The Bearkat’s are back and the Equine program is in full swing!

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Editor: Lacee Keller

And the barn doors have opened…

School is back in session and the students have rushed back into the classrooms and the BARN! The Sam Houston Equine Program is up and running once again at full force! Each year because of the continuous support from alumni, donors, and equine enthusiasts the program continues to grow. There are now three competitive teams: Equestrian, Horse Judging, and Ranch Horse.

This year each team will have the opportunity to travel the country and compete against some of the top schools in the nation such as Texas A&M, Colorado State, Kansas State, and Oklahoma State University. We have a very dedicated group of students and this year holds many great things for each team!

Top Honors for the Horse Judging Team!

The Horse Judging Team DOMINATED last March at the University of Florida by bringing home the first place team award! For earning this achievement the team was awarded a game ball signed by the Florida Gators.
A few words from Dr. McMillan…
Some insight on what to expect this year and what’s new to the Sam Houston Equine Program

What an exciting time! In three and a half short years the SHSU Equine Program has developed into a nationally recognized program.

Through the hard work of undergraduate and graduate students alike, recognition at the state and national competitions has become a mainstay.

Research conducted at the SHSU Equine Center has also been presented at state and national meetings.

The Horsemen’s Association now has over fifty members and now thirty students have declared Equine Science as a minor.

Looking forward, fall competitions for the judging, ranch horse, and equestrian teams show big promise and success is expected.

I look forward to all the great events and competitions that are coming up this fall and also look forward to working with our great students.

I hope everyone has a good fall and good luck to everyone!

New addition comes to the program: Equestrian Team!

Intercollegiate Equestrian competition has now come to Sam Houston!

The girls are out and YES that’s sweat rolling down their faces as Coach Carmen Del Toro has the girls working hard!

This year is the first year that Sam Houston will have a competing equestrian team. The team will travel the state competing against other universities in equestrian competitions.

At the competitions, the girls will draw horses they have never ridden before to show. This allows for an even playing field and displays each individual’s horsemanship skills.

The girls will compete in a variety of events such as hunter under saddle, hunt seat equitation, and over fences.

Keep an eye out for these Kats!
It might be a little awkward walking up to a student talking to walls, but for any horse judger this is just a normal part of the routine! The Sam Houston State Horse Judging Team’s dedication showed when they traveled to two contests last spring.

The University of Florida held their first collegiate horse-judging contest in conjunction with their State 4-H contest. Each participant had to judge four halter classes followed by four performance classes.

Then, the college kids used their talking to walls skills and prepared four sets of reasons that were given to four different reasons takers.

Sam Houston BLEW the contest out of the water! The team had two people in the top three: Lacee Keller, second, and Kari Carroll who was third overall.

The team placed first in reasons, second in halter, and third in performance.

These placings along with the help of Ashley Spakes and Samantha Brooks brought the team to a victory finishing first overall!

From there, the team traveled on to compete at the American Paint Horse Association’s Spring Sweepstakes judging contest held in Fort Worth, Texas.

There the team once again stole the spotlight from many renowned schools finishing third overall!

Samantha Brooks placed tenth and Jessica Hawley finished fifth in reasons respectively. Samantha Brooks was second in halter and Kari Carroll placed fifth in halter.

The team also earned second place in reasons, third in halter and third high team overall.

Ashley Spakes was sixth place overall individual. This was a huge accomplishment considering that 22 teams from all over the country were there to participate with over 130 students in the contest.

This fall the team is back and more dedicated than ever with their eyes on the prize!

Not only does their schedule include alternating 6 and 7 am practices Monday through Thursday, they also have two shows they plan on attending as warm ups for the big contests.

The team will travel to Ohio to compete at the All American Quarter Horse contest on Oct 9-14, and then the AQHA World Show in Oklahoma City, OK.

Spring ’09 was a great semester for the SHSU Horse Judging Team! Not only did they earn top honors at the University of Florida but they also stood out among the crowd of judges at the American Paint Horse Association Spring Sweepstakes!

Kari Carroll was deep in concentration as she looked over her notes before placing the class.

Students listen closely as Coach Matt McMillan gives a pep talk before the start of the competition.
Last year was the inaugural year of the Sam Houston Ranch Horse Team and it was a great start! The team attended two shows in the spring, the Austin Collegiate Challenge and the College Nationals. At both shows the team did very well!

Caleb Thompson was 6th overall individual, placing second in trail and Lacee Keller was third in reining and seventh overall at the Austin Show. Sabrina Borgstede and Nicci Ahart, helped the team to go on to be fifth place team overall.

The team took their game faces to the College National Ranch Horse competition in Lubbock, TX. Out of 120 competitors and 9 teams, Sam Houston achieved fifth overall team. Sabrina Borgstede placed third in the limited non-pro trail. Caleb Thompson earned 8th in the non-pro reining.

Lacee Keller was the reserve all-around non-pro competitor finishing 8th in pleasure, 7th in reining, 9th in trail, and 3rd in working cow horse.

Great Job Guys!

Just because summer came around didn’t mean the team quit working! The team competed in Conroe, TX on August 21 and 22.

The team once again did very well! Nicci Ahart was 8th in the pleasure.

This year holds big plans for the Ranch Horse Team!

This is the first year the Ranch Horse Team will have their own class which will meet Monday and Wednesdays 3:30 to 5:20. Also, on Fridays, they will have the opportunity to work cattle at Gibbs Ranch.

The team is planning on competing in three shows this fall: Bryan/College Station on October 2-3, Rosenberg October 30 and 31, and Stephenville on November 6th and 7th.

Along with the additional competitions the team will be attending this year, another exciting fact is the growth this program has displayed!

Last year there were 10 students competing. This year that number has more then doubled!

With the hard work ethic this team displays, the sky’s not even the limit!
Spotlight Rider: Samantha Brooks

Samantha Brooks is a 21-year-old junior. She has served as President of the Horsemen’s Association at Sam Houston for the past two years and is still currently serving in that same position. Samantha competes on the Ranch Horse Team as well as the Horse Judging Team. When she is not busy with horses, she enjoys camping and swing dancing. Her favorite movies include Finding Nemo, Matchstick Men, and Garden State.

*Act well your part there all honor lies.*

– Alexander Pope

And last but not least.....

The Sam Houston Equine program would like to give a special thanks to our great sponsors!

Champion Ranch
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2009 Sponsorship Opportunities

The SHSU Horsemen’s Association is asking for a sponsorship from you or your company for the upcoming year to support our Horse Judging Team, Ranch Horse Team, as well as our Equestrian Team. Students from each of these teams spend many hours every week preparing for competitions that take place all around the country. While participation on these teams provide invaluable life lessons, these travels are extremely costly. Below are opportunities available to you or your company.

**Standard Sponsor $200**
Tax deductable donation as well as a personal letter of thank you from the University Advancement Office

**Silver Sponsor $1,000**
Tax deductable donation, letter of thank you from the University Advancement Office, banner recognition to be displayed at the SHSU Indoor Riding Arena, and name or logo recognition on team vests that will be worn at competitions

**Gold Sponsor $5,000**
Tax deductable donation, letter of thank you from the University Advancement Office, banner recognition to be displayed at the SHSU Indoor Riding Arena, name or logo recognition on team vests that will be worn at competitions, as well as custom made belt buckle displaying ‘2009 SHSU Horsemen’s Association Supporter’

We appreciate the support of the SHSU Horsemen’s Association. In three short years we have grown to a student organization comprising of over 50 members. With your support, these students will have the ability to become future leaders in the equine industry.

If you have any questions please contact:

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Please make sponsor checks to SHSU Horsemen’s Association