

Colby High graduate to lasso rodeo interest during college

By John Van Nostrand
Free Press Publisher

Some Colby High athletes swung the bat. Others spiked the ball.

Reagan Coulter saddled up. Coulter, 18, who just graduated from Colby High, will continue his interest in rodeo at Colby Community College on its rodeo team this fall. Since he was 6, Coulter has been trying to lasso his rope around a steer's head in team roping.

"When I started high school rodeo, I knew I wanted to do this in college," he said.

Since his freshman year of high school, Coulter has participated in the National High School Rodeo. The National High School Rodeo Association helps youth get involved in rodeo. It has over 10,000 members and 1,250 sanctioned rodeos in 39 states, five Canadian provinces and Australia.

In team roping, Coulter and another person race against the clock to lasso a steer around the head and back legs.

He watched his father, Kirk, team rope during his childhood and was hooked by the challenge of riding a horse and throwing a lasso at the steer all at the same time. He uses his father's horses.

"When he was 2 or 3 years old he carried his rope everywhere he went. I thought he might do this," Kirk said.

Reagan said he started competitive team roping when he was 10. He challenged experienced adults early on.

"I never went up against somebody my age until high school," he said.

Colby High does not have a rodeo team. Coulter only represented Colby. The high school rodeo season typically has 32 rodeos during the school year on weekends. Two rodeos are held each weekend.

"This is all individual," Coulter said. "The school does not help but we do have to turn in our grades."

Coulter pays for his own transportation to rodeos, which can be as far as Mound City, south of Kansas City. He also has to pay his entry fees, usually \$50. He can win at least that amount back in prize money during rodeos.

Since high school rodeo is not a sanctioned sport by the Kansas State High School Activities Association, participants are allowed to win money.

In April, Coulter was named to the Wrangler High School All-Star Rodeo Team by the National High School Rodeo Association. Reagan was selected based on his leadership qualities, academics and athletic achievements.

Coulter had multiple team rope



Coulter



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Colby's Reagan Coulter, right, tried to get the steer in the right spot for his partner to lasso the steer's legs. Coulter, who had participated in the National High School Rodeo Association will take his skills to Colby Community College's rodeo team this fall.

Two riders, two ropes, one steer

Team roping involves two people, one called a header and the other a heeler.

The header, ropes the head of the cattle. The other cowboy, known as the heeler, ropes the heels or legs.

Coulter prefers to be the header but has done the heeler. He likes the challenge of being the header. The header is the first out trying to rope the head as quickly

as possible without breaking the barrier.

The barrier is a breakaway rope pulled across the roping chutes. It is designed to give the steer or calf a head start out into the arena making the competition more difficult.

Once the catch is made the header dallies and turns the steer left. This opens up the way for the heeler to rope the legs. The clock is stopped

when there is no slack in both ropes and the horses face each other. If the barrier is broken a 10 second penalty is added to the time. Also, if the heeler manages to catch only one leg, then a five-second penalty is added.

In addition to these penalties there are only three legal catches that the header can make. These are both horns; one horn and the head; the neck.

partners during high school. His senior year, he worked with Cory Hatcher of Syracuse. His freshman year he worked with Clay Phillips of Rexford. His sophomore and junior years he worked with Tyrell Reynolds of Tribune. He met his partners at other rodeos.

Coulter won at the state finals rodeo and finished 11th at nationals last year in Springfield, Ill., with Reynolds. Their time was :35.7.

Reynolds has been in rodeo at Colby College the past year.

"Recruiting for college rodeo is like any other sport. It is very competitive," said Colby Community College rodeo coach Allen Russell.

Summer is the best time of year to recruit as rodeos are popular events. During the colder months, rodeos are held at indoor arenas.

Russell looks for specific things in team ropers.

"Of course the times are important. If your steer runs harder you will have a slower time. Then you have to consider how you work with your partner, the horses and the steer," Russell said.

Coulter's best time has been 4.8 seconds.

"You only get one chance," he said. "I hate wasting a good steer," he said.

A good steer is one that runs a little slow with its head up.

Although rodeo skills are important, Russell said he also looks for what's inside the person too.

"I look for good kids and good students," he said. "Reagan had roped a lot with assistant coach Chris Sherman. I knew quite a bit about him before his senior year. Reagan is an awesome kid."

Coulter said he was not treated any differently at school because of his rodeo interest while surrounded by the football, basketball and other sports players. He said other students could not tell he was in rodeo wearing a T-shirt, jeans and tennis shoes.

"Nobody wears their cowboy hat until they rope," he said.

Reagan is not the only one in rodeo at Colby High. Lindsey Wilson, a junior, competes in barrel racing, poles and breakaway. Quinnlyn Woofter, another junior, competes in cutting, barrels and poles.

The college's rodeo season begins Sept. 14 and lasts through June

2008. Rodeos are not held every week. Colby will compete against other two-year schools and major universities like Fort Hays State and Oklahoma State. Russell said two former Colby college rodeo participants eventually competed at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, Nev.

"The competition is going to be tougher at college, but he's up to it," Kirk said.

After his college education, Reagan said he still wants to rodeo.

"I want to see where this takes me," he said.

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Colby II K-18 team starts with wins

The Colby II K-18 baseball team defeated Oakley in a doubleheader Thursday.

Colby won game one 16-6. Colby quickly got a lead in the first inning by scoring nine runs off of two hits and seven walks.

Oakley managed to score three runs in the second inning, but Colby maintained its lead in the third inning by scoring four runs.

The game was called in the fifth inning because of the 10-run rule after Colby led 16-6.

Jordan Rasmussen and Nathan Quagliano each had a single for Colby. Dalton Snyder got the win for Colby giving up five hits and striking out five.

Colby scored four runs in the fourth inning to win game two 7-6. The second game of the doubleheader was five innings.

Andrew Ketchum and Rasmussen each had a double. Snyder had two singles for Colby. Aaron Luckert and Quagliano each had a hit. Quagliano had three RBIs

in each game. Rasmussen earned the victory for Colby pitching three innings. He struck out six and gave up four hits over three innings. Braden Sager pitched the last two innings for the save.

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