

UT Martin Rodeo News

The University of Tennessee at Martin

December, 2011



Alumni Spotlight

The UTM Rodeo family is excited to congratulate alumni Matt Bright and Ty Atchison for qualifying for the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, Nevada. The NFR will begin the first of 10 rounds on December 1, 2011. Matt will compete for the world championship in the bareback riding and Ty will be contending for the gold buckle in the saddle bronc riding.

Although this is Ty's first trip to the NFR, he has been very successful in professional rodeo with career earnings of \$131,037 thus far. Some of his PRCA highlights include winning the saddle bronc riding at the Dodge City Roundup Rodeo, the Livingston, MT Roundup, and the Atlantic City Boardwalk Rodeo to name just a few.

Ty also had an outstanding career as a member of the UTM rodeo team. He qualified all four years for the College National Finals Rodeo: 3 times in the saddle bronc riding, finishing 2nd in the nation his sophomore year, twice in the team roping and once in the steer wrestling. He won regional titles three years in a row in the saddle bronc riding and the men's All-Around. Ty credits Coach Luthi as a big factor for his success in rodeo. He graduated from Martin with a degree in Farm & Ranch Management.

This will be Matt's second trip to the NFR in Las Vegas. Last year he was knocked out of the Finals competition early with a neck injury, but bounced back this year to again qualify in the bareback riding. The Tennessee native has career earnings in pro rodeo of \$174,747. Other highlights include 3 trips to the DNCFR, winning the bareback riding at the Ellensburg, Washington Rodeo, the Pioneer Days Rodeo, Flint Hills Rodeo, and the Caldwell, Idaho Rodeo along with many others.

While at UTM, Matt had a stellar four years in which he qualified each year for the CNFR in the bareback riding. In 2007 he won the Ozark Regional bareback riding title after finishing 3rd twice and 2nd once. Matt had this to say about his experiences in Martin, "My time spent at UTM was the biggest influence on me for rodeoing fulltime. I gained the tools necessary in and out of the arena to become the person I am today." He left UTM with a degree in Agricultural Business.



Ty Atchison

Both of these student-athletes have left their mark on the rodeo program and have greatly contributed to its success. Coach Luthi remarked, "Ty and Matt are both outstanding young men, with great drive and determination to excel in whatever they choose to do. I am very thankful that we had the opportunity to have them both as members of our rodeo program. I am very excited about all the things they have accomplished and even more excited about the things they will accomplish in the future."

UTM cowgirl, Ty Fitzgerald, is also in Las Vegas at the NFR representing Tennessee as Miss Rodeo Tennessee. She will be in competitions all week vying for the crown of Miss Rodeo America and we wish her the best of luck.



Matt Bright

Fall Rodeo Recap

The 2011 college rodeo season began as usual with high expectations and the annual trip up to Missouri Valley College. It was exciting to get the season started and the men's team ended up second and the women were fourth. The next stop was West Alabama and both teams battled to second place finishes. During Halloween weekend the teams made the short drive to Murray State where the men's team got its first win of the year, while the young women's team fought for a fifth place finish. Then it was off to Southern Arkansas University, in Magnolia, Arkansas, where both teams worked hard and finished second. The final rodeo of the semester was at Troy University and the results were similar to how the year began, with the men's team coming in second and the women's team fifth. The current Ozark Regional standings have the women's team in third place and the men's team sitting in second. There are still five rodeos to go in the spring, highlighted by the 44th Annual UTM Rodeo on April 12 - 14.

Some individuals have started the year strong. Tawnie Foster is currently 4th in the region in the barrel racing, while Heather Moore is holding down 7th place, and Katie Brown is 13th. Chelsie McDade is having another exceptional season and is 6th in the breakaway roping and 3rd in the goat tying.

On the men's side, John Alley is in 6th place in the men's all-around competition. Ty Hughston is winning 3rd in the saddle bronc riding. Tyler Waltz is still sitting in the top ten in the bareback and bull riding, after disappointingly injuring his knee early in the rodeo at Murray. He had successful surgery and is rehabbing to come back strong. Matt Smith is currently 13th in the bulls. In tie down roping, Jordan Thrasher is winning the region, Ben Walker is 8th, and Clark Adcock is 13th. The steer wrestlers are having a dominating year with five cowboys in the top 15: John Alley is 4th, Austin Duckett is 9th, Jordan Thrasher sits 10th, Clark Adcock is 11th, and Robert Joyce is 15th. Some of our team ropers had a good fall with Ben Walker winning the heading and Clark Adcock holding down the top spot in the heeling. Clay Mitchell is 4th in the heading and John Alley sits 4th in the heeling in the regional standings.

