

Spike keeps everyone on their toes

Spike was bred by Ian McRoberts of Tareena Bloodstock and came into the NSW Thoroughbred Rehabilitation Trust as an unbroken 3yo that had never left the picturesque Taree stud where he was born.

His pony-like stature meant he never reached the racetrack but what he lacked in size he made up for in character and attitude.

Spike had a lot to learn about the big wide world outside of the paddocks and was slowly broken in by the trainers at the Taree retraining facility with regular spells to allow for growth spurts.

Spike found dressage work in the arena boring and didn't mind letting his rider know his opinions, so to mix up the monotony of flatwork, he began trail riding, beach rides and free jumping.

This was when he showed his aptitude over the obstacles and it became apparent this would be his new career.

Spike had a few competition outings with the re-trainers before he was spotted by a family from Wollongong who thought the young gelding was exactly what they were after as their 15yo son Max was searching

THIS MONTH WE PUT THE SPOTLIGHT ON A CHARACTER CALLED SPIKE, A GELDING BY FLORAL DYNAMITE WHO NEVER QUITE MADE IT TO THE RACETRACK

WORDS: HOLLY HARRISON

for his second horse to be his next showjumper.

Just a few days before Max was due to go and trial Spike at Taree, Max had an unfortunate accident coming off his motorbike and fracturing his arm.

But the family still went to meet Spike and it appeared to be a 'match made in heaven'; the two 'boys' striking off a great rapport immediately. So, without even riding Spike they took him home.

With Max's arm still in a full cast they made their show jumping debut, and what a team they were.

Max and Spike have since gone from strength-to-strength, recently competing at SIEC and achieving a 3rd place in a competitive field against more experienced horses.

Spike still took the opportunity

to show his flair with a few bucks between fences with the pair proving unstoppable.

Max said: "Looking for a new horse to join us was becoming a very long and tiring process with so many horses out there, but none were the right 'fit'.

"Then a friend saw our struggle and suggested we contact Karen Day from NSW Thoroughbred Rehabilitation Trust.

"Karen was very helpful as she listened to all our worries and needs, and it was just luck that she said they had the perfect horse for us.

"We packed our bags and headed to Taree to meet a young thoroughbred, Spike, whose distinctive personality was a parallel match to my own.

"When we arrived, Mal Fitzgerald and his family greeted us with open arms. Mal's daughter offered to ride Spike for us as I had broken my arm just a couple days before hand.

"After meeting Spike, we knew instantly that he was the perfect match. His playful personality keeps everyone on their toes, including all the other horses, but it is what helps make him the horse we all love and we would not swap him for anything else!" **RNSW**

BELOW: Max and Spike going through their paces

