



**Wharton County
Junior College**

Office of Marketing and Communications
911 Boling Highway
Wharton, Texas 77488

NEWS RELEASE

Toll free: 1.800.561.9252, ext. 6322

Office: 979.532.6322

Fax: 979.532.6493

LEADER OF THE PACK

WCJC cowboy takes top honors at College National Finals Rodeo

For the fourth time in nine years, a Wharton County Junior College cowboy has claimed a national rodeo title.

Cade Goodman of Waelder was recently named the 2014 National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA) National Champion in steer wrestling. A freshman at WCJC, Goodman earned the coveted title after an impressive showing at the College National Finals Rodeo (CNFR), held June 15-21 in Casper, Wyo.

Goodman said it was the culmination of countless hours of hard work.

“It has been tough and I have tried as hard as I can all year long to be the best I can be,” Goodman said. “Winning the steer wrestling at the CNFR is the most exciting thing that I have accomplished so far in my career as a bulldogger.”

Steer wrestling is a difficult and fairly dangerous rodeo event. It entails having a cowboy drop from a horse onto a running steer in the hopes of wrestling the animal to the ground. The competitor is usually known as a “bulldogger.” A second cowboy, the “hazer,” rides next to the steer and tries to keep it running in a relatively straight line to expedite the process.

Goodman credited his hazer – Troy Lee Keaton – with helping him succeed in the event.

“Without my hazer, I couldn’t have accomplished what I have,” he said.

WCJC Rodeo Coach Sean Amestoy expressed his pride in Goodman’s finish. Competition at the CNFR is second to none.

“It’s the best of the best,” Amestoy said. “It’s a big deal to win a national title. A lot of these guys go into the pros.”

That Goodman finished so strongly is not that surprising to Amestoy, despite the fact that the cowboy is only a freshman and was competing against far larger schools. In one year’s time, Goodman won titles at the Texas High School finals, the International Finals Youth Rodeo and now the CNFR.

“He’s only a freshman and is competing against guys that are 22 and 23 years old,” Amestoy said. “He did a great job.”

But Goodman isn’t the only WCJC cowboy to achieve success at the national level. Cody Kohleffel of East Bernard finished fourth in the nation in team roping after competing at the CNFR. Last year, Kohleffel finished sixth in the nation in that event.

Also competing at the CNFR were WCJC team ropers Heath Kocurek and Blaine Greener, both of Sealy. Amestoy credited his cowboys with helping to push WCJC to the top rung of the national standings. Of 56 ranked teams, WCJC finished ninth in the nation.

This is actually the eighth time in 13 years that WCJC has finished in the top 10. And Goodman’s title is the fourth time in the past nine years that the college has had a national title.

Considering that schools of all sizes and divisions compete together, that’s quite a feat. Also competing at the CNFR were Texas A&M, Kansas State University, Oklahoma State University and Texas Tech, just to name a few. WCJC finished ahead of all of them.

“We don’t have any separation between junior colleges and four-year universities,” Amestoy said. “We’ve been fortunate as we’ve been able to compete at a high level for a long amount of time. Our teams have been all very capable and I feel blessed to be a part of it.”

Not one to rest on his laurels, Amestoy is already looking to next season’s crop of young cowboys and cowgirls. He likes what he sees.

“We’ve got a great group coming in next year,” he said. “I look forward to seeing what we can do.”

Goodman’s looking forward to that as well. He’ll be back for his sophomore year at WCJC.

“I am going to keep working harder and try to be the best I can be to try and win another national championship,” Goodman said.

For more information on the WCJC Rodeo Team and its accomplishments, visit the college’s website at www.wcjc.edu