



Jace Boote of Binford has been busy in the North Dakota high school rodeo circuit. Here, he competes in steer wrestling at a rodeo in Killdeer held on May 10-11. Photo courtesy of Annika Plummer Photography.

HITTING THE SHORT GO ROUND

Binford cowboy Boote, Sykeston's Lacina finish up high school season —

BY ERIK GJOVIK

Two local rodeo stars at the high school level are excelling in their chosen sport.

Jace Boote of Binford, along with Fallon Lacina of Sykeston, have earned their way to the big stage at the North Dakota High School Rodeo Association (NDH-SRA) Finals in Bowman, held June 11-15.

Jace Boote

Boote, an incoming sophomore at Midkota High School, is a compact package of muscle, determination and grit.

These are traits that have helped him excel in the high school rodeo arena, and the son of Alan and Nikki Boote has made the long days in the pickup hauling the stock trailer to events this spring count.

Boote qualified for the North Dakota High School Rodeo Association (NDH-SRA) Finals in Bowman June 11-15 through his performances this season on the circuit, which are divided into fall and spring rodeos.

He entered the finals at 14th place in both the team roping and steer wrestling events. Along with roping partner Stockton Nelson of Columbus, Boote has accumulated 15.0 points during the season, and 12.0 points on the steers.

He just missed qualification in tie down roping, finishing just three points out of



Fallon Lacina would finish first in girls cow cutting at a rodeo in Bismarck on May 30 with a score of 72 points. Her season score of 97.5 points currently puts her in second place heading into the NDHSRA finals. Photo by Sierra Schmidt, Untamed Souls Photography.

the top 24 with 6.0 points for 26th place overall.

Boote comes from a rodeo family. His older sister, Jade, along with older brother, Jory, have competed in the sport at the junior high and high school level, and also in college at Dickinson State University, as has his mom, Nikki. His dad, Alan, competed for National College (now Na-

tional American University) in Rapid City, S.D.

Fallon Lacina

Lacina, the daughter of Codie and Larry Larson, Jr. of Sykeston and Daron Lacina of Spearfish, S.D., has qualified for the NDHSRA finals in one event.

Even if not for quantity, Lacina has certainly made up for it in quality, as she is sitting

in second place statewide in the girls cow cutting event.

Her score of 97.5 points is just behind event leader Sofie Huff of Donnybrook with 102 going into Bowman.

Lacina has won three events during the season circuit so far, taking top honors at rodeo events held in Killdeer, Dickinson and Bismarck.

North
Dakota
Outdoors

By Doug Leier
N.D. Game & Fish



What are aquatic nuisance species?

You've heard for years about aquatic nuisance species, but what are they? The zebra mussel is likely the most famous. Or infamous. Let's get back to the basics and review some of the most important information on ANS and zebra mussels

What are aquatic nuisance species?

Aquatic nuisance species – nonnative organisms that cause harm to native and desirable species, the environment, economy or human health – are wreaking havoc on aquatic ecosystems across the nation. Among these invaders, the zebra mussel stands out as a particularly troubling species, one that is increasingly making its presence felt in North Dakota's lakes and rivers.

What is a zebra mussel?

Zebra mussels are small, freshwater mollusks native to the Caspian Sea region. They were accidentally introduced to North America in the late 1980s through the ballast water of European ships. Initially found in the Great Lakes, zebra mussels have spread rapidly across the continent, and unfortunately, they've made their way into North Dakota.

The zebra mussel poses significant risks to the state's aquatic systems, and their effects are far-reaching. These mussels are notorious for their ability to reproduce at an alarming rate. A single female can produce up to a million eggs per year. Once established in an area, zebra mussels attach to surfaces in dense colonies, which can cause a range of problems. They clog water intake pipes, disrupt native species and contribute to the decline of water quality by filtering out plankton and altering food webs.

In North Dakota, zebra mussels have been found in eastern North Dakota waters and the Red River, its tributaries, boat docks, marinas and other infrastructure, where they accumulate in large numbers. In fact, the invasive species are now a growing concern for people who rely on these bodies of water for fishing, boating and water supply.

The expansion of zebra mussels can lead to a significant reduction in native aquatic biodiversity. By outcompeting local mussels and filtering out plankton – the primary food source for many aquatic species – zebra mussels disrupt the entire ecosystem. This can lead to a decline in fish populations, affecting local fisheries, anglers and the economic health of communities that depend on these natural resources.

