

# My WILD RIDE

## FIONA JOHNSON

**The inspiring true story of how one woman's faith and determination helped her overcome life's greatest odds...**

Fiona Johnson was born a city girl, but that never stopped her love for horses. At the age of 10 she saved up all her pocket money to buy a saddle at a garage sale. Eventually, after months of nagging her parents, they agreed to buy her a horse to accompany the saddle. Fiona's teenage years were spent growing up with horses at the Ray Murray ranch in Kellyville NSW.

In her early 20's Fiona meets Matt and they fall madly in love. They move to Queensland, buy a 5 acre block of land, get married and begin to build their dream home.

But things are about to take a dramatic turn. Married for less than a year, Fiona is diagnosed with Acute Myloid Leukaemia. She's only 25. She begins chemotherapy early in December 2001 and spends the days leading up to Christmas in intensive care. With toxicity in her stomach, she can't eat or drink for over two weeks, and is fed through a drip throughout the festive season.

It's in 2002 that she goes into remission, yet realises her fight has only just begun. She continues with chemotherapy and loses a friend in the hospital who had been battling the same disease. Fiona is faced with the biggest decision of her life – to have a transplant or not. Given only a 50%

chance of surviving the next five years, Fiona decides against a transplant despite doctor's advice. She's also told her chances of falling pregnant are slim to none after such intensive treatment.

It's in that moment Fiona decides life is too short. She begins a lifelong dream – to become Australia's rodeo champion...

Fiona Johnson is now cancer-free, still happily married to Matt (who now also competes in the rodeo circuit), has two beautiful children (despite all odds) and has gone on to become the National Champion in Breakaway Calf Roping.

personal best in Breakaway Roping of 2.29 seconds. Fiona is also a horse trainer who can ride dressage, rodeo and western and has shown horses at national and state level. She practices natural horsemanship. Now 34, Fiona currently lives with her husband Matt, their two children Mahli and Beau, and their horses in the NSW rural community of Murwillumbah.

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