



SHAHZADA – OUR JOURNEY by Marg Boland

In May 2014 I decided that I would enter the 2014 Shahzada Mini Marathon on my 8 year old mare Rosebrae Cameo. Firstly I had to wean her foal so the 1st week in June she stopped being a mum & returned to training. I started legging her up. Cameo's attitude amazed me not once did she call to her foal she was always standing at the gate ready to go training as soon as she saw her saddle & my helmet go on the gate.

So I paid my entry for the Mini & we were all set. I wanted to do a 80Km ride prior to it so she wasn't on a 13 month Rule & Cobark was the closest ride for us. Haydn Fisher came & put a new set of shoes on her & commented on how she was looking & why

hadn't I entered the Shahzada 400. My answer was she hasn't done anything since the Mini Marathon in 2012. Later that day I had a conversation with Brad Jones & he asked me why I hadn't entered the BIG ONE. My answer to him was "I will see how she is after Cobark".

Cameo went so well at Cobark, & I started thinking maybe we should give the 400 a go. I knew she didn't have to be super fit, many super fit horses don't finish a Shahzada 400.

The 1st week of August I emailed Ross Mudie & changed my entry from the Mini Marathon to the 400. So with that done now I knew I had to get to work getting her set for the Ultimate Endurance Challenge. Every day I put the saddle & her tendon boots on even if it was just to be lunged for 20 minutes. I didn't want rubs anywhere from her gear.

We arrived at St Albans on the Friday before the ride with all our gear. I had checked the weather report – "bugger it was going to be a wet ride". Anyone in our sport who knows me well has seen how much gear I bring to a ride. This is why we bought a gooseneck. One of the things I was asked often was "how many rugs did you bring Margie?" Well let me tell you I took 10 just to be on the safe side, you can never have too many I say.

I asked Haydn if we needed new shoes & he said sometime this week he would change them but these ones were ok to start on.

Shahzada is a very different ride to any other because "TO FINISH IS TO WIN", & all week you get to ride with so many different people. Out on track & back in camp everyone has a chat about how things are going.

Friday Day 5 is a riders most nervous last 2 legs & we were still out there, I was so excited. At the vet check after the first leg the head vet Dan commented to me "Did you actually ride this leg?" her heart rate was 39 & metabolics all A's. Cameo got stronger & stronger every day even having a

gallop across the paddock on Friday afternoon on the last leg coming back to base. That final Vet check is very nerve racking, the crowd is amazing & to have so many people watching your last trot out & cheering when you get the THUMBS UP from the vets is very special.

Then on Saturday morning at presentation we were called up to work out for Best Managed, this was very unexpected. Even more unexpected we were awarded the Trophy.

My little home bred mare Rosebrae Cameo is a daughter of Iviore my first endurance horse, who has 3 Shahzada Buckles & 2 Tom Quilty Buckles. My first Shahzada on Iviore we were awarded an Encouragement Award for Best Managed Novice Horse & Rider that was in 1998 . Cameo is so much like her mum & I am so proud of her.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this Shahzada very special.

