

*The Morrill Act of 1862 established a Land Grant University  
in each state where **The Leading Object**  
would be instruction in agriculture and related fields*



## NMSU's College of Agriculture and Home Economics

Vol. 17, No. 4, April 2003

# Six qualify for College National Finals Rodeo

Six NMSU rodeo team members qualified for the College National Finals Rodeo as the men's and women's teams closed out the regular season with wins April 4-5 at the Southern New Mexico State Fairgrounds.

"This was a great way to finish at home," said coach Jim Dewey Brown. "We're in good position going into the conference and national finals."

Four men and two women earned byes to the CNFR June 8-14 in Casper, Wyo., by finishing at No. 1 or No. 2 in the regional point standings. Others will have a second chance to qualify at the conference finals rodeo May 29-31 in Hobbs.

Mandy Sproul, national leader in the women's all-around standings, will represent NMSU in barrel racing and goat tying. She finished with the region's highest totals in both events, racking up 595 points in barrel racing and 595.5 in goat tying.

Clay Snure, first in regional men's all-around standings, wrapped up first place in calf roping with 423.5 points.

In team roping, heeler Kody Gentry earned a bye with a first-place regional total of 176.5 points. Jarred Evans was second in the standings as a header, qualifying with 123 points.

Jordan Davis, second in the region in bullriding, earned a bye with 159 points.

Breakaway roper Leah Stevenson finished second in the region with 331 points. "She missed first place by just seven points," Brown said. "It came down to the last calf on Saturday."

During the weekend rodeo, the women's team, which is leading the national standings, accumulated another 360 points to protect the lead.

Sproul had a runaway all-around victory with 295 points, winning the average in barrel racing and

goat tying, and finishing second in breakaway roping. As proof of her consistency, she posted times of 17.82 and 17.8 in barrel racing and 8.4 and 8.3 in goat tying.

In saddlebronc riding, Taylor Smith was second in the average with 139 points on two rides. Davis was third with a 75 on one ride.

Buddy Robinson, who won the long go in steer wrestling with a time of 5.6 seconds, was third in the average with a 13.6. Snure won the short go with a 4.8.

Calf roper Brett Acuna posted his first win of the season, accumulating enough points to compete in the conference finals. Acuna was first in the short go with a 9.6. John Pete Etcheverry, who won the long go with a 10.5, was second in the average.

In team roping, Dylan Salvo and Kody Gentry won the average and finished first in the short go with a 7.5. Lee Kiehne and Aaron Thomas were fourth in the average.♣

## The Dean's Perspective

NMSU and the College of Agriculture and Home Economics have proved to be welcoming to a broad array of students and faculty with varying viewpoints, interests and backgrounds. What this doesn't mean, however, is that we want to discard great traditions. Some exciting things are happening in the college that solidify NMSU's Western traditions.

The success of our rodeo team under the leadership of coach Jim Dewey Brown is stunning this year. We could be on our way to adding

national championships to those we won in Western horsemanship in the 1990s. To top it off, the team's budget was more than doubled by the state this legislative session, promising a bright future.

Recently, Animal and Range Sciences added some very well-known individuals, who will join us soon. Clay Elliott, one of the most respected livestock judging team coaches around, will coordinate our judging teams. Jerry Hawkins, who was responsible for recruiting many a New Mexico youngster for judging

teams in the state of Texas, will be recruiting for us this year.

Both will help us establish NMSU as the place to be for students with rural interests and rural roots. The spillover effects of rodeo and judging success will no doubt enhance our 4-H programs as well. Just because our college represents more to more people today doesn't mean it should represent anything less to our traditional clients.

## College sees partial success with Legislature

NMSU's College of Agriculture and Home Economics saw funding for two of its legislative priorities signed into law at the conclusion of the legislative session in March. The Agricultural Science Center at Farmington had its budget enhanced by \$100,000 and the Chile Task Force won \$130,000 in new dollars.

Vetoed were \$150,000 in increased funding for the Range Im-

provement Task Force, \$150,000 for a viticulturist, \$50,000 for a Mora County 4-H agent and \$25,000 for a parenting publication. New funding for the Water Task Force never made it into legislation.

Faculty were awarded a 3 percent compensation increase, with 2.5 percent for staff. The Board of Regents will consider compensation increases, and there are moves afoot to offer staff 3 percent by tap-

ping into other dollars, said Dean Jerry Schickedanz.

The rodeo team won \$125,000 in new recurring funding, giving it an annual budget of \$200,000, beginning in July. While not a legislative priority, those dollars are administered through Extension.

The state FFA office, located on the NMSU campus, received \$300,000 in budget enhancements.

