

Local

Gets no 'special treatment'

Cav gets first woman rider

By JENNIFER AFFLERBACH

Battalion Staff
When cadet Beebe Buck went with her roommate to buy Parsons' Mounted Cavalry collar brass for her uniform, she was told there are no women in the Cavalry.

Her roommate promptly set the record straight: "Well, now there are women in the Cavalry."
Buck, a junior biomedical science major from Millani, Hawaii, is the first female to ride with the unit since it was organized in 1974.

PMC — also known as "the Cav" — is a group of Cadet Corps juniors and seniors who ride at all home football games and perform at agricultural and equestrian events throughout campus. There are 25 members this year, commanding officer Dennis Scarmado said.

Buck said she had no problems at all riding the games or on the two Corps trips to Austin and Dallas. But she said that many people were surprised to see her.

Buck said she gets no special treatment from the male members of the Cavalry.

"I have to show them that I'm willing to work," she said. "They don't do stuff for me. They don't try to make it any harder, either."

Cavalry member Kenny Ray, who became a member, said, "She's a real, real shocker." She's held her own. "I still feel it (the Cavalry) should be all male."

Another Cavalry member who said not to be named said, "I don't think women should be in the Cavalry or the Corps."

Mike Chandler, a junior in the Cavalry, said, "I don't mind (admitting women). It's bound to happen sooner or later."

Chandler said Buck "pulls more on her own weight." The general reaction from Corps members "has been a lot better than expected," Buck said. "Quite a few guys are for me. The majority just keep quiet."

Buck said she occasionally hears, "Here's the girl in the Cav," as she walks by. She has received a few nice comments, but she said that is to be expected.

"People ask me if I got on (the Cavalry) just to cause trouble, to make waves," she said.

Buck, who has been riding horses since she was 11 years old, said that is not the case. She has wanted to be in the Cavalry since she first found out about it her freshman year, she said.

Throughout her sophomore year, she spent her spare time at the stables where the Cavalry horses are kept, building fences, cleaning up, and showing that she was willing to work, she said.

Requirements for joining the Cavalry are membership in the Corps, a 2.0 grade point ratio and junior or senior classification, according to the Cavalry's constitution.

Some riding ability is also necessary to become a member, Scarmado said.

During their sophomore year, cadets may apply to the Cavalry's Rules Committee to be voted on for membership. There is no limit to the number of applicants that may be accepted. The Rules Committee consists of the advisor, executive officer and other Cavalry members.

Although she has her own horse, Buck had to borrow one to ride in the Texas Tech football game. Hers was temporarily "a horse of a different color."

For uniformity, all the horses ridden in the Cavalry are brown. Buck's was gray. After an application of two cases of brown dye from a beauty salon, Buck's was pink.

She said she received quite a bit of teasing from Cavalry members over that.

Buck is from Hawaii and had never been in Texas before coming to Texas A&M University. She decided to become an Aggie when she lived in Korea, where she worked for a veterinarian who had gone to Texas A&M.

Buck, who initially joined the Corps "just to get a room on campus," said, "I like the Corps. You get hooked."

She does not plan to go into the military after she graduates, she said, but would like to work with large animals as a veterinary technician.

Asked if she would encourage other women to join the Cavalry, Buck said she knows of three sophomores who are interested, "but I don't go around encouraging them."

"You've got to want to feed horses and build fences," she said. "It's not for someone who just wants to wear a cord or a ribbon."

Members of the cavalry wear distinctive gold citation cords and ribbons on their uniforms.

Parsons' Mounted Cavalry was named in a suit filed in May 1979 against Texas A&M University as denying membership to women cadets



Staff photo by Brian Tate

Beebe Buck, the first female member of Parsons' Mounted Cavalry since the unit's formation in 1974, saddles her horse, Brigadoon, at the PMC stables on FM 2818.

solely on the basis of sex. The suit was filed by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of former Corps member Melanie Zentgraf and other women in the Corps.

Other Corps organizations named in the suit are the Brigade Color Guard, Ross Volunteers, Aggie Band, Fish Drill Team and Rudder's Rangers.

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