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Dan Post Again Donates Boots to Rodeo Team

For the past three years, the Dan Post Boot Company, located in Clarksville, Tennessee has donated a pair of boots to each member of the rodeo team and both coaches. They have developed a group of boots called Dan Post Cowboy Certified, geared toward the boot wearer who wears boots every day and rides horses. UTM Rodeo alumni Bill Hoy approached Dan Post about a partnership whereby Dan Post would provide Cowboy Certified boots for the rodeo team and coaches. The idea turned into a win-win opportunity for both parties and has benefited each tremendously. One of the rodeo team members who wears his Dan Post boots regularly in regional competition and at the past College National Finals Rodeo, John Alley states, “I think they are a great boot. They are very durable and I can wear them in and out of the arena”.

Coach John Luthi thinks the Dan Post Boot Company is a great sponsor for our team. “I wear my Dan Post boots every day. They not only wear

well, but they are very comfortable. We sure appreciate Dan Post Boot Company’s support and sponsorship.”

What does Dan Post get from this partnership? An opportunity to be affiliated with and to support a successful college rodeo team. They also receive important product feedback from competitors that put their boots to the test. Ken Moore, president of Dan Post Boot Co. says “We are proud to provide Dan Post boots to the UTM rodeo team and appreciate the commitment and dedication of these student athletes and their coaches.”

Dan Post Boot Company markets and distributes around the world with these brands: Dan Post, Cowboy Certified, Dingo, Laredo Western Boots, McRae Industrial, and is the authorized licensee for John Deere boots. You can find more information at danpostboots.com.



UTM Rodeo Schedule 2011 – 2012

Cossatot Comm College (Texarkana, AR) – Feb. 23 - 25

Univ of Ark at Monticello – March 29 - 31

University of Tenn - at Martin – April 12 - 14

Northwest Mississippi (Senatobi, MS) – April 19 - 21

Northwest Mississippi (Centerton, AR) – April 26 – 28

Keep up with UT Martin Rodeo results at www.utmsports.com

Fall Recap

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“Both teams have competed well this fall”, said Coach Luthi. “Some people have had stronger starts than others, but we still have half of our season to go. Good Lord willing, we will finish with a strong spring”.

You can see all the results at www.collegerodeo.com (Just click on result standings and then Ozark Region).

UTM Skyhawk Rodeo Team Roster 2011-12



Clark Adcock
Freshman
Smithville, Tenn.



Leslie Alexander
Sophomore
Loudon, Tenn



John Alley
Sophomore
Adams, Tenn.



Krista Alsobrooks
Junior
Dickson, Tenn.



Ryan Altomare
Freshman
Salem, Ohio



Kelli Bamberg
Senior
Beaver, Pa.



Courtney Bell
Sophomore
Bethlehem, Pa.



Clay Brewer
Freshman
Rutherford, Tenn.



Katie Brown
Freshman
Waverly, Tenn.



Natalie Brundige
Junior
Martin, Tenn.



Lee Burton
Freshman
Cedar Hill, Tenn.



Warren Cagle
Senior
Humboldt, Tenn.



Cheyenne Crouch
Freshman
Thompson Station, Tenn.



Christy Cunningham
Freshman
Milan, Tenn.



Austin Duckett
Freshman
Dalton, Ga.



Shane Fitzgerald
Freshman
Collierville, Tenn.



Ty Fitzgerald
Junior
Collierville, Tenn.



Allen Foster
Junior
Columbia, Tenn.



Tawnie Foster
Freshman
Vanleer, Tenn.



Justin Gibbs
Freshman
McMinnville, Tenn.



Mary Gorsuch
Freshman
Lancaster, Ohio

UTM Skyhawk Rodeo Team Roster 2011-12



Dacia Horne
Freshman
Lebanon, Tenn.



Ty Hughston
Junior
McBain, Mich.



Robert Joyce
Sophomore
Dyer, Tenn.



Alex McAlexander
Senior
Huntington, Tenn.



Chelsie McDade
Senior
Selinsgrove, Pa.



Clay Mitchell
Sophomore
Bolivar, Tenn.



Heather Moore
Senior
New Johnsonville,
Tenn.



Brandon Morrison
Freshman
Camden, Tenn.



Tyler Phillips
Junior
Martin, Tenn.



Cailynn Puera
Freshman
Pulmyra, Tenn.



Heath Simpson
Freshman
Somerville, Tenn.



Matthew Smith
Sophomore
Dyer, Tenn.



Matthew Spry
Junior
Alamo, Tenn.



