

Equestrian team looks ahead to show season

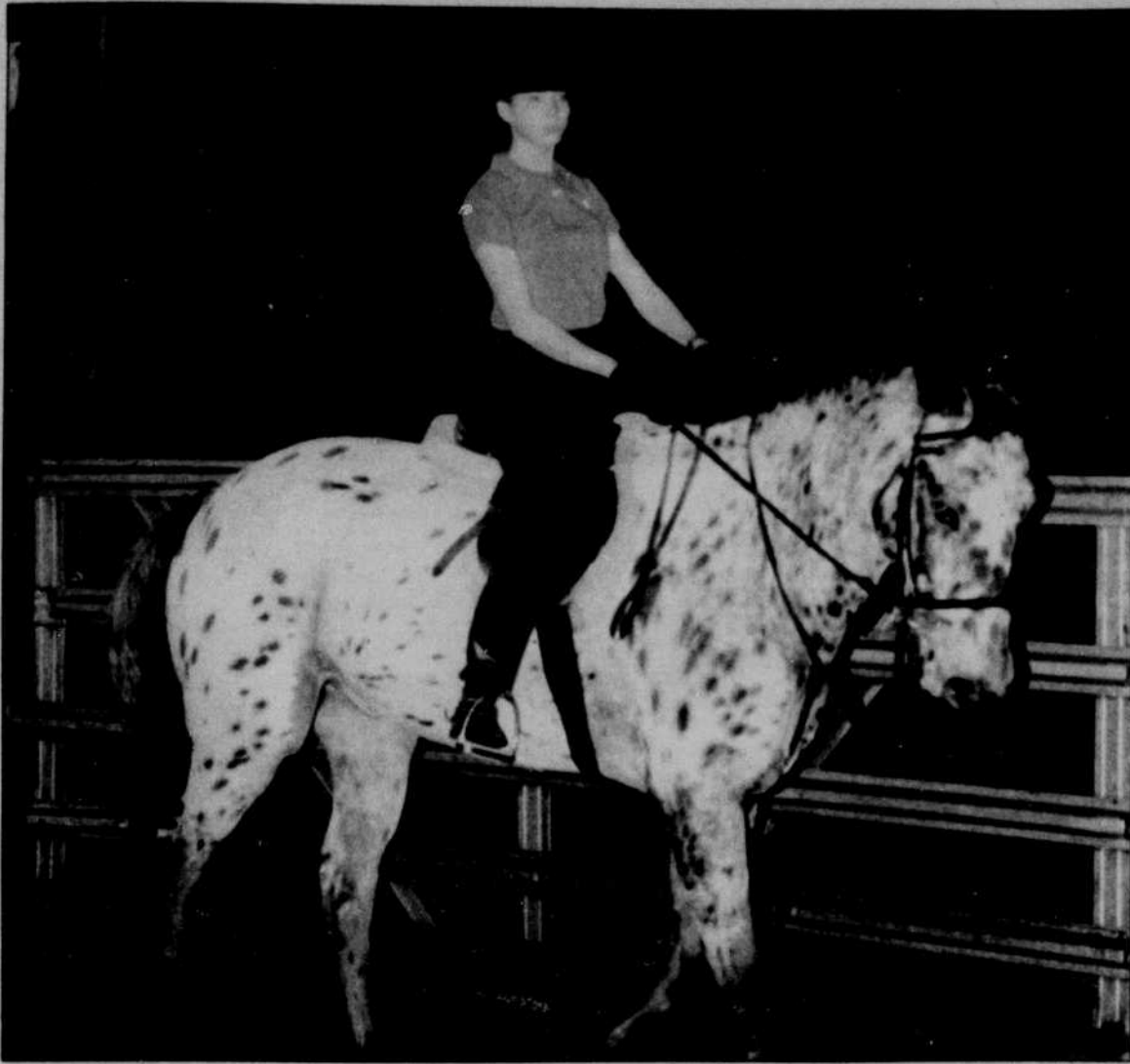


Photo by Bobbie Lo

Leslie Probst and horse Beav compete for the club equestrian team. Probst is a student coordinator and veteran of the team.

By Candi Carlson

Of the Emerald

"Of horses and horsemanship" is the little-known meaning of the word equestrian. This definition, however, is well-engrained in the 12 members of the University equestrian team.

Coached by Patty Karren and co-coordinated by University students Molly Mullen and Leslie Probst, the club began lessons this week in the indoor arena at Foxridge Farms, about 10 miles west of Eugene.

Probst, one of the few team veterans, says all the team members have at least two years jumping experience and were chosen during tryouts for enthusiasm, dedication and determination rather than pure ability. These traits are crucial because of the taxing mental and physical strain of the sport.

The team does not practice together, instead participating individually in lessons once a week at Foxridge. Three team members own their own horses, and the other members ride school horses.

During lessons, the team members ride English style only, developing hunter-jumper techniques as well as basic dressage, or flat work.

The hunter-jumper events are the team's main concentration

in shows. Although both events involve jumping, there is a big difference in the two classes, according to Mullen.

In the hunter class, a smooth ride and a precise stepping pattern are the keys.

"You're supposed to look really pretty," Mullen says.

Jumper classes, however, involve height, speed and "just (getting) over the fences." The jumper class is "pure athletic ability instead of style," Mullen says.

According to Probst, last year was unorganized, and resulted in only two shows on the competition schedule. This year, in addition to working for the fourth consecutive victory at the Oregon State University show, the team hopes to organize and compete in a Washington State University show along with OSU.

Other meets the club will attend include open shows around Oregon and some schooling shows.

Several fund-raising activities have been organized by the club to help meet the expensive season. The team is involved in McArthur Court cleanups through the club sports program and along with Douglas Dorm, is sponsoring a "Casino Night Dance" Dec. 5.

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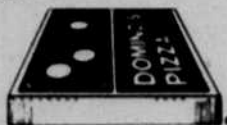
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