

Apprentice turns caring into career

COLTEN Preston has always loved horses but he never dreamt his passion would become a rewarding career.

The third-year apprentice farrier has taken the industry by storm, winning a national award for his skills.

Mr Preston, a University of Queensland Gatton campus student has always made horses and their health a top priority.

"It's important that they are cared for properly and are looked after just like humans," Mr Preston said.

It is his genuine and caring disposition that saw him take out Queensland's Farrier Apprentice of the Year late last year.

But he never dreamt of winning the national title.

"It was just a complete shock," Mr Preston said of winning the Australian Farrier Apprentice of the Year competition.

"It was a huge honour to win the award, and the competition was tough, and I thank everyone for their help and support."

He was presented with his

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award by the university's associate dean, Professor Richard Williams, at a presentation and lunch organised by Gatton Vocational Education Centre.

Mr Preston put a lot of time and effort into his studies and was humbled to be awarded with the two accolades, which he said he never expected.

"It was definitely worth the hard work and effort" he said.

Mr Preston is completing his apprenticeship, specialising in the care of horse feet, through the registered training office at Gatton, located within the university campus.

The national competition is hosted by the Master Farriers Association and was held at North Melbourne Institute of Tafe in Victoria.

Master Farriers Association president Kerri Ireland and secretary Steven Crosbie attended the awards evening and were elated Mr Preston won the award.



HUGE HONOUR: Gatton farrier Colten Preston has won the Australian Farrier Apprentice of the Year award.

Photo: Hung Vu

The pair was instrumental in mentoring Mr Preston and other farriers, assisting with their skill development through industry support and placement.

Since the re-instatement of the certificate three in farriery within

the university's vocational centre about two years ago, the number of apprentices has nearly doubled.

The Gatton campus is now recognised as the only registered training office for farriery qualifications in Queensland.

IN BRIEF

Kidney disease rife

SOUTH-EAST: There have been 350 Australians die of kidney disease in the first seven days of 2010.

Kidney Health Australia says on average of more than one Australian is dying with kidney-related diseases every 30 minutes, with chronic kidney disease) responsible for contributing to the deaths of more people than breast cancer, suicide and road deaths.

CKD is known as the silent killer as people can lose up to 90 per cent of the use of their kidneys without feeling sick.

People with CKD can delay the need for dialysis or sometimes halt progress entirely if they implement a commonsense personal health plan in collaboration with their general practitioner.

Home costs up 1%

SOUTH-EAST: Renovations, extensions and new home costs have increased one per cent in the past quarter, according to Archicentre, the building advisory service of the Australian Institute of Architects.

Archicentre's Queensland manager Ron Tanton said Archicentre expected renovations to increase in 2010 considerably, with baby boomers renovating their family home for lifestyle reasons and to increase the value of their homes as part of their superannuation strategy.

Honey's healthy

SOUTH-EAST: If one of your guilty pleasures in life is to pile a mound of honey on your toast each morning, two new reports should put a smile on your face.

The studies, funded by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, have uncovered what Winnie the Pooh has known for years: honey is more than a tasty spread, it may also be good for your health.

An investigation into the therapeutic properties of honey, and the value-adding potential of prebiotic components of Australian honey found, in the future, people may use hospital-grade honey to treat skin and wound infections or to promote good bacteria inside us.

Water safety critical as hottest days draw near

SOUTH-EAST: Queensland Health is warning residents to be water safe as the arrival of hot, steamy conditions prompt more people to take to dive in.

Since June, and with the hotter weather still to come, emergency departments have recorded 112 near-drowning incidents.

Most of the incidents involved pools but some also involved the beach, lakes and freshwater creeks.

Director of emergency Dr

Stephen Brierley said a worrying aspect of this year's statistics was a jump in immersion incidents of children less than five years of age.

Hannah's Foundation executive officer Katherine Plint said the message of water safety was crucial.

"Since July 1, 2009, the foundation has assisted many families across all age groups but the highest age group is the under fours," she said.

Labor 'signs away jobs'

SOUTH-EAST: The LNP has urged Premier Anna Bligh to guarantee that no jobs will be lost in the handover of remaining industrial awards to the Rudd Government's Fair Work system.

LNP and opposition leader John-Paul Langbroek said small-business owners across the state had already indicated they would be forced to cut staff to cover additional wage costs imposed.

"Premier Bligh made a promise of creating 100,000 bread-winner jobs, yet the Bligh Labor

government has, in effect, signed the termination letters of thousands of workers ... because of the huge costs imposed on small business under the Rudd Gillard IR system," he said.

The federal government says it is committed to educating businesses about changes to workplace laws amid concerns they have been left in the dark.

Workplace Relations Minister Julia Gillard said an ongoing need for education remained.

The new laws took effect on January 1.



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