**

THE STALLION INCENTIVE IS BACK IN 2023, PAYING 45% TO BOTH STALLION OWNER AND RIDER! \$50 ENTRY FEE PER HORSE, \$45.00 ADD BACK.

## THE RICHEST BARREL RACE IN AUSTRALIA!

Our chosen charity for 2023 is The National Breast Cancer Foundation.  
Wear pink on Friday and Saturday!

You must be a full ABHA member to compete at the 2023 ABHA National Finals!



Photo credit: Cowgirl Creative - Tyler Palmer

The spotlight for this edition of the ABHA Newsletter is shining on our Western Qld, Outback Barrel Horse Circuit (OBHC). This affiliate and their events are welcomed into the smaller rural townships of Western Queensland by their councils to promote social connection which is an important focus given that horse events in the bush are a big part of the fabric that bring communities together and are classed as 'important, sport and recreation events in the local calendars.

### **When was the OBHC formed and why?**

The Outback Barrel Horse Circuit was founded in 2014, while in the cusp of the horrendous drought.

At the time there was no official divisional barrel racing club offered within Central Western Queensland. We chose to run over the Summer Period (when people would normally have turned their horses out, but we found that during the drought people were still having to have their horses in and hand fed and were looking for places to take them to. Also, because the Divisional barrel racing concept was new to the Central West we didn't want to clash with shows and other rodeos, to encourage people to come and give Divisional Barrel Racing a go!

With the many cancellations of Rodeos and Campdrafts around the region due to lack of stock caused by drought, we needed to create and facilitate an essential recreational equine club for rurally minded people to keep us connected and still be able to participate in sports with horses. The support and growth in our club were astounding from the get go, especially amongst the youth and has led to the Western Queensland profile & reputation we have today of being one of the most active and vast serving equine clubs in the region.

### **Is the club incorporated?**

Yes.

### **Do you charge an OBHC Membership, how many members do you normally sign up in a competition year?**

We do charge an OBHC Series Membership on top of the annual ABHA membership required. This is used essentially as a

'trophy levy', to help us purchase some great prizes for our End of Series Presentations. We keep it affordable for families with a single membership only \$25 and a family \$100. Our membership base has continued to grow each and every year with anywhere between 60-100 members each series.

### **What is your clubs focus this year?**

Initially when we started out, we were the only club offering events around the region, and therefore offered around 10-15 events (mostly double weekends) every series. But with the growth and popularity in the sport and new clubs around region forming, we have decided instead to offer 4 MAJOR events this series. To allow barrel racers to do more within the region. Over our 9 years we have built some great partnerships that have allowed us to build our profile to be able to host MAJOR events within Western Queensland, we have seen that this has also opened our Club up to a new following of barrel racers from right across the State coming and supporting our events due to the added money and prestige of our events.

### **How many committee members?**

We have 3 'small but mighty' Executive Committee Members - myself, Megan Prow (Treasurer) & Andrea MacCronan (Secretary). We all bring a different skillset to the table and it seems to work pretty well! In saying that, we have ALOT of help from all our members and their families to pull off our events and make sure everything runs smoothly on the day, and for that we are forever grateful!

### **Where do you hold your events, private arenas, towns etc?**

I think I can confidently say that our Club covers the widest stretch to run our events! Outback Queensland towns are spread out, and we host events as far south as Cunnamulla, and as far north as Jundah/Longreach so our committee and members travel alot of km's to support our club. Our committee even travels 12hr Roundtrip to hold one divisional Barrel Race. We have hosted our events at community showgrounds arenas right across Western Queensland in Blackall, Tambo, Augathella, Charleville, Jundah, Cunnamulla, Longreach, Winton, Barcaldine. We have had some pretty cool locations too! We held a BIG divisional Barrel Race at the iconic Australian



Stockman's Hall of Fame last year, and we always love our Barcoo Spring Fling Classic in Jundah (which is coming up soon), It has an awesome arena next to the Race Track and it is a big weekend of lots of great fast horse action. OBHC is really lucky to again have great working partnerships with alot of the regional councils, who allow us to hire and assist with ground preparation so that we can bring our club to their community! We have found out here in the country, the towns are just exceptionally grateful to have a event in our town (especially during the town), these events injected much needed activity into these Outback Towns!

### **How do you raise your money for end of year prizes and some of the large paying events OBHC promotes?**

You always get out of it what you put into it, and as a club we work very hard fundraising and building partnerships with sponsors to ensure we can give our members some fantastic End of Series prizes and host large paying divisional barrel races in Western Queensland. Our small committee hosts fundraising activities such as Cocktail Bars at local race days, do catering gigs, organise raffles, applying for grants etc. We also are very conscious of ensuring we look after our sponsors, who are the backbone reason we get to hand our great series Awards (we hand out over \$20,000 worth of Series Prizes) ! OBHC has built some strong partnerships with sponsors who remain loyal and support us every year. Rumpf Quarter Horses as just about been with us since our inception. And our current MAJOR Sponsor Install Solutions have generously supported our club for the past two years, allowing us to award Saddles to our OPEN 1D and YOUTH 1D Champions. Last year we kickstarted a great partnership with Ironhorse Australia, where our club was able to purchase a Ironhorse Float as a Club Fundraiser Raffle, along with sponsorship to host our first Ironhorse Challenge Cup Event in Blackall last year which had a purse of over \$10,000 added. We are just about to kick off another Float Raffle, which will once again be drawn at our Ironhorse Challenge Cup event in November, and is a great little fundraiser for our club plus it's great giving someone a float!

