

# Winter clinics hone rodeo skills, faith in Christ

Youths keep up rodeo skill in winter while boosting faith

By KATHY CORGATELLI NEVILLE  
For Farm & Ranch

Before there were indoor riding arenas, riders and horses took a respite until spring. But today, riders can saddle up all year long.

Some teens interested in rodeo events are taking advantage of being able to practice all winter. Organizers of a summer Rodeo Bible Camp found it was so popular among young riders, they started a weekly practice every Tuesday night from November to March.

For 13 years, the Southeastern Idaho Rodeo Bible Camp has been held in Downey to help competitors perfect their skills in rodeo and their walk with God, too. The new weekly practices aim to do the same. Clinicians help kids during the summer camp and the weekly practices, while pastors lead devotionals.

One of the organizers, Pastor David Kite, of Blackfoot, says meeting more frequently is important in a number of ways. Kite is the pastor of Blackfoot Southern Baptist Church and the pastor of Cowboy Churches in Idaho Falls, Blackfoot and Pocatello.

So far, the number of kids showing up to ride has increased from two to 12, with



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**Jason Clemens of Blackfoot, left, coaches his son, Riley, on a bucking machine at the Tuesday night Christian Timed Event Clinic at the Mill Iron Arena on Weeding Lane in Blackfoot. Riley, 16, was last year's District 4 High School Rodeo bareback champion. Jason attended a Bible-based rodeo clinic when he was young. "It takes something they are interested in and brings them to the Lord, too," he said.**



**Riley Clemens, left, and brother, Colton, bow their heads in prayer at the Tuesday night Christian Timed Event Clinic in Blackfoot. The clinics are held each Tuesday night from November to March.**

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17 to 20 adults on hand to give instruction.

"The summer camp is real influential with our kids," Kite said. "But we are concerned about the rest of the year, too."

The opportunity to ride and practice rodeo skills indoors during the winter months and worship, too, is a big draw, Kite said. Young riders are helped with their roping and riding by

members of the Idaho State University Rodeo team in Pocatello and mentored by area pastors. The weekly practices are held at the Mill Iron Arena on Weeding Lane in Blackfoot and begin each week at 6:30 p.m., and conclude at 9 p.m.

The interdenominational organization's mission is to bring youths to Christ, to help them increase their faith and to help them to become better rodeo competi-



Kite

## Christian Timed Event Clinic

**Where:** Mill Iron Arena, Weeding Lane, Blackfoot  
**When:** Tuesday nights from November through March  
**Contact:** Pastor Dave Kite, 844-1576

tors.

The weekly sessions, called Christian Timed Event Clinics, help kids improve their roping, barrel racing and pole bending skills. Teens can practice on two different mechanical bucking machines, too.

The clinics are open to youths between the ages of 13 and 19. They are encouraged to bring a parent or guardian with them to practice. The clinics are free, but when cattle are used there will be a \$10 charge per youth.

Jessica Partner of Pocatello looks forward to the weekly sessions where a devotional is held before each practice. A regular at the summer Rodeo Bible Camp and at the Cowboy Church in Pocatello, she welcomes the extra time to practice. Jessica competes in team roping, breakaway roping, barrel racing and pole bending on the Highland High School Rodeo team. She is endeavoring to earn a college rodeo scholarship.

"It's always nice to have different practice opportunities and have godly influences and teachings, too," Partner said.

# Beet growers faced challenges in 2013

By CINDY SALO  
For Farm & Ranch

Idaho growers produced record sugar beet yields this year, but were hit by a double whammy of low beet prices and low sugar content.

Yields averaged 36 tons per acre in the Blackfoot area, but prices are expected to fall for the second year, into the \$40-per-ton range. Tight sugar supplies in 2010 and 2011 pushed beet prices up to \$65 per ton, but they have dropped since, as sugar imports from Mexico increased.

Darwin Jensen, the Amalgamated Sugar Co. crop consultant in Blackfoot, said this year's local crop averaged 15.6 percent sugar on a fresh weight basis. This is a percentage point lower than usual for the area. Beet sugar content was low across the U.S. and Jensen said the company-wide average was 15.5 percent. Amalgamated Sugar processes the sugar beets grown in Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Blackfoot-area growers focus on sugar content because they pay high shipping costs. Growers near processing plants in the Magic and Treasure valleys can make up for low sugar with high tonnage. The 100-mile trip from Blackfoot to the processing plant in Paul cuts into growers' profits, so they ship the most valuable beets possible.

The low sugar content this year has growers and crop consultants scratching their heads.

"The best research I've seen says that the minimum nighttime temperature in August has

more effect on sugars than anything else," Jensen said. "Hot August nights are bad, but if it cools down, the sugar goes up. It used to cool down more, (but this year) we had as high as the high 50s, even the 60s one night"

Many Idaho fields had to be replanted after frost killed young plants this spring. Jensen said that 35 percent of the crop was replanted in his area. Replanting rates in other areas ran to nearly 50 percent.

Doug Evans, a grower and local area sales rep for Holly Seed in Blackfoot, said the lower replanting rates were due to relatively late planting.

"Some guys have gotten frozen (in the past) and have started waiting until later," he said. "Also, some were dry and so they irrigated first and planted later."

Sugar content may have been reduced because seed of the most desirable varieties, which produce the most sugar, had been used up by the time growers bought seed the second time. To boost sugar, the industry eased some requirements for disease resistance in beets planted in parts of Idaho. Growers in the Upper Snake River area will be able to try high sugar varieties from out of state next year.

Curly top virus, which is spread by a leafhopper, is the main disease concern in eastern Idaho. To prevent the virus from gaining a foothold in the area, growers will need to treat seeds with insecticide and monitor fields for signs of disease.



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