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By NCTA News Service

Ranch Horse team travels to collegiate contest

Sweetwater, Texas – The NCTA Aggie Ranch Horse Team has placed fifth in weekend competition among Division II teams at the American Stock Horse Association (ASHA) Collegiate National Championship Show.

Five students competed and four served as support staff to the team from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis.

The Aggie team is coached by Joanna Hergenreder, NCTA assistant professor of animal science and equine instructor. She also is serving her first year on the ASHA board of directors.

In the first year of changing formats to Division I (6 team members) and Division II (4 team members), the collegiate contest provided greater opportunity and competitive balance for NCTA with the 4-member team and one individual, said Hergenreder.

“We placed better this year with each team member having at least one class where they placed higher than shows previous to this,” she added. “It was an amazing experience this year, especially getting to experience some competitors from all over the country.”

Hergenreder shared this CNCS summary for NCTA riders:

Rio McGinley, **Oshkosh**, and Sally competed in the Open/Nonprofessional category with some very stiff competition and placed 10th in Trail Class out of 24 entries.

Makayla Forsythe, **Garland**, and NCTA's own Four Sieto Gill placed 6th in Pleasure out of 41 competitors in the Limited Nonprofessional. They also had their best cow run to date.

AJ Pestello, **Breckenridge, Colo.**, and Strait Delta Cutter also competed in the Limited NP and placed 15th in Trail Class out of 41 competitors traversing the toughest trail pattern to date.

Mariah Stamper, **Falls City**, and MT Paddy Tonketta (Mister) placed 9th in Cow Work and 15th in Pleasure, both out of 45 competitors in Novice. Not bad for having only rode Mister twice before the contest. Team mate Clayton G'Schwind, Callaway, provided the horse, Mister, for the weekend.

Courtney Leach, **Lewellen**, and Strait Chexy Doc also competed in the Novice and placed 28th in Reining and 33rd in Pleasure, both out of 45 competitors.

“This was the duo's third show ever and about 30 days of riding together,” Hergenreder said. “We look forward to where these two go with some additional time for practice.”

Four team members assisted riders with contest preparation and care for the horses: Morgan Schrank, **Sioux Falls, S.D.**; Drake Johnson, **Pender**; Hanna Christenson, **Ord**; and G'Schwind, **Callaway**. Riders also received support from NCTA faculty members Judy and Roy Cole of **Curtis**.

“The Aggies wouldn't have had such a smooth show without these four helping get things ready and keeping things running all weekend,” noted Hergenreder. “Roy and Judy Cole were a great assistance, as well, in hauling our hay and supporting the students.

“We are extremely motivated to return next year with strong goals to move up in individual and team placings.”

Ranch Horse activities will resume in the fall semester when NCTA classes resume. For information about equine programs and competition teams, contact Hergenreder at 308-367-5291, or see ncta.unl.edu.

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Mariah Stamper, **Falls City**, and Mister

NCTA Ranch Horse team at national contest Sweetwater, Texas are, back row, from left, AJ Pestello, **Breckenridge, Colo.**; Rio McGinley, **Oshkosh**; Morgan Schrank, **Sioux Falls, SD**; Mariah Stamper, **Falls City**; Courtney Leach, **Lewellen**; Drake Johnson, **Pender**. Front row, Hanna Christenson, **Ord**; Clayton G'Schwind, **Callaway**; and Makayla Forsythe, **Garland**. (NCTA courtesy photo)