Our Barcoo Spring Fling Classic (our annual West N Breast Cancer Support Group Fundraiser event) held in the heart of the channel country, Jundah - is able to offer

\$15,000 added prizemoney thanks again to our strong partnership and collaboration with Jundah Race Club, Barcoo Shire Council and Major Sponsors. Again, it is just working with other organisations and clubs for the greater benefit to be able to pull off something bigger than we could of if we went it alone! It is our 3rd year hosting this event in Jundah, and the weekend boasts Bush Sprint Racing, Thoroughbred Racing and our \$15,000 Divisional Barrel Race.

### **What are your up and coming events for the remainder of 2023?**

Round 1 of our Install Solutions Win the West Super Series was held back in July at Cunnamulla Fella Roundup (\$6000 added).

Round 2 will be our upcoming Barcoo Spring Fling Classic in Jundah 29th Sep-1st Oct (\$15,000 added + Buckles & Prizes)

Round 3 Ironhorse Cup Challenge Blackall 3/4th November

Round 4 FINALS Blackall 18th November

### **BEST TIP FOR OTHER CLUBS!**

We don't really have one, because as for anyone involved in any sort of club we understand the hardwork and commitment involved when we volunteer our spare time to make these events happen, and that itself is 'the BEST'. Every person involved in the club brings their own set of skill sets to the table, and good committees work together effectively when they can acknowledge the different strengths of their members and use it as an advantage towards the shared common goal of our small part in bettering the future of the sport of barrel racing!



# MEMBERS, HAVE YOUR SAY!

IF YOU'RE ATTENDING THE FINALS, THESE ARE EXCITING TIMES FOR OUR ASSOCIATION!

PLEASE JOIN US IN THE AELEC AMPITHEATRE  
TUESDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER AT 7PM FOR OUR AGM!

## RULE CONNECT **GET UP TO DATE WITH RULE CHANGES!**

### **Amended Rule: 20th July 2023**

Whipping – Disqualification will occur if more than 2 contacts with equipment or hand from start of run to first barrel.

Disqualification will occur if more than 2 contacts with equipment or hand from barrel 1 to barrel 2.

Disqualification will occur if more than 2 contacts with equipment or hand from barrel 2 to barrel 3.

Disqualification will occur if more than 4 contacts with equipment or hand from barrel 3 to end of run.

Definition of equipment (object, device) riding crop- over and under whip- quirt, reins.

Ruled by the Judge.

### **Amended Rule: 20th June 2023**

Barrel Racing Rule No 31: If a competitor is to be assisted into the arena the handler must be in full dress attire as per rule 25 (Barrel Race Rules) and must exit the arena at the commencement of the run for safety reasons.

### **Amended Rule 21st March 2023**

#### *Current Rule:*

#### Maturity Events

1. Option to choose one of the following:  
Option One: 7 year old horses  
Option Two : 7 & 8 year old horses  
Option Three: 7,8 & 9 year old horses
2. Can be run over 1, 2 or 3 rounds.
3. Affiliates have the option to allow a competitor to roll over their time from a Maturity event into a divisional barrel race, provided they are run on the same size course.

4. A horse's age will be calculated based on a year starting 1 August every year (Horses Birthday). For example, a horse born any time between 1 August 2019 and 31 July 2020 turns one (1) year old on 1 August 2020 and so on.

5. All horses entered in the Maturity Event are to ensure that all the correct paperwork for the entered horse is supplied, and the horse is of the correct age as per the ABHA rule book. Registration Papers or the ABHA Proof of Age Form (that has been completed by a vet) are required.

#### Futurity Events

1. Open to horses 4, 5 and 6 years.
2. Can be run over 1, 2 or 3 rounds.
3. Affiliates have the option to allow a competitor to roll over their time from a futurity event into a divisional barrel race, provided they are run on the same size course.
4. Any Futurity with \$500 prize money or more will count as a qualifying Futurity round for the ABHA Finals.
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#### **Added 21st March 2023**

Affiliates who have never ran a Futurity event since their inception, may apply to the Board of Directors to run a \$200 posted prize money Futurity that will count as a National Finals qualifying event. All future Futurity events held will require the \$500 posted prize money.

#### **Added 22nd February 2023**

Refunds will not be given for any event fee's that have been paid. If an event must postpone due to unforeseen weather circumstances, then a credit note will be issued to the affiliate to reschedule their event at a later date. No refunds will be given for any event application fees.

Affiliates may offer the option for members to change their nominations, however members must advise this before the event commences.

