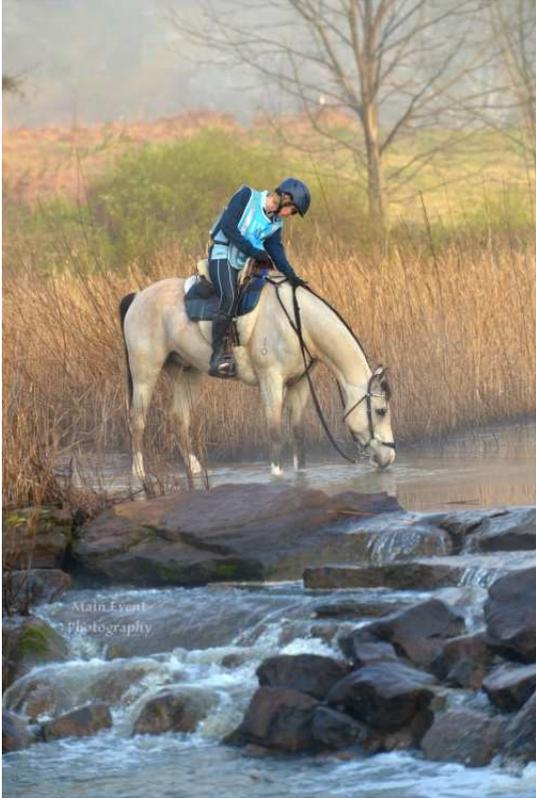


# BOSS

By Kim Hagon

From the first week of September each year, I start planning for Shahzada in August the following year! It seems that the whole world revolves around the last week in August every year, and the closer we get, the more intense and exciting it becomes!

I am a mother of three active boys, the wife of a vet and the accountant of his vet practice so life is never dull and spare time is something I never have. Preparing a horse properly for an 80km ride is a test of endurance in itself, so preparing for a marathon is exactly that, a marathon!



I plan ahead for which rides I will use as training rides, having an alternate plan if things change along the way. Boss is a real character of a horse and I enjoy every moment I get to spend with him, and he really is a part of our family. He is known to gallop around the paddock stirring up all our other horses if I happen to sleep in and not feed him early enough. The threat of a stampede or worse is enough to get me out of bed on the coldest of mornings!

This year I had a 40km training ride at Tooraweenah as our easy start to the season. I took my eldest son Dusty who is 7 and my niece Katie who is 10 along for the company. The hills at Tooraweenah are always a good test, but keeping Boss at a safe pace for the kids was easier said than done and at one stage I nearly had to get the kids to lead *me*! Boss likes to travel along and is much easier to handle when he is on his own. We managed to get around safely and all vetted through so it was worth the effort.

We then had trips to Mudgee and St Albans for Careflight as training for fitness before the 240km Manilla Muster.

The build-up to Shahzada in our house requires more planning and organisation than Christmas! Our lives revolve around shoeing, clipping, rugging, training, washing, packing, vehicle maintenance etc, all on top of our usual household chaos! To get the timing right

and to have everything 100% on the Monday morning of Shahzada and actually getting there is the hardest part. Two days before leaving we even had a massive storm with lightning so close to the house I was sure Boss had been hit but to my relief all was fine. Once we actually get to St Albans, we can relax somewhat and everything starts to fall into place and all the hard work and training starts to pay off. I have the pleasure of riding a horse that has done enough rides at St Albans to know the tracks fairly well and know where he's going each day. As the ride goes on, the days become a blur of hills, roads, strapping, vetting and doing it all again. I also have to maintain a tight regime to manage Boss through the week. Every horse and rider has their individual problems that arise during the week, and Boss is no different. Our team worked very hard trying to cross the T's and dot the I's all week - a challenge for sure, but one that has become addictive over the years.

*Kim Hagon on Diamond R Boston at McKechnie's crossing.  
Photo by Main Event*

My support crew are essential to my attendance at Shahzada and without them it would be an impossible task. My Mum doubles as my strapper and babysitter, making sure the boys are washed at least once a day, my strapping gear is ready to go, and I eat something between legs. Kym is my rock and keeps me from getting carried away with my imagination and finding things wrong with my horse! Dad as Chief Steward is the silent support and helps everything run smoothly.

My planning for Boss and Shahzada started well before he was born as I did Shahzada on his mother in 1998. I wasn't sure how he would develop as a foal...but we're thrilled with how he's worked out. He has now done 5 Shahzadas from 5 attempts, his first with April in 2008 and one with Kym carrying Heavyweight in 2010 and three for me. He is not the easiest horse to ride or manage, but he is legendary in my eyes and hopefully has many more to come.

Now home, unpacked and the washing started, I have started planning for 2013!!! And yes Kymbo I will be fit next year I promise.

Kim Hagon #56=