Scott Steely
Junior
Savannah, Tenn.



Taylor Stillwach
Freshman
East Hampton,
N.Y.



Tammi Swearingen
Freshman
Horsehead, N.Y.



Jordan Thrasher
Junior
Culleoka,, Tenn.



Lauren Wagner
Sophomore
McClure, Pa.



Benjamin Walker
Sophomore
Sparta, Tenn.



Tyler Waltz
Sophomore
Jersey Shore, Pa.



Kelley Wigington
Sophomore
Adams, Tenn.



Kyle Wilson
Sophomore
Branchville, N.J.

Not Pictured:

Brett Carnal
Junior
Savannah, Tenn.

Jordan Ward
Freshman
Union City, Tenn.

Staff



John Luthi
Rodeo Coach



Nelson Davis
Assistant Rodeo
Coach
Athletic Trainer

www.utmsports.com
www.collegerodeo.com

Going For A Ride

by David Pruitt (former UTM cowboy)

There seems to be electricity in the air. You can hear and almost feel the crash of the slide gates as the chutes are loaded up. You hear the yells of the Stock Contractor and the hands working the chutes as the stock is being crowded up, preparing them to go into the spotlight. You look around to see 8 to 12 other guys, some nervous, others totally focused, some even joking, but all preparing in their own way for the explosions to come.

You hear a shout; "Ought 33 is loaded, get your rope on". You know that's your ticket, it said so on the day sheets posted just inside the contestant area where you paid your fees. You've got to be careful when you're walking, the shanks on your spurs are a little longer than horse riding spurs and even more unforgiving. Woe is the cowboy that gets tangled up in his spurs, his buddies will wear him out.

The feel of the poly rope in your hand is good. The glycerin and the pine rosin that you applied earlier is good and sticky, ready to ride. The clanking of cowbell(s) can be heard as their weight on the rope assist you in dropping your rope down under your ride so your buddy can grab it and pull it up with a chute hook. The big bovine stands pretty easy, hopefully he'll stay that way, some sure don't. You step over into the chute, careful to keep your feet firmly on the slats and not letting your hooks get into him as your setting your rope to fit this particular beast. Tie that rope on good, don't want it to fall off while you're waiting. Not too tight, don't want him to chute soak too much, this might be a good buckler.

They say his trip is two and to the right with a lot of down, this will be away from my hand. Gonna have to really cowboy up to get by this one. Not too bad of a hooker, just be sure you don't come off in front of him. He'll get with you if you do. Those horns aren't just there for show, he knows how to use them and you can be sure he knows exactly where the tips of them are. Those horns have been "tipped" or trimmed down. The point isn't there anymore, the tip is now about the size of a quarter, but still when backed with just under a ton of beef, they can penetrate places you don't want them to. Two things you need to know about bulls, they stink and they'll hurt you. Somehow you grow to love that smell though, well, tolerate it anyway. The "hurt you" part is another thing entirely.

Chap-up, stick your glove in your belt and now loosen up. The excitement increases as the announcer asks the crowd in a thunderous voice; "Are you ready for the Bull Riding?!?!?" More of a statement than a question. Of course, the old saying goes; "a bull rider is never ready, it's just his turn".

5 Time NFR Bull Riding Qualifier, Joe Wimberly from Cool, TX once gave an interview where he told what his mental preparation for this event was. Joe simply stated; "Loosen up, just relax and have fun; make your ride and get your money and go home". Those words were echoing through my brain as I tried to emulate Joe's attitude. Ummm, this can be fun after all; just wish I'd worn my brown pants instead of these blue jeans. (You'll have to refer to Blue Collar Comedy Tour if you don't get that one.)

Loosen up and have fun; that's the ticket. Get the glove on. It's tight, teeth are required to get it on snugly. The taste of the rosin and leather is still on your teeth, don't taste all that bad, but you'll never find it on a menu anywhere I hope. Pull your hat down tight, pat some more rosin in your gloved hand which is now tied to your wrist and you're up on the back of the chute. Careful with the gloved hand as you ease over in the chute. Get your feet where they need to be, ease your knees down on him where he'll know you're there, but also know you're not trying to hurt him, maybe he'll stand. Sure hope he'll stand, all this metal around you isn't really meant for human flesh and bones to be crushed against. You sling the excess of your chaps back over your legs, get it out of the way so you can work your rope. One of your buddies can be heard talking, he's not really talking to you, but never the less, he's talking. "A bull rider is in control, the power is in his hands and between his knees, he is the man".