On top of the ecological damage, zebra mussels can also have a substantial financial toll. Their ability to cling to infrastructure means they can cause major issues for water utilities, irrigation systems and power plants. The cost of cleaning zebra mussels from intake pipes and other equipment can be considerable, especially in areas where infestations have gone unchecked for years. From fisheries and water recreation, to municipalities and power companies, the financial burden of managing zebra mussels can be significant.

The spread of zebra mussels in North Dakota highlights the importance of preventative measures and public awareness. The Game and Fish Department has been working to monitor water bodies for invasive species and implement strategies to limit their spread. Programs that focus on educating boaters, anglers and others who use water resources about the importance of cleaning boats and gear after each use are essential in combating the spread of zebra mussels.

One of the most effective tools in the fight against zebra mussels is early detection. As more lakes and rivers in North Dakota are surveyed for the presence of invasive species, scientists can identify problem areas before they become widespread. Public reporting systems allow citizens to notify authorities when they spot potential zebra mussel colonies, which can help lead to more rapid responses and containment efforts.

Zebra mussels pose a serious threat to North Dakota's aquatic environments. Their rapid spread and destructive effects on native ecosystems and local economies cannot be ignored. However, through education, prevention and monitoring, we can take steps to slow their invasion and protect the beauty and biodiversity of North Dakota's waters for future generations. It's up to all of us to be vigilant stewards of our precious aquatic resources and help ensure that zebra mussels don't continue to spread unchecked.

Learn more about aquatic nuisance species and zebra mussels here or <https://gf.nd.gov/ans>.



Doug Leier

REDBIRDS BABE RUTH BASEBALL

Locals begin vs. NR, Nelson Co.

BY ERIK GJOVIK

The Carrington Redbirds Babe Ruth team started their season with games in New Rockford on June 4 and at home versus Nelson County June 5.

At Jim Johnson Field in New Rockford, the 'Birds took on the young SNR Black Sox, and were defeated by a score of 10-4.

Even while giving up double digits in the ledger, Carrington had a decent showing on the mound from Jameson Kutz. The lefthander would strike out nine Sox in the loss, and Isaiah Oatis came on for the final inning and picked up two more.

Evan Johnson went 1-for-3 with a double and two runs batted in, and James Rau also had a hit and two runs

while walking twice. Oatis was 1-for-3 with the bat, while Kutz drove in a run with a sacrifice fly and also walked.

The first official action of the spring and early summer at the City Park baseball diamond occurred on June 5, and the Redbirds faced the Owls for another District 4 league clash.

The Owls scored three runs in the first inning, and that was all the offense they would need in a 3-0 shutout.

Past that initial frame, Redbird pitcher Parker Bickett was on point for the rest of the contest, as he racked up 12 strikeouts but did not receive any run support.

Carrington had just two hits in the loss, as Kutz finished 1-for-2 at the plate and Oatis was 1-for-3.

This season, the Redbirds

will have a new head coach. Luke Kutz steps into the managerial seat following Mitch Page's seasons at the helm of the program.

Kutz is assisted this summer by Ethan Johnson and Dallas Braaten.

The Redbirds took on Thompson's #1 team last Wednesday, June 11, in Carrington. They return to action this week with a pair of road games against Thompson #2 Monday, June 16, and Hatton #1 Wednesday, June 18. Both doubleheaders start at 5 p.m., with the first game counting in the league standings.

Upcoming home action for the 'Birds will be Wednesday, June 25, against Mayville #2 at City Park at 5 p.m.

The District 4 Tournament for Babe Ruth baseball will be held July 16-19 in New Rockford, with the state tournament being contested in LaMoure July 25-29.

Post 25 starts season Monday at Edgeley

Carrington's John Raymond O'Hara American Legion Post 25 baseball team will start the 2025 summer slate in Edgeley Monday afternoon, June 16.

After one season at the helm, last year's Post 25 coach, Jayden Shipman, has stepped aside in favor of his younger brother, Grady.

Grady Shipman jumps from the playing field to the coaches box just one year after finishing up his Legion baseball career, and spent this past season playing college ball at Valley City State.

The tentative schedule published in last week's Independent shows that Post 25 will be playing a strictly District 4 schedule.

The district tournament will be held in Wishek July 21-24, and the winner will advance to the State B Tournament at Park River on August 1-5.



The zebra mussel poses significant risks to the state's aquatic systems, and their effects are far-reaching. Photo by Ashley Peterson, NDGF.

Deadline for Ads, Legals, Classifieds, press releases, and photos is Tuesdays at 1 p.m.