

# UNL rodeo team holds its own among competitors

By DAVID WILSON  
Staff writer

It may not have been the recognition most Nebraska athletes experience, but while wearing her UNL rodeo jacket Wednesday, Jamie Chaffin was noticed by a fellow student in her chemistry lab.

"There's a rodeo team here?" he asked.

That's not an uncommon question.

Even Chaffin, now the top cowgirl on the squad, didn't know the team existed until after she arrived on campus.

As a club sport, the rodeo team receives little university funding and doesn't even have a coach. That leaves its success to the drive and determination of its members.

"It's an individual kind of thing," Chaffin said. "You have to make yourself practice, because nobody is there to make you go out and do it."

Of course, they help each other out, but of the eight cowgirls on the team, Chaffin is one of two who compete in breakaway roping, and she is the only athlete to compete in goat tying. The majority of the women just compete in barrel racing, as does Chaffin.

But the fact that she's the only cowgirl to compete in all three events doesn't seem to affect her improvement.

Approaching the start of the spring season this weekend, the Burwell native ranks second nationally in goat tying, and regionally ranks 13th in barrel racing and 11th in breakaway roping.

"Her determination and overall competitiveness are what make her so hard to beat," said George Pheiffer, UNL's rodeo club adviser since 1981. "I've had quite a few who have had the same or better physical skills but haven't had the determination and competitive skills."

The rodeo club will open its spring season Friday and Saturday in the 41st annual UNL College Rodeo

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GEORGE PHEIFFER  
rodeo club adviser

at the Saunders County Fairgrounds in Wahoo. Competition against teams from the six-state region will be held at 7 p.m. Friday and 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday.

For Chaffin and the rest of the UNL squad, it will be a chance to get back into the swing of things after a winter break from the rodeo. Unlike some other schools, NU doesn't have the luxury of an indoor practice arena.

The women's team currently ranks 22nd in the nation and second in the region - behind South Dakota State. The men's team is ranked fourth in the region.

"I'm really excited for the spring season to get going," Chaffin said. "I don't really think we can catch first place, but it would be nice if we could stay in second and still improve."

Chaffin also has her eyes set on qualifying for the College National Finals Rodeo held in June - something the junior has yet to be a part of.

The top two teams in the region will qualify for the national meet in Casper, Wyo., along with the top two individuals in each event. The key, she said, will be staying on top of her game mentally.

"The biggest problem with me is when I psyche myself out and push myself too hard," Chaffin said. "Instead of going in with this calm thought and just doing it, I try to hurry myself too much and start making little mistakes."

But the mental aspect, Pheiffer said, is also where Chaffin has made her biggest improvements. Upon her arrival in Lincoln, Chaffin had com-

peted in high school rodeos, but hadn't planned on continuing her rodeo career.

"You have to have the physical skills, but physical skills alone aren't sufficient," Pheiffer said. "She's developed and matured the ability to know how to win."

Just as Chaffin must be mentioned when discussing the women's rodeo team, one cowboy stands out among the men - Kyle Whitaker.

Whitaker ranks No. 1 in the nation in saddle-bronc riding, and regionally ranks 13th in calf roping and sixth in steer wrestling.

His efforts last year earned him the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association's Linderman Award for the second straight year - meaning Whitaker won the most money in three events, including at least one roughstock event.

Whitaker, one of a dying breed of all-around cowboys, earned the award while also competing at the collegiate level.

"He is undoubtedly the most versatile contestant since I've been here," Pheiffer said. "We've never had anyone that competes so well in so many events."

Both Whitaker and Chaffin are closing in on being ranked in the all-around.

"Rodeo, like any other event, is becoming more and more specialized," Pheiffer said. "There are less all-around contestants."

But Chaffin isn't planning on losing her drive and determination any time soon.

"It's fun," Chaffin said. "It's just too addicting."

# Senate debates speed fines, liquor and fireworks sales

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stituents that feel when average speeds are clocked at 81 or 83 (mph) that that's a problem," Bromm said. "You reach those speeds a lot more so (on the Interstate), than on byways and lesser traveled roads."

Another portion of the bill that would have created one drivers license-point system for both highways and the Interstate was not adopted during Wednesday's debate.

