

MRA

MISS RODEO AUSTRALIA

Hey there!

So I have to start by saying that I've had a little bit of a quiet month, other than nearly getting blown away by Tropical Cyclone Debbie.

Due to the cyclone I was unable to attend some rodeos. With a prediction of making landfall 350kms north of my home town, good old Debbie had other plans and made her way down the coast to directly hit my beautiful home of Proserpine and Airlie Beach.

After nearly 48 hours of winds up to 290kms, it finally gave up and let the rain fall.

My childhood home turned into a house boat for three days before the water slowly receded and the damage was revealed. Sheds blown away, fences gone, cattle yards destroyed and a treeless garden. It was so strange to look upon the surrounding mountains and not see a single leaf left on the tree branches. The wind was one strong blow.



Cyclone Debbie aftermath

After 16 days of cold showers, the sound of the generator 24/7, creek crossing, fixing fences, chopping trees, being bitten by green ants, hairy caterpillars and mozzies,

I was so glad when Easter rolled around, and the airport opened



Grand Entry at Great Western Rodeo

back up! Get me down to Victoria I thought, for the Southern Easter Run!

My first stop was a quick "shop over" in Melbourne to buy this North Queenslander a bigger coat! Friday was the first day of rodeos, with Great Western Rodeo, to kick off a cracker of a weekend.

The grounds were muddy but that didn't stop our pro athletes from showing us what they're made of! Unfortunately, I had to leave three quarters of the way through to start my night journey up the hill to Omeo.

What an experience! Leaving Great Western in a ute with my travel partner, along the way we picked up a towing gig of two horses and another travel buddy. But like most of you know, travelling doesn't always go to plan.

Having to take a two-hour detour via one very scary drive up a mountain at 3am, we three girls ran into a little bit of a smoky problem under the hood at 5am, only 40kms from Omeo. But we pushed on and got to our destination by daylight for a quick hour's sleep before the starter.

Just when I thought I couldn't get any colder, I was proven wrong. I now understand why Omeo has their rodeo at midday. For a small town, it sure knows how to throw one hell of a rodeo! The lack of sleep wasn't going to slow this girl down from supporting all our APRA athletes in their rides.

Sunday brought me to Buchan. At this point I didn't know if we were going north, south, east or west, but thanks to my travel partner we got there! This was the new Buchan committee's first year at the controls and with admissions \$5000 up on the gate, I'd say they have the right people on the job!

The very same night we drove ourselves to Lang Lang, the biggest rodeo of the four. With an 8am start and 13 flag barriers, I must say I had the funniest and most enjoyable grand entry of them all. A fantastic way to finish the weekend off, with smiles and laughs all around, not to mention the couple of cheeky roper boys trying to race each other out.

I tip my hat to the committee members of all four rodeos. You all deserve a gold medal and the biggest pat on the back for the amazing work you have put into making these rodeos into the 5 stars events they were.

Congratulations to the winners and place getters of all events over the four days. To all of the competitors, you have showed me why I love and respect the sport of rodeo.

A HUGE thank you to my beautiful friend and driving companion for the weekend, Ally Tarpey. You are truly amazing and I had the

