

Not just horsing around



Sheila Burke and Roulette jump a fence in the Open Equitation class at the Elmira Charity Horse Show Saturday, July 21.

Photos by
Lynn A. Thornberry



Equestrian Sheila Burke talks quietly to her horse, Roulette, at her family's farm in Elmira. Burke, a top rider in nationwide events, spends several hours each day practicing and caring for her horses.

Notre Dame senior rides way to success

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

ELMIRA — Imagine straddling an animal 10 times your own weight and guiding it over a series of fences, walls and water hazards while hundreds of people watch.

Notre Dame High School's Sheila Burke does not need to imagine such a scene. The 17-year-old senior has lived it countless times over the last 12 years.



Burke cleans her boots after a muddy practice session.

Since age five, Burke has been riding ponies and horses competitively in equestrian events. Thus far, her riding career has taken her to competitions nationwide.

Along the way, she has won numerous local and regional championships. Last November, she finished fifth in the junior women's division of the national equitation championships in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania — an achievement that suggests she may go far in the world of equestrian competition.

"I think how far she can go is limited only by her desire," declared her mother, Jane Burke. "She hasn't yet hit a wall where she has said she's not going to do it any more."

Sheila Burke became interested in horses when she was still in diapers. The Burke family lives on a small farm, where they raise horses — something that her father, Dan Burke, had done much of his life. As a child, she also watched her older brother, Charles, ride and enter competitions.

Burke began riding at age three. She owned her first pony by the time she was four, and began riding competitively the

following year.

"She always seemed to be good at the level she was at," her mother said. "She had very consistent success."

That success has been the result of hard work. Each day, Burke puts in several hours practicing and caring for her horses. When she enters competitions, Burke often misses school because she has to go on the road.

Last January, for example, she took part in the Florida circuit where many of the top young riders compete. To participate, however, Burke had to leave school on Thursday, fly to Florida, ride in the competition, then fly back on Sunday to go to school on Monday. She estimated that during the school year just completed, she missed 13 Fridays because of competitions.

Even while traveling around the country, she managed to keep her grades high enough to plan to go to Georgetown University next year. And she was able to play for the Notre Dame tennis team.

Still, such a schedule leaves little time for a social life, the young rider acknowl-

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We received 16 correct entries identifying 28 as the number of points Wilt Chamberlain hit from the foul line in his highest scoring game.

The winner was **John C. Barney** of Rochester.

SPORTS TRIVIA

This week's question:
What was first used by CBS on December 7, 1963, in televising the Army-Navy football game?

A: _____

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We received 20 correct entries identifying Cream as the group that rose to the top with *Sunshine of Your Love*.

The winner was **Mike Hartman** of Wayne Central High School.

MUSIC TRIVIA

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Who recorded the (number one) #1 hit *Tell Her About It* in 1983?

A: _____

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