## NMSU floral designers finish with flourish at nationals

The talents of NMSU's floral designers were in full bloom as they arranged their way to three firsts and a second place finish at the National Intercollegiate Floral Crop Quality Evaluation and Design Competition in Las Cruces.

It was NMSU's best finish since resuming national judging and design competition in 1997, said Geno Picchioni, the horticulture faculty member overseeing the event.

"We have always had some design students place nationally, but this just seemed to be our year," he said. "We were elated to see how competitive we were nationally."

In the design competition April 4, contestants from 11 universities had one hour to complete creations made from a preselected assortment of flowers, a scenario the team had practiced for weeks, including several times during spring break.

"I would have to attribute our design team's success to our coach," said a beaming Amy Newton, a horticulture major from Roswell who created the winning floral design in the amateur water vase centerpiece contest. "She taught us some really new and in-

teresting design techniques and worked with us a lot."

Coach and event coordinator Sabine Whitley credited the students' dedication. "All of that work paid off for them," she said. "I am absolutely thrilled." To pull off a virtual sweep of all four design events, NMSU contestants had to earn the highest total scores from six floral industry judges who independently rated the designs, she said.

Kathy Burcham, a horticulture major from Cuauhtemoc, Mexico, won the amateur competition in one-sided, asymmetrical design.

Bryna Wilson, a graduating horticulture major, gained experience for a planned career as a floral designer for special events such as elaborate weddings. She won the professional level contest in European hand-tied design by crafting an elegant bouquet suitable for a bridal party.

Eva Winans placed second in tablescapes, the other professional contest for those who had previously competed in the amateur division or done paid work as floral designers. The winner was Monica De Anda of California Polytechnic.

A complete tablescapes includes tall banquet arrangements, decorated place settings and napkin rings made from fresh flowers.

Winning designs were on display during the banquet, with awards kept secret until the ceremony.

Cal Poly's team won the highly competitive floral evaluation or judging contest by ranking 30 classes of cut and potted flowers. The University of Wisconsin-River Falls was second, followed by Wisconsin-Platteville.

"This is the kind of experience that complements academic work by helping students make the transition into their careers," Picchioni said. "Doing well in this competition looks great on a résumé."

In addition to the competition, the 70 participating students met potential employers on industry tours of local floral and cactus greenhouses. Evening entertainment and sightseeing tours rounded out the activities.

"The desert poppies they saw on the way to White Sands were particular favorites," Picchioni said. "Several of the students said they want to come back to New Mexico." ❖

## Two riders advance to national equestrian finals

NMSU equestrian rider Kristi Gottspomer won three first place awards and a second at the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association's Zone 7 Championships at the campus Equine Educational Center on April 5.

Gottspomer will represent NMSU at the IHSA National Championships May 1-4 at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tenn. She will be joined at nationals by junior Megan Duff, who has already been selected to represent NMSU in the American Quarter Horse Association high-point rider class.

Gottspomer, a Las Cruces native, put together one standout ride after another, finishing first in alumni Western horsemanship and first in alumni reining during the afternoon competition. Earlier in the day, she garnered a first in

alumni hunt seat flat and a second in alumni hunt seat over fences. "Kristi is a very versatile rider," said Amy Smith, NMSU huntseat coach.

From now until nationals, Gottspomer said she'll be polishing her skills to their highest levels. "You need to be on the money every single time," she said.

In stock seat team competition at the Zone 7 Championships, perennial regional powerhouse Texas A&M University defeated Colorado State University for first place overall. West Texas A&M University was third, while NMSU was fourth.

"We had excellent effort," said Deborah Rosencrans, NMSU stock seat coach. "It's just too bad the weather didn't cooperate with us this time," she said, referring to the high winds and blowing dust that pelted riders most of the day.

Tessa Cathey, a freshman from

Las Cruces, earned second in the beginning horsemanship class, while Elizabeth Knight, a freshman from Las Cruces, won fourth in intermediate horsemanship.

Rachel Rosencrans, a senior from Las Cruces, won second in open reining, while national qualifier Duff, NMSU's high-point stock seat rider for the entire region this season, received a third in open Western horsemanship class. Freshman Christina Gonzales from Taos won fourth in advanced horsemanship.

In the individual competitions, Rosencrans received a fifth in open Western horsemanship, and Lauren Kanof, a freshman from Las Cruces, was fourth in intermediate over fences. Erin Frye, a senior from Los Alamos, earned sixth in advanced Western horsemanship, while RaeLynn Dunlap placed sixth in walk/trot/canter.

## Agricultural marketing specialist teaching at NMSU

Jay Lillywhite, an agricultural economist with interests in value-added food marketing and natural resource economics, has joined the faculty.

Lillywhite comes to NMSU from Purdue University, where he completed his doctoral coursework. His dissertation research was on using surveys to estimate consumer demand for products new to the market.

