

# BARREL RACING EVENT...



## ... Set to take place at Iowa Equestrian Center

*Top riders from upper Midwest to compete in Cedar Rapids in June and August*

One of the most exciting and fast-paced events in equine sports has found a home in Cedar Rapids. The sport of barrel racing is expanding in scope at the Iowa Equestrian Center, thanks to some facilities upgrades that make the agility and speed of barrel racing possible in the center's arena.

Two key events are set for the summer months at the center: The Barrel Bash-Cedar Rapids, set for June 25-27, and the 2010 Iowa NBHA State Championships, held August 13-15. Top riders and their horses from hundreds of miles around will converge on the center at the Kirkwood Community College main campus. Upwards of 300 participants per day are expected to speed around the three-barrel indoor course.

The June Barrel bash will be a double qualifying event for the BBR World Finals show in Oklahoma. Participants will not only compete for thousands in prize money but will also receive double qualifying points when they race. There are even pre-selected elite racers who will run to qualify for Team USA in the North American Barrel Race Challenge, a joint USA vs. Canada competition, to be held September 4-5 in Brandon, Manitoba.

Other Team USA qualifying sites for the Challenge are Perry, GA; Stephenville, Texas; Rapid City, SD; and Jackson, Miss.

Center Director Patrick Klatt notes that a substantial change in the footing materials in the facility arena was a major reason the IEC got the nod for this and other barrel racing events.

"We are pleased to host these two major events and offer this exciting entertainment to eastern Iowa. These types of events help round out the diversity of the center programming, and were added after the changes to our footing composition. That was a major change, and credit goes to our Kirkwood leadership for their support in making that improvement possible," Klatt said.

Barrel racing is a timed event, with margins of victory often decided by hundredths or thousandths of a second. Riders guide their horses around a series of barrels set up in a triangular array. The competitors and their horses maneuver in a cloverleaf pattern around the barrels as quickly and closely as possible without knocking any barrels over.

Renea Bolling of Greenfield, Iowa is the lead organizer for the June Barrel Bash and notes that the Iowa Equestrian Center's amenities and capacity were key factors in locating the regional qualifying event in Cedar Rapids. "We were impressed with the number of stalls at the center. That's essential when we'll have hundreds of contestants coming there in one weekend. And obviously, with the speed and top-level competitors in these events, having that good ground footing beneath them is crucial. We appreciate the efforts of Patrick and his staff to make this big event come together," Bolling said.

The Cedar Rapids barrel racing weekend should draw a wide range of riders, according to Bolling. "These types of

events are considered an 'open' event, and are growing in popularity. The divisional format allows riders at any experience level to compete and get a chance to compete for large payoffs. That opportunity draws a lot of interest and participation. We have been producing divisional barrel races with a chance to advance to national levels for a decade now," she added.

An example of the large payoffs Bolling referred to is in play at the June Cedar Rapids regional. The North American Barrel Racing Challenge has put a *Future Fortunes incentive fund* in play for the weekend, with \$10,000 in bonus money on the line.

The Cedar Rapids Barrel Bash event schedule includes Friday warm-ups beginning at noon June 25, and the main races beginning at 6:30 p.m. Saturday's warm-up starts at 8 a.m., with youth events beginning at 11:00. The main races are at noon on Saturday, including the \$10,000 Future Fortunes bonus prizes. Sunday's main races begin at 8:30 a.m., with participants vying for the North American Barrel Racing Challenge finals.

More information on the June 25-27 regional barrel racing event at the Iowa Equestrian Center is available at the event Web site: <http://www.barrelbash.com>. Event information is also available from organizer Renea Bolling at [bolling@iowatelecom.net](mailto:bolling@iowatelecom.net) or 641-745-5845.

Additional information on the Iowa NBHA State Championships may be found at: [www.ianbha.com](http://www.ianbha.com), or by contacting State Director Jeff Vorhies, 641-919-8547.