



## PCA Backs Sports Australia 'Team Girls'

Pony Club Australia has jumped on board with the Sports Australia Team Girls initiative announced this week.

"As we have a large percentage of female members, we certainly want to encourage more girls and young women to take up or continue being active with a healthy sport," CEO Dr Catherine Ainsworth said.

"Equestrian is one of the few sports where men and women compete together, even to Olympic level. This initiative is about building a nation of more confident girls and women through a connection with sport and we are well placed to do that. There are already plenty of wonderful female role models in our sport, like the late dual gold medallist Gill Rolton, Olympic and World Cup showjumper Edwina Tops-Alexander, and Hazel Shannon (28) who is the first rider ever to win the Adelaide International Three Day Event three times.

"The 800 Pony Clubs throughout Australia do a great job of retaining a high percentage of female members after their mid-teens, which is often the point where numbers decrease due to competing interests. In 2019 we started the Centre Membership Program by linking with riding centres. We accredit these centres to teach the tried and tested Pony Club method to people so now you can be a Pony Club member without your own horse. This is to encourage people to take up or return to riding and we think this will appeal to women especially," Dr Ainsworth added.

"We agree with Sport Australia's belief there's so much more to sport than physical health benefits, such as the ability to build confidence, self-esteem, team-work, communication, social skills, leadership, goal-setting and resilience. Pony Club also adds the dimension of horsemanship education, working safely with animals and enjoying the great outdoors."

We will be encouraging our Clubs and members to visit the [Suncorp's Team Girls hub](#) to access the great range of articles, toolkits, e-books and videos."

### #TeamGirls

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## SPORTAUS

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