



Collegiate Competitors Dominate National Western Horseman's Challenge

The 2023 National Western Stock Show Horseman's Challenge continues to fulfill its mission of bringing the equine community together and entertaining guests. Quarter Horses, Paint Horses, ponies, gaited horses, Draft Horses and mules challenged each other in a two-day competition starting off with 60 riders competing on two different obstacle courses that tested the partnership between horse and rider. These 60 riders included 10 collegiate participants from five different Colorado colleges who host equestrian programs.

At the end of the individual rounds, scores and times were totaled and three winners topped the three different divisions - advanced, intermediate, and beginner. Jo Teter and Teters Brandy earned first in the advanced division with a total score of 197 out of a possible 240. Placing first in the intermediate division was Elizabeth Pallardy and Monroe with a total score of 122. Trisha Hansen and Little Texas rebel scored 85 points, which placed them first in the beginner division.



Despite the snow and cold, the second day was full of exhilarating rides. The team challenge continues to grow in popularity with 13 teams competing in this year's event. The Team Challenge invites horsemen from various backgrounds to create a group who works together to complete various obstacles. It was a privilege to see a variety of riders come together and make connections throughout the competition, especially within our collegiate division where two colleges joined forces to dominate not only the Team Challenge, but also the Collegiate Challenge. Our first place team was composed of riders from Otero College's Rodeo Team and Northeastern Junior College's Ranch Horse Team. Team "10 Outta 10" included Bella Ayers, Lorah Jacobson, Colton Bashor and Zoey Boos. These handy horsemen had a course time of 4:19 minutes and a total score of 99 points.

Based on scores from the individual rounds, ten open riders qualified for the Speed Challenge on day two. After braving new obstacles, including smoke and mirrors, Mattea Miranda and her horse, Riatta, won the Speed Challenge championship with a time of 5:54 minutes. The duo had a total score of 107.

The talent exhibited from our college athletes was stellar. All ten collegiate representatives tackled the difficult final course and Bella Ayers from Otero College came away as the Collegiate Challenge competing on her coach's horse Sumpter. Bella and Sumpter had a total score of 107 points. The Reserve Champion was Zoey Boos and Maggie from Northeastern Junior College.



Congratulations to all of our Horseman's Challenge competitors! We hope to see you again in 2024 for a new and exciting challenge! To learn more about the Horseman's Challenge, please visit <https://nationalwestern.com/horse-shows/>

Written by Delaney Haight, NWSS Intern
Photos courtesy of Casey McBride