"Traditionally, economists have used historical data to estimate consumer demand, but this type of data is often not available with products that are new to the market," he said "In these cases, using survey data can provide important consumer preference information that otherwise could not be obtained."

He has also researched marketing for ethnic foods. One of his

projects dealt with marketing fresh goat meat to Minnesota's Somali populations. Somalis observe Muslim dietary laws that prescribe slaughtering practices different from those used by major goat meat exporters in Australia and New Zealand, he said.

"Ethnic food sales have been a growth area but a topic that hasn't been studied as much as other types of marketing," Lillywhite said. "My research dealt with niche marketing opportunities."

His other research interests include marketing natural gas in Western U.S. pipelines.

He teaches marketing courses in Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business.

From 1998 to 2000, Lillywhite was a teaching specialist and assistant professor for the University of Minnesota, working on the campus

of Southwest State University in Marshall, Minn. He was director of the Southwest Center for Economic Education, lecturer for agribusiness management and economics courses, and co-adviser for the Agribusiness/Agronomy Club.

He was a research assistant at Iowa State University from 1995 to 1998, where he worked on the university's annual land value survey and oversaw state surveys of farm sizes, management and operations.

Lillywhite grew up on his grandfather's farm in northern Utah. He earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Brigham Young University in 1992 and a master's degree in economics from Utah State University in 1994. He is completing his dissertation. ❖

# Bottoms to lead Leyendecker, Fabian Garcia centers

Rick Bottoms will serve as the new super-intendent of NMSU's Leyendecker Plant Science Research Center and Fabian Garcia Research Center. He brings to his new post almost a decade of weed science, irrigation and agronomy experience at the University of Missouri and five years working as a weed scientist and range restoration expert at the University of Wyoming.

His plans include research on invasive weeds, reflective light and irrigation efficiency modeling. Located 8 miles southeast of Las Cruces, the Leyendecker center has more than 200 acres of varying soil types for research on plant breeding, disease control, insect and nematode control, herbicide effects and production management techniques.

The Fabian Garcia center west of campus supports greenhouse, orchard and crop research. It also contains a botanical garden and

turf demonstration plots, which are used to screen new plant materials and to teach classes on landscaping, ornamental design and maintenance.

"I hope to improve the focus of our research programs and adjust the logistical dynamics between the two research centers," Bottoms said. He will also serve as an associate professor in Agronomy and Horticulture and have an adjunct appointment with Entomology, Plant Pathology and Weed Science. Bottoms said he looks forward to spending time getting acquainted with NMSU's diverse mix of agricultural programs.

Before joining NMSU earlier this month, Bottoms worked for more than nine years with the University of Missouri, where he served as agronomy specialist and director of operations at the school's Graves Farm Research Center. The 78-acre facility's research focused on corn,

soybeans, forage and alternate crops.

Prior to that, he directed several ground-breaking agricultural Cooperative Extension Service outreach programs for Native Americans at the University of Wyoming, including providing the federal design model for funding Extension programs on reservations. In addition, Bottoms has worked as a college and high school agriculture instructor and FFA adviser.

Bottoms earned a bachelor's degree in animal science and a master's degree in agricultural education and mechanized agriculture from California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo. He received his doctorate in agronomy, physiology and crop ecology from the University of Missouri. Bottoms also is certified as a professional agronomist, weed scientist and crop adviser. ❖

## Students rake in landscape awards

NMSU horticulture majors Steve Hogenmiller, Sandy Potvin and Genieve Sanchez placed nationally at the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) Student Career Days in Jacksonville, Miss.

This is the second year that NMSU has participated in the events, which were held in March. "Overall, we had some really good individual performances," said Rolston St. Hilaire, faculty adviser for the NMSU chapter of ALCA.

ALCA offers one of the largest student career fairs for students seeking a career in landscaping, he said. "Most importantly, the students find it a very rewarding experience."

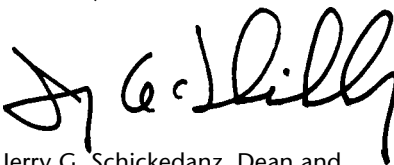
Hogenmiller was 41st in overall performance among 671 students competing in 24 landscape industry-related events. He was eleventh in skid-steer operation.

Potvin took first place in sales presentation and third place in business management. "The exposure to the industry leaders is great," she said. "It is an awesome competition."

Sanchez, who competed in irrigation design, maintenance equipment operation and personnel management, was offered a job with AAA Landscape of Arizona. She said she was impressed with how many company representatives attended to talk with students. ❖

The Leading Object is dedicated to encouraging communication among all areas of NMSU's College of Agriculture and Home Economics.

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