

Wallowa County's Hanley "Noodle" Miller won the tie-down calf roping title at the Oregon State High School Finals in Prineville in June 2002. At the High School Rodeo National Finals in Gillette, Wyoming, July 17-23, the 15-year-old will be competing in both tie-down roping and team roping.



Contributed Photo

Miller wins high school calf roping title

Enterprise cowboy qualified for nationals in two events

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Hanley "Noodle" Miller, a 15-year-old freshman at Joseph Charter School and the son of Cory and Dena Miller, of Enterprise, recently completed a successful first season of his high school rodeo career.

Partnered with his 11-year-old sorrel gelding, K2, and his 13-year-old bay gelding, Pepperoni, Miller led the state from the beginning of the season last fall. He then walked away with the tie-down calf roping title at the Oregon State High School Rodeo Finals in Prineville earlier this month. Miller tied down 16 of 17 calves through the season and placed in 15 of 16 runs. The championship earned him a saddle, sponsored by Les Schwab, and a buckle. In addition, Miller was awarded a certificate for the Columbia River Circuit PRCA permit when he turns 18.

Next on Miller's agenda is the High School Rodeo National Finals in Gillette, Wyoming, July 17-23. He will be competing in both tie-down roping and team roping with his partner, Bayli Ladner, of Klamath Falls. The two moved up to fourth place in the team roping standings at the Oregon High School Rodeo Finals to earn a spot at the national event. Miller's 19-year-old sorrel gelding, Capone, and his 14-year-old bay mare, Kabang, carried him through the season as the team's heeler.

Miller is coached by pro rodeo compet-

itor Nathan Steinberg, of Klamath Falls, and formerly of Southern Texas, who has mentored him and helped develop Miller's tie-down roping skills. Steinberg has been doing clinics with eight-time world champion and ProRodeo Hall of Fame inductee Joe Beaver since 2004.

"I met Noodle two years ago at a Joe Beaver clinic in Idaho," Steinberg said. "I instantly fell in love with him. He's a good kid from a good family. We do 20 clinics a year and I see a lot of kids. It's inspiring to see Noodle's work ethic and love of the game. When he comes here to rope, he asks 20,000 questions a day and has desire beyond his years. It's pretty cool. And to see him with the work ethic he has at 15, he'll be successful at whatever he does."

Miller also earned an invite to compete this September in one of the two Joe Beaver Roping events of the year in Texas.

In addition to the list of successes this past year, Miller has also qualified for the Vegas Tuffest in Las Vegas, Dec. 1-5, for the second straight year and for the Hoovey Junior Patriot Finale in Fort Worth, Texas, in February and March 2023.

In his spare time, Miller is busy managing his own herd of Corriente and Hereford cattle and exercising and training most of his family's 25-plus head of registered quarter horses. He helps his parents in the family's fencing business or putting in saddle time on horses brought to him by those from the local community and beyond. He is also a member of the Joseph FFA Chapter and competes at the Wallowa County Fair with market steers.

Tigers earn all-GOL honors

By RONALD BOND
For The Observer

LA GRANDE — Before securing a spot as the state player of the year and helping the La Grande baseball team to a state title, Devin Bell was the most dominant player in the Greater Oregon League.

Bell recently was named GOL player of the year after helping the Tigers to an undefeated league season, one that saw La Grande not only win all 12 games but allow just two runs in the process and toss shut-outs in its last 10 league contests.

Bell finished the 2022 season with a .539 batting average, 10 home runs and 69 RBIs, and carried a 6-0 record on the mound with a 0.39 ERA.

Bell was among 12 Tiger players who received all-league honors for LHS. The first team consisted of catcher Cole Jorgensen, first baseman Nick Bornstedt, Logan Williams as a first-team infielder, both Jace Schow and Sam Tsiatsos as first-team pitchers, Cesar Rodriguez and Braden Carson as first-team outfielders, and Noah McIlmoil as a first-team designated hitter.

Jorgensen hit .479 with four home runs and 33 RBIs, and posted an impressive on-base percentage of .635. Bornstedt finished .262 with 26 RBIs and a .479 on-base percentage, and Williams was .267 with a home run, 18 RBIs, 35 runs scored and 10 stolen bases. Schow and Tsiatsos combined for a record of 16-0 on the season. Carson hit .333 with 16 RBIs and 22 runs scored, while Rodriguez hit .310 with 14 RBIs and 24 runs scored. And McIlmoil hit .447 with a home run, 16 RBIs and 11 runs scored.

Both Sergio Staab and Jarett Armstrong made the second team, Staab as a pitcher and Armstrong in the outfield. Staab was 2-0 with a 0.84 ERA, and Armstrong hit .302 with 12 RBIs and 10 runs scored. Derek Begin rounded out the player awards as an honorable mention first baseman, hitting .375 with two RBIs and 36 runs scored.

"I think every single one of those kids on there earned every single one of those (awards). If you asked them, they would say they had the opportunity that they had because the players around them gave them the opportunity," head coach Parker McKinley said. "It's a tremendous team

effort. Fun stuff to have been part of the process."

McKinley himself earned recognition for the Tigers as the league coach of the year.

Softball team sees seven players, coach recognized

The La Grande softball team secured the Greater Oregon League title in 2022 and earned a berth in the state semifinals.

The Tigers were boosted to that success by a bevy of all-league awards, with four players landing on the first team and four garnering a spot on the second team.

"They all earned it," head coach Cody Bowen said. "They definitely earned it. It was hard to categorize some of them. Ultimately it came down to batting average and fielding average. The girls had a really good team this year. We had a lot of freshmen that showed up and played well."

A pair of seniors led the way on the first team, with Grace Neer collecting a spot on the first team as a pitcher and Kinzy Bowen being named to the first team as a utility player. Neer, as a pitcher, turned in a record of 8-3 with a 2.81 ERA and 121 strikeouts in 82-1/3 innings. Bowen had a .408 batting average with 12 home runs and 43 RBIs. Carlee Jensen was selected as a first-team outfielder batting .420 with 12 RBIs and a team-high 32 runs scored, and Carlee Strand was a first-team infielder, batting .488 with five home runs, 30 RBIs and 23 runs scored.

Strand also was named to the second team, earning a spot as a pitcher with a 9-3 record and a 1.94 ERA. She was joined on the second team by a pair of outfielders, Brielle Hood and Rylie Huddleston, who hit a respective .333 and .446 with two home runs, 20 RBIs and 33 runs between them, and by catcher Marti Anderson, who hit .400 with three home runs and 28 RBIs.

Cody Bowen was named GOL coach of the year, giving the credit to the team for the award.

"It's a nice honor (that) I appreciate," he said. "The girls do a lot of hard work and make me look good."

The Tigers finished 11-1 in GOL play and posted an overall record of 18-8 before falling to eventual state champion Cascade in the semifinals.

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