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Muswellbrook's Lauren Browne works towards her dream of competing at Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games

• Rod Thompson

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MUSWELLBROOK rider Lauren Browne is readying herself for a busy time as she works towards her dream of competing at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

And, while she's vigorously preparing her mount Sky's Da Limit for their quest, the 26-year-old will receive some valuable financial assistance, thanks to a new sponsorship deal with Malabar Coal.

Browne, who has competed at a state, national and international level, said she's very thankful for the organisation's support.

"Malabar is a genuine and community-minded company that I am proud to represent in 2019," she explained.

"I'm travelling along a very long road to achieve my goal.

"It's a challenging sport - eventing, which incorporates cross country, dressage and showjumping.

"So, every little bit [of aid] helps."

The former Western Australian, who now works at Brett Cavanaugh Racing in Scone, only started riding at the age of eight.

"My love of it has grown from there, from pony club through to Equestrian Australia," Browne said.

"One thing's just led to another.

"But, you have to back yourself, too.

"They only take three riders to the Olympics, so it's a tough game.

"You've got to produce strong consistent results over a 12-month period, not one or two every now and then."



In the meantime, Browne has enough on her plate, starting with the Sydney International 3-Day Event at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre at Horsley Park from April 25 to 28.

"Sky's Da Limit is ranked among the top 10 horses in Australia, so he should have a good run there," she said.

"In fact, that competition suits him.

"Then, the short-term aim is making the Australian team for the Trans-Tasman, in New Zealand, in May.

"I guess that's my first priority.

"We also have the Mitsubishi Motors Australian International 3-Day Event in Adelaide at the end of the year (November 14-17).

"That gives us plenty of chances to do well; and impress the national selectors."

In January, Browne took the opportunity to visit the Maxwell Infrastructure site and witness the rehabilitation of the now closed Drayton open cut mine.

"Malabar is using all of its resources to rehabilitate past mining operations and demonstrate to the community what responsible mining really means," she said.

Chairman Wayne Seabrook said the company was delighted to back the gifted rider.

"The funding deal, which will subsidise Lauren's entry fees throughout the 2019 season, is just one example of Malabar's active role in the region," he explained.

"Our community sponsorship program currently supports the Australian Men's Shed Association, Wildlife Aid, Upper Hunter Education Fund, Denman Rugby League Football Club and schools in the area, including Muswellbrook Public, Denman Public and St Joseph's Primary in Denman.

"We're doing our best to listen to locals and provide support where it's needed most.

"Where we can help, we will; and we're open to hearing any ideas and opportunities the community has."