You pull the tail on the rope which was holding it in place and hand it to the guy that's pulling for you. Your glove hand runs up and down the tail of the rope, heating up the rosin so it'll give you a good grip on the rope. You call for slack, tension on the rope is released, you get your hand into the rope and get it positioned so your hand is just on the side of his back bone and just behind the break in his shoulders. Glance over your shoulder into the arena as the Contractor points at you. The chute is unlatched after they put the twist rope into position and have

the pull rope attached. Reach down with your free hand to grab the rope on his side; "pull" is what you hear yourself saying as the rope goes taught on your riding hand. "A little more" as you grab the tail from your buddy and run it through your gloved riding hand. The bull steps around in the chute, he knows the tension on the rope only means one thing and he's ready. As the rope is laid across your hand, you clamp down on it, then grab an inch or two and let it off, just for luck if for nothing else. Make the final wrap, glance back to see that the gate man is paying attention and slide up, putting your weight on the bull and trying to find a seat as you nod your face to "release the beast". The creak of the gate, the shout of the announcer and the roar of the crowd are oblivious to you, the power that is released commands your attention. The adrenaline that was coursing through your veins has now become a freight train and is highballing through your system. Your focus is on one thing, "ride". Keep your feet moving to the front, pull and push on your rope. Ride him jump for jump, that's the ticket, that's the ride. When it starts to feel good, loosen that outside spur and let him know you're there. You hear the horn signaling the end of the 8 seconds. You're tapped off good and want it to keep going, but you've made your ride so step off. If you don't land on your feet, then "Get Up Cowboy, Save your life"! Head to the nearest structure and pray that you didn't offend the bull fighters in a previous life. The roar of the crowd can now be heard in your head as the Announcer encourages their approval. At this moment, you've never felt more alive! That's it, that's why you do it, God this is awesome!

Rodeo Calendars on Sale

The annual rodeo team calendars are on sale now.

They make great Christmas gifts!

The calendar includes action shots of team members competing and a still shot of each team member.

If you would like to purchase a calendar you can contact the rodeo office at 731-881-7426 or dluthi@utm.edu.

Cost is \$10.00

SAVE THE DATE

The 44th Annual UTM Rodeo

April 12, 13, and 14

The team is beginning to sell advertising packages, program ads, and various arena signs for the rodeo. If you are interested in some type of sponsorship during the rodeo feel free to contact a team member or the rodeo office at 731-881-7426 or at dluthi@utm.edu.

We are also beginning to collect items for the team's annual scholarship auction. If you would be willing to donate something to the silent auction during the rodeo or live auction Saturday afternoon during the free barbecue, please contact the rodeo office.

Rodeo Booster Club Jackpot Dates

Barrel Race Dates

Oct. 21-22

Nov. 11-12

Jan. 13-14

Team Roping Date

Feb. 17-18



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Remember this handout....



WHO MAKXS OUR RODXO TXAM A SUCCXSS

XVXN THOUGH MY TYPXWRTXR IS AN OLD MODXL, IT WORKS QUITX
WXLL XCEPT FOR ONX KXY. I HAVX WISHXD MANY TIMXS THAT IT
WORKXD PXRFXCTLY. IT IS TRUX THAT THXRX ARX 41 KXYS THAT DO
FUNCTION WXLL, BUT JUST ONX NOT WORKING MAKXS A BIG
DIFFXRXNCX. SOMXTIMXS IT SXXMS TO MX THAT OUR RODXO TXAM IS
SOMXWHAT LIKX MY OLD TYPXWRTXR-- NOT ALL OUR TXAM MXMBXRS
ARX WORKING. YOU MAY SAY TO YOURSXLX, "WXLL, I AM ONLY ONX
PXRSON, I WON'T MAKX OR BRXAK A TXAM." BUT, YOU DO MAKX A
DIFFXRXNCE, BXCAUSX A TXAM TO BX XFFXCTIVX NXXDS ACTIVX
PARTICIPATION OF XVXRY SINGLX INDIVIDUAL AND YOUR XFFORTS ARX
NXXDXD. RXMXMBXR MY OLD TYPXWRTXR AND RXALIZX THAT I CAN
MAKX A KXY CONTRIBUTION TO OUR TXAM.

I AM ONLY ONX,
BUT I AM ONX,
I CAN'T DO XVXRYTHING,
BUT I CAN DO SOMXTHING,
AND THAT WHICH I CAN DO
I OUGHT TO DO,
AND THAT WHICH I OUGHT TO DO
BY GOD'S GRACX I SHALL DO.

SINCXRXLX,

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE **UT**
MARTIN

Follow the rodeo team at

www.utmsports.com