



Little Britches Rodeo Star

When Taylor Hoxeng of Volin returned to first grade at Gayville-Volin schools earlier this month, the vivacious seven-year-old had to have one of the best “What did you do this summer?” stories ever - the best part, she was living her dream. Hoxeng became a Little Britches rodeo star.

“I got to go to the National Little Britches Rodeo Finals,” she said with a beaming smile.

Hoxeng and her family, father Tyler, mother Sarah and little brother Cody, spent the summer traveling to Little Britches rodeo events in Flandreau, where Taylor earned the right to travel to the national rodeo in Pueblo, Colorado in late July.

Little Britches is one of the oldest, continuing youth rodeo associations in the world, with its membership ranging from kids ages 5 - 18 in 26 states across the U.S.

“It was just amazing,” said Tyler. “There were about 1,100 contestants across the different age groups. In each of Taylor’s events there were 120-140 contestants.”



Set up as a week-long rodeo, the National Little Britches Rodeo Finals held events twice a day, the first in the morning and second in the late-afternoon, but the grueling schedule of events didn’t faze Taylor.

“She was up ready to go every morning, leading the horses out, getting them ready for the day,” said Sarah. “She just loves everything about the rodeo and shows.”

Taylor, who was born with a birth-defect where she is missing several fingers on one hand, has developed a modified grip when holding the reins of her horse. However, you can tell that she doesn’t even think about it - she just does what she needs to do to succeed.

To hear her speak about being involved with Little Britches, you can tell that there isn’t anything Taylor doesn’t enjoy about participating in the rodeo.

“I do barrel racing, goat tail untying, flag racing and pole bending,” Taylor said with a big grin. “I like barrel racing best.

“Doc and I race down and go around the barrels. Where I look, he looks and goes.”

Doc is Taylor’s 22-year-old, 14-hands (about 56 inches) tall horse. To hear her describe him, you can tell that he is more than a horse to her - he is her best friend. But what is most impressive, Taylor trained Doc to be a rodeo horse herself, starting when she was just 4-years-old.

“He used to be one of our stallions,” her dad said. “We gelded him when he was 14 and Taylor began working with him when he was 19.”

Taylor described the process as just leading him around the barrels and working with him, but you could tell by mom and dad’s grins as she was talking that there was more to it than that.

“She is out there every day with him,” Sarah said. “She truly enjoys every aspect of his care and doesn’t hesitate to get out there and do it. When we were getting ready to leave for Pueblo — it is a 12-hour drive — she was the first one up at 3 a.m. getting her horses loaded in the trailer.”

While Taylor didn’t win any of her events, she did have personal-best times in each. Add to that, she got to be one of the flag-carriers in the opening events.

“It was just amazing,” Sarah said. “We were in this huge arena

Laminate | Porcelain | Resilient | Hardwood

Larsen Carpet

MANNINGTON RESIDENTIAL
mannington.com | 1.800.356.6787

212 Walnut | 605.665.2067
Historic Downtown Yankton

Floor Designs Copyrighted by Mannington Mills, Inc. ©2013 Mannington Mills, Inc. 2013