

# Media Kit

## KIDS Foundation Tour d'Horse



### About Tour d'Horse

Tour d'Horse is the annual major fundraising endurance ride organised by the KIDS Foundation. Held over six days in the Upper Hunter Valley of New South Wales, riders undertake approximately 200 kilometres on horseback across private countryside, hosted from Belltrees Station with base camp in Gundy.

The event unites horsemanship and community purpose, raising vital funds for children impacted by traumatic injury and life-altering events. Riders are partnered predominantly with retired racehorses, showcasing the adaptability and character of off-the-track thoroughbreds beyond the racetrack.

In 2025, Tour d'Horse raised \$1.17 million, enabling the KIDS Foundation to support more than 300,000 children and families through trauma recovery, education and wellbeing programs. The event aims to build on that momentum each year and surpass \$1 million.

### Origins & Purpose

Tour d'Horse was conceived following the sudden and tragic loss of KIDS Foundation CEO Dr Susie O'Neill OAM's granddaughter, Bella, in 2021. In the midst of profound grief, a short trail ride undertaken by Susie and her family became a powerful moment of connection and healing.

Recognising the therapeutic impact horses could have in times of trauma, Susie transformed that experience into purpose.

Tour d'Horse was created to bring together the equine community in a meaningful endurance challenge, symbolising resilience, partnership and recovery, the very qualities central to the KIDS Foundation's work.

### Honour Roll

2024 – Mackas Angus Rider: Aeron Holzhauser

2025 – McEvoy Mitchell Racing Riders: Jo McEvoy & Demi McEvoy

### Ambassadors

- Abigail Vidler
- Amanda Ross
- Emma Hawkins
- Georgina Burke

### Notable Faces on the Ride

- Anto White OAM
- Alec White
- Ally Mosley
- Ben Melham
- Demi Brereton
- Jamie Melham
- Laura Crane (Artist)
- Sam Freedman
- Simon Wincer (Director)
- Tom Burlinson
- Tom Hawkins

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### Tour d'Horse 2026 – At a Glance

- Dates: 11 – 17 May 2026
- Distance: Approx. 200km over six days
- Location: Upper Hunter Valley, NSW – Belltrees Station Base Camp: Gundy Recreation / Camp Draft Grounds

### Snapshot of the Week

- **Monday 11 May** Riders arrival Gundy AM, briefings. Ride 1 begins and welcome event at Belltrees
- **Tuesday 12 May** Ride 2 Belltrees Station
- **Wednesday 13 May** Ride 3 Belltrees Station
- **Thursday 14 May** Community Day with KIDS participants at Coolmore and Scone Equestrian Centre, followed by Yellowstone Night at Gundy!
- **Friday 15 May** Ride 4 Belltrees Station
- **Saturday 16 May** Final Ride 5 and Scone Cup Carnival, with evening presentation in Gundy
- **Sunday 17 May** Departures

### Camp TANGO – The Heart of the Story

Running alongside the ride at base camp in Gundy is **Camp TANGO** (Together Achieving New Goals and Opportunities) – a transformational program for young survivors.

Each riding team is paired with a survivor participant from Camp TANGO, who becomes their Team Captain, creating a powerful connection between the riders' endurance challenge and the real purpose behind the journey.

### The Moment That Anchors the Story

On Thursday, the story turns. After days in the saddle, the riders step aside. At Scone Equestrian Centre Captains, the survivors themselves, take the reins, riding with their teams supporting and encouraging them.

It is a moving and unforgettable moment that captures the true spirit of the event



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### **Confirmed Teams - 2026**

1. Banter Foundation
2. Belltrees Station
3. Bennett Racing
4. Boneo Park Equestrian Centre
5. Coolmore Australia
6. Emirates Park
7. Freedman Racing
8. Inglis
9. James Harron Bloodstock
10. Koala
11. Magic Millions
12. McEvoy Mitchell Racing
13. Michael Freedman Racing
14. MRC Foundation
15. Oreana
16. Petsock Foundation
17. Ride 4 Bella
18. RB Sellars
19. Somerstone Farm
20. Snowden Racing
21. Thenford Farm
22. Thiele
23. Via Sistina (Chris Waller + Yulong)
24. Victorian Jockeys' Association
25. Waterhouse Bott Racing
26. Woolooma Station
27. KIDS Foundation

### **Race Day Sponsors**

Godolphin Lifetime Care  
Aushorse / Thoroughbred Breeders Australia  
Newgate  
Makybe Diva Stables  
Bell River Thoroughbreds

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### Media Contact

KIDS Foundation – Media, PR & Content Lead

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## Media Content & Opportunities

### Background Content

#### Video Assets

- Tour d'Horse Highlight Video 2025 – [Watch here](#)
- Tour d'Horse 2025 – Teaser – [Watch here](#)
- Who We Are & What We Do – [Watch here](#)
- Reflections – CAMP Phoenix 25 – [Watch here](#)

#### Still Imagery

**High-resolution imagery by Nicole Cleary available here.**

#### Logos

**KIDS Foundation and Tour d'Horse Logos available here.**

### Content Event Week

#### Broadcast Video Content

Cinematic, broadcast-quality footage will be captured throughout the Tour by James Mullen, delivering premium vision across all stages.

