MISS RODEO AUSTRALIA

Wow! What a crazy month of rodeo madness! The action is continuing as I am currently writing my monthly article on my plane flight to the Canadian Finals Rodeo. I hope you all enjoy the read I can't wait to tell you all about my international journey when I return.

The Famous Warwick Rodeo and this year's 50th National Finals Rodeo...

My work as Miss Rodeo Australia started a week prior to the big event where I was privileged enough to travel to Sydney alongside Georgie Stower the newly crowned Warwick Rodeo Queen to meet our International Queens Lauren Heaton - Miss Rodeo America and Katy Lucas - Miss Rodeo Canada.

Jack Daniels, a major sponsor of the Warwick Rodeo hosted us in Sydney for a few days where we were able to show our International Queens a little bit of Australia before the real work started. We had an absolute ball sightseeing in Sydney visiting the Opera House, catching a ferry across to Manly Beach, Taronga Zoo and my favourite which was dinner with the Jack Daniels crew at the amazing and popular restaurant 'Icebergs' on the iconic Bondi Beach. We had great company, amazing food and a lot of laughs!

After a few days in Sydney it was time to head back to Toowoomba, QLD. We all boarded a plane to Toowoomba West Wellcamp Airport, Qantas were kind enough to sponsor our return flights to Sydney. On arrival to Wellcamp Airport we were overwhelmed with a massive greeting of people including the Toowoomba Mayor, Warwick officials and a lot of media. After interviews and meet and greets at the airport the Queens and I were headed to visit the major sponsors of the Warwick Rodeo to show our appreciation. After visiting sponsors it was time to head out to Warwick and get settled into our new home for the week, kindly sponsored by the Coachman's Inn.

It was an early morning start the next morning for us as we were headed to Killarney to help one of the suppliers of cattle for the Warwick Campdraft, Hayden Lamb, muster the cattle in. We met up with our photographer, Storm Lahiff, who then joined us for the rest of the week as our very own paparazzi. The girls and I had a tonne of fun mustering with Hayden and with our photo shoot on the property. We then headed to Canning Downs Horse Stud for a tour of the iconic property and learnt about the history of Canning Downs then straight on to the Gold Coast for promotions.

Whilst at the Gold Coast we met up with the Surfers Paradise Life Savers for a photo shoot on the beach for the Gold Coast Bulletin and also got to meet with the iconic Meter Maids. Throughout the rest of the day we handed out Warwick Rodeo flyers, signed autographs and took photos with tourists. It was really great to be able to promote rodeo to people who were not familiar with the sport and I felt we got a lot of interest and potential spectators.

By now it was Wednesday, the day before the official rodeo action started so we set off on our last adventure out of Warwick to Stanthorpe for a little bit of country touring. Kicking it off with Sutton's Apple Orchard Tour where we got to taste different kinds of freshly made juices, pies and home baked goodies. Then onto a visit with Law Dogs Australia where they do private shows of trained guard and detection dogs, we also got to play with the cutest little Labrador puppy who was all of 8 weeks old and could already accomplish more tricks than my 12 month old Dalmatian. Safe to say I was a little embarrassed with my dog training skills. After advancing on some dog training skills the girls and I had lunch at the Queensland College of Wine Tourism they were kind enough to give us a tour of where the wines were processed and often by high school students studying to work in the Wine Industry in conjunction with their senior schooling. The lunch was fantastic I would highly recommend the menu. Later that night it was the official Warwick Rodeo sponsor's evening at the Warwick Showgrounds and at the Rodeo Heritage Centre was the Induction of R.M. Williams, Jack Gill, Stan Gill and Lance Skuthorpe in the Hall of Fame and the NFR Competitors back number presentations. We mingled and showed our appreciation at the sponsor's evening and then presented the back numbers to the National Finals competitors. Many will never know just how much it meant to me to award these back numbers to all the competitors. As Miss Rodeo

Australia I have travelled and watched each and every one of you on your good days and your bad and I have felt like a part of the journey that got you there and you have all been such an important part of mine so for me this was a very special moment.

The first day of the rodeo had finally arrived and I couldn't wait to get into some action. The 4 of us Rodeo Queens had been given the opportunity to participate in the famous Warwick Gold Cup Campdraft where we each teamed up with a campdrafter and their horse and got to have a run. I was teamed up with Craig Sheppard from Peak Crossing. I managed to get out of the Camp nicely, around the first peg, around the second before my beast beat me back to the first peg. I didn't make a qualified run but I sure had a lot of fun with it! Later that night my usual duties were performed kicking off with autograph signing, Grand Entry & leading the round winners in their victory laps for the night.

Day 2 of the Finals was a day filled with promotions such as autograph signing, photo shoots with sponsors and town tours. Once the sun went down it was all on again with rodeo action, kicking off the rodeo with the Grand Entry. Throughout the night I helped in the arena tracking cattle and mingling through the crowd. The 4 Queens got to have a little fun running the Campdraft horses in the barrel race, which went pretty well considering the horses had never done it before and Miss Rodeo Canada Katy Lucas got to show her skills as a team roper with Thomas Whitwell in the team roping and she roped it like a boss! She is one tiny but mighty woman that's for sure.

Day 3 of the Finals was a great day starting off with a fantastic breakfast with Tracy Vellacott, our chaperone for the week. She baked us pizza scrolls, slices and so many delicious goodies. Thank you for taking such good care of us all week, Tracy! The other Queens and I were then off to the Warwick street parade where Miss Rodeo America Lauren, Miss Rodeo Canada Katy and I got to ride in a BMW convertible down the street in the parade. This was one of the first parades I had ever been in where I wasn't on a horse which I have to say I thought wouldn't be as fun but I thoroughly enjoyed it, it was a lot of fun waving to the kids and alongside such good company.

Day 4 and final day of rodeo action... Sunday was filled with presentations, victory laps, Grand Entry, autograph signings and much, much more. That night we then presented all the Australian Champions and Warwick Rodeo Aggregate winners their buckles and saddles at the APRA Headquarters, the Rodeo Heritage Centre. I have too many people to thank so I am going to keep it simple and say thank you to the APRA, Warwick Rodeo Committee and all the girls who I spent the week with you all made my Finals and Warwick Rodeo one of the best ever! As a former Warwick Rodeo Queen it means so much to come back and represent as Miss Rodeo Australia. A big thankyou also goes to my sponsor's Rock and Roll Cowgirl, Corral Boots and Ride Tuff for always having me looking my best!

Yours Truly in Rodeo
Danika Boland
Miss Rodeo Australia

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