## Liquor purchases

Signing that little black book at the grocery store when you purchase alcohol could be a thing of the past if a bill advanced by the Legislature on Thursday becomes law.

LB719, which advanced 29-1 from the first round of debate Thursday, would give liquor retailers the option of not using the books to document who purchases alcohol.

Omaha Sen. Patrick Bourne, who is sponsoring LB719, said anyone who is carded when buying spirits must sign the book.

The books, the result of a 1969 law, were designed to give liquor retailers an absolute defense if they happened to sell to a minor.

But the books have become a prob-

lem for grocery stores, Bourne said.

Grocery stores have become more strict about requiring identification to purchase booze, which means more people are being carded and required to sign the book.

This creates backed-up lines, he said, which is why several Omaha grocery store-chain owners asked him to introduce the bill.

## Fireworks

Nebraskans got one step closer to ringing in the new millennium with a bang, literally.

LB621, which cleared the first round of debate Thursday, would allow fireworks sales from Dec. 28, 1999 to Jan. 1, 2000.

Twenty-six senators have signed onto the bill, which is sponsored by Gering Sen. Adrian Smith.

Smith said allowing fireworks sales would keep tax money in the state, because Nebraskans would not have to cross the borders to get fireworks.

Money generated from sales-tax revenue from fireworks would be put into the state's Fire Insurance Tax Fund. That money is used for fire prevention activities.


Compiled by senior staff writer Jessica Fargen

no bible study this week

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# Moeser requests budget cuts, improved recruiting strategies

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said. "We are going to make progress in this."

Moeser said faculty and staff salary increases were still the regents' top priority. Early signs have shown that the Legislature will appropriate funding close to the regents' salary increase request, he said.

"The people of the state, as demonstrated in the Unicameral, are concerned," Moeser said. "They have a good understanding in the importance of keeping superior faculty."

But despite receiving some funding for salary increases, Moeser said more money was needed.

To counteract the economic shortfall, Moeser asked all UNL deans and vice chancellors to prepare budget cut proposals at two levels - one at a reduction of 2.6 percent and the other reduced by 3.2 percent.

The proposals would be used in determining the elimination of specific areas, such as programs or services, rather than affecting many different areas, Moeser said.

"The instruction, research and public service mission at the university are central to remember and maintain," Moeser said. "I am confident we will do so."

College of Arts and Sciences Dean Brian Foster said he understood

the university's need to budget, however, he said cutting from what is already a tight budget would be difficult.

"Three percent is a lot to cut from a budget. It's a lot of money for our college," Foster said. "Every time you reduce your amount of money, great implications will occur."

College of Fine and Performing Arts Dean Richard Durst agreed.

"We are a small college, and it is not going to be easy," Durst said. "Originally we had anticipated something less than 3.2 percent."

Durst said the College of Fine and Performing Arts had already aborted two searches for tenure-track faculty and said current vacant positions would not be filled. Faculty members within the college are meeting today to discuss other possible budget cuts.

In addition to individual college budget cut proposals, Moeser said he wanted the university to increase out-of-state and international student recruitment, reduce university utility costs and maintain private support from university alumni and friends.

Admissions Director Larry Routh said the university has already implemented strategies to increase out-of-state and international enrollment, which bring in higher tuition fees than in-state students.

"We are just at the front of everything," Routh said. "It's a building

process. We'll go out, become better known and hopefully bring students in."

Routh said the University of Nebraska Alumni Association has volunteered to help locate UNL alumni, asking them to attend and speak at out-of-state college recruiting fairs. In addition, admission staff members have been traveling overseas, recruiting international students, he said.

But increasing enrollment is only one way to generate revenue, Moeser said. Creating efficiency within the university is another.

Richard McDermott, associate vice chancellor for facilities management, said UNL was working through a proposal that would reduce utility costs by 20 percent, saving the university \$2 million per year.

Moeser encouraged the university community to be supportive, rather than defensive in light of the budget constraints and the cost-cutting decisions the university would face in the next few months.

The Appropriations Committee is considering the university's budget request and will release its final budget in May. "We are going to make progress on this," Moeser said. "I think the important thing is that we have positive support as we move forward. The quality and excellence of this place is good and will continue."

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