A daily broadcast-quality VNR will be distributed by 2:00pm (AEST) via MediaNet, by BossMan Media (Melbourne-based). Each VNR, aligned with the daily Media Release, will include:

- Rider interviews
- Colour overlay
- Aerial drone footage
- Supporting visuals from the day

#### Photography

Daily high-resolution editorial imagery will be delivered by Nicole Cleary, available for immediate media use.

#### Media Opportunities

A range of tailored opportunities are available across the Tour, including:

- Radio interviews
- Print features
- Live crosses
- Additional vision and access to riders and key talent

We are committed to working closely with media partners to facilitate meaningful, high-quality coverage. Please reach out to coordinate interviews, vision, or bespoke coverage opportunities to

**Melanie Mullen: [melanie@kidsfoundatiuon.org.au](mailto:melanie@kidsfoundatiuon.org.au) or 0418 331 994**

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### About KIDS Foundation

Established in 1993, KIDS Foundation (Kids In Dangerous Situations) is a leading national Australian charity supporting children and young people who have experienced traumatic injuries, burns, abuse, violent crime or genetic conditions that impact appearance and physical capability.

Each year, KIDS reaches over 300,000 children and families through trauma recovery programs, equine-assisted wellbeing initiatives, camps and preventative safety education delivered nationally. Horses sit at the heart of KIDS programs, helping children rebuild confidence, trust and emotional connection as part of life long recovery journey

#### Mission

Our mission is to 'Build Strong Lives' through empowerment, Recovery and Education programs.

#### Vision

Every child is safe, free from harm and injury.

#### Values

Trust, Loyalty, Kindness, Respect, Acceptance.

### Our Programs

#### Recovery

In our Recovery Programs we celebrate all abilities, offering support, camps and recovery programs for children and families following traumatic events that change lives and capabilities.

#### Education

We educate and empower children to learn about safety and wellbeing, while still allowing them to be kids through Early Childhood Education Centres and preschools, using our series of SeeMore Safety programs and activities.

### KIDS Equine Assisted Learning

We have an equine-based program linked closely with our books "SeeMore and Carm" and "SeeMore Kindness", aimed at helping children develop an awareness of emotional communication.

Our equine program involves educators from KIDS Foundation, along with an equine specialist, taking our ponies into kindergartens.

We aim to help children develop an awareness of emotional communication. It is believed that being in close proximity to a horse can reduce our heart rate, reduce blood pressure, reduce the amount of cortisol (stress hormones) and it can also cause the feel-good endorphins to increase in us. Horses are very sensitive to emotional and verbal cues. The program also demonstrates the role in which animals, in particular horses, can play in caring for our mental and emotional health and wellbeing.



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### KIDS Bios



#### CEO - Dr Susie O'Neill OAM

Susie is a Doctor of Philosophy in Education and a qualified preschool and primary teacher specialising in children at risk. Her passion began in 1988 while working with the Children's Protection Society during her studies in Ballarat.

In 1993, she founded the KIDS Foundation, a leading national charity supporting children affected by trauma, burns, and life-altering injuries. Each year, the organisation reaches 300,000 - 400,000 children and families through programs delivered across Australia, including 10,000 early learning centres and schools.

Susie has authored 17 children's books featuring SeeMore Safety, along with a parenting book and a collection of human-interest stories. Her work includes published journal papers, conference presentations, and multiple awards in child safety. In 2023, she was awarded an Order of Australia for her services to children.



#### Matt Thiele - Burns Survivor and KIDS Foundation Ambassador

Matt was just three when he was trapped in a car fire in 1999, sustaining severe burns to over 30% of his body, particularly his face, head and hands. He spent months in hospital, including 33 days in intensive care, and survived two cardiac arrests despite doctors advising his family to consider switching off life support.

He has since undergone multiple surgeries, including skin grafts and procedures to treat scarring and infection-related complications, losing parts of his fingers along the way.

Growing up, Matt often felt isolated until he connected with the KIDS Foundation at age 10. Through its programs, he found a supportive community, built lifelong friendships, and gained confidence, eventually earning a black belt in karate and speaking to audiences of over 1,000 people.

Now 30, Matt is a business owner, homeowner, and proud Ambassador for the KIDS Foundation and Burn Survivors Network. He mentors young survivors, helping them build confidence and understand they are not alone, and credits the Foundation with shaping who he is today.

