

Born to Compete

By [Jenna Nielsen](#)

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For Coarsegold Rodeo Queen Jessica Boswell, life is more than a competition

Yosemite High School senior Jessica Boswell is competitive.

But she is more competitive with herself than she is with others.

The 17-year-old reigning Coarsegold Rodeo Queen grew up around horses all her life and her competitive drive and interests combined have led her to win multiple competitions and now into a possible college career.



"I just have a competitive personality," Boswell said. "Being around horses growing up, it was kind of natural that I wanted to start showing."

Boswell has been involved with the Coarsegold Rodeo since she was 6 years old and has been competing for about the same number of years.

She is one of the youngest Queens to ever win the competition.

"I just remember I wanted to be Queen because when I was little I said I always wanted to be one of those," Boswell said.

She was also Rodeo Princess in 2002.

"When I won princess I was excited because I rode the horse I had trained so it was a win for the both of us," she said.

She has competed in multiple Madera Fair horse shows and Yosemite Lakes Park (YLP) shows.

She was also the 2003 Western Year-End High Point buckle winner at the Linder Stables Show.

"I am so proud of her because even when she didn't win, she still had this great attitude about it," said Rachel Boswell, Jessica's mother. "She kept going and trying harder. She knew it wasn't just about winning."

When she is getting ready for a Queen competition, Boswell said she practices four times during the week and every weekend.

"I am very critical of myself," Boswell said. "I am my worst critic."

Boswell said when she is getting ready for a competition it can get hard balancing school and other activities, but that the time spent is worth it.

Charlotte Pierce has been training Boswell since she was about 8 years old.

"She is very dedicated," Pierce said. "She has ridden a lot of horses that no one — even me — thought could do anything, but she has gone on to win with them because she sticks with it."

Pierce said the reason Boswell is so successful is because she puts in the time.

"That's the thing with horses," Pierce said. "It just takes time."

Community service is just as familiar to Boswell as competition.

When she isn't balancing school, sports, and competitions, she is working for the community — her community.

"Jessica has always been involved in community service," said Rachel Boswell. "In the past, the

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rodeo court hadn't done much and she tried to get it started where they did more community service. She wanted to get the court more involved."

When Boswell was Rodeo Princess in 2002, she helped organize a toy drive for children at Valley Children's Hospital in Madera.

"I talked to the hospital and found out what kind of toys they would want me to bring in," Boswell said. "They said anything that would keep the children entertained in their age group so I went to Longs Drugs and bought the toys."

Boswell said she couldn't have done it without Longs, which donated coloring books and also gave her a discount on the toys she bought.

"I invited the Queen and Little Princess to go with me," she said. "We brought the toys to the hospital and visited with the parents and they were just as excited as the kids were."

Tom and Kristi Bohna, owners of Bohna Arena in Coarsegold, donated \$500 to Boswell to help fund her toy drive.

"We were so impressed with Jessica and what she was trying to do," said Kristi Bohna. "There was no way of telling her no."

Bohna has known Boswell for about eight years and is also a good friend of the family's.

"She is such a great girl," Bohna said. "She strives to succeed and she does succeed. When she sets a goal she stays on track and achieves everything she strives for."

Because of the Bohna's donation, Boswell said they had more toys than they needed to give one to every child.

"The kids were more than excited," Boswell said. "We had enough toys to give to every kid and even to some visitors who came to see them."

Boswell wanted to do the same fundraiser this year, but the hospital was closed for flu season at the time she wanted to go.

At this year's Coarsegold Rodeo set for May 5 through 7, Boswell is helping bring back the Exceptional Kids Rodeo that hasn't been a feature at the event for a few years.

She is also putting it on for her high school senior project.

"I wanted to bring it back because it was a good community event," Boswell said. "I liked watching the kids have fun and interact down in the arena."

Boswell said the Exceptional Kids Rodeo, on Friday, May 5 this year, is for children with special needs from the Coarsegold School.

Different stations will be set up that the children can go to.

At one station, there will be two metal barrels. One will have a bull head with horns and the other a horse.

"We are going to strap saddles on them for the kids and there will also be an actual horse they can ride," Boswell said.

At another station, there will be stick horse racing and a "race around the barrel" race.

There will also be a roping station with a fake cow head on a bale of hay.

"There will be a professional bull rider, bronc rider and ropers that will show the kids exactly how they do it," Boswell said. "Each kid will also get a cowboy hat and a sheriff's pin."

When Boswell graduates in June she hopes to get an equestrian scholarship to California State University, Fresno where she will major in pre-veterinary medicine.

"Horses have always been a part of my life and I want them to continue to be," Boswell said.

After college, Boswell wants to be an animal veterinarian.

Her second choice college is Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, that also has an equestrian program.

"She will be successful with everything," said Rachel Boswell. "Because Jessica is competitive at everything, from school to sports. And she is mature, determined and she doesn't give up."



Community service is just as important to Boswell as competing. She has set standards for more community involvement among the rodeo's court.
Photo Courtesy of Jessica Boswell



After she graduates in June, Boswell wants to attend California State University, Fresno on an equestrian scholarship.
Photo courtesy of Jessica Boswell



At the 2005 Coarsegold Rodeo, Yosemite High School senior Jessica Boswell was crowned Rodeo Queen. Boswell was also Coarsegold Rodeo's Little Princess in 2002. She has been involved with the rodeo since she moved here from San Diego with her family when she was 6 years old.
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