

Did you know?

➤ **Cody Hancock** didn't secure his berth at the **2000 NFR** until the final weekend, earning the **15th spot** by just **\$400**. But once he got to Las Vegas, he dominated, becoming the first rough-stock cowboy in PRCA history to go from the No. 15 slot at the NFR to a world championship.

Who's HOT IN BULL RIDING?

Mike Moore

Finally healthy in 2001, Moore showed the rodeo world what he could do. He had a 95-point ride at the Copenhagen Cup Finale in Dallas and rode into the Wrangler NFR in sixth place.



Mike Moore

Artful, but dangerous

Of all the events in professional rodeo, perhaps none is as beautiful or as violent as bull riding. It is the art that pits the talents and will of a cowboy against the strength and will of a 2,000-pound animal.

It is a conglomeration of human emotions and senses wrapped into one brutal yet poetic eight-second ride.

It is complete opposites juxtaposed on a canvas of dust. It is the immense power and size of an untamed bucking bull. It is the bass drum beat of massive hooves, the bel-low of a challenged animal, the musical whistle that signals the end of a ride.

It is contested by cowboys who often weigh no more than 145 pounds, such as 2000 world champion Cody Hancock. It is perhaps the only rodeo event in which physically smaller athletes – resembling Olympic gymnasts in Wranglers – can win the world.

It is the bucking chutes packed with cowboys during the bull riding competition. All lend a hand in some way, providing tips to the rider or perhaps

whispering a silent prayer. It is the nod of a head and an explosion from the gate. For the cowboy on the spot, it is a wild, dangerous eight-second ride to another world. But only if he is lucky and tough.

It is the unpredictable bucking motion of the bulls. One moment the animal is hovering like a snorting helicopter. The next he is throwing back his head like a ticked-off T-Rex in search of a meal, who suddenly transforms to a twisting whirlpool with dangerous horns and hooves.

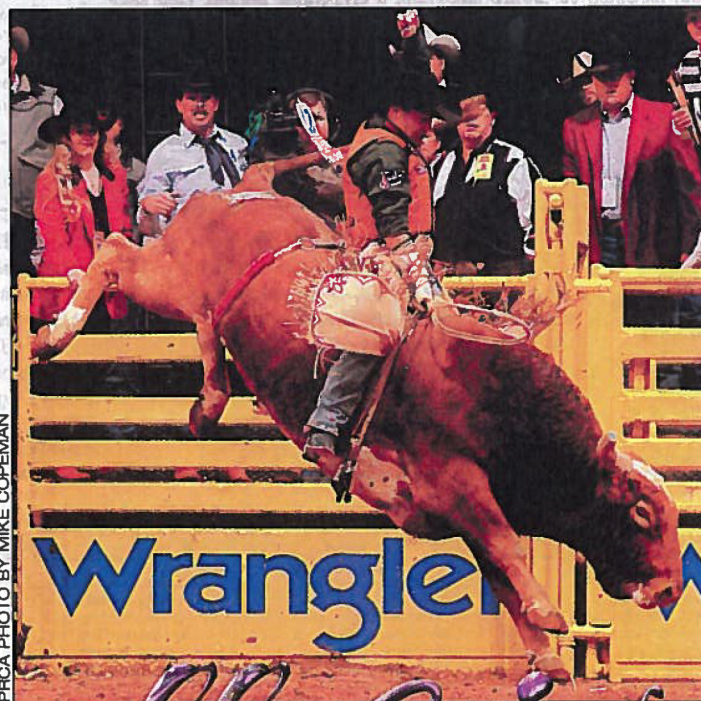
And, amazingly, bull riding isn't over when it's over. Once the cowboy has made the eight seconds, his paycheck may be secure, but his health isn't. Escaping the bull is no easier than riding it. A cowboy's gloved hand can become caught in his bull rope, leaving him to dangle like a wet dish rag. Some cowboys are literally bucked off beneath the bull's feet. That's the moment a cowboy hopes his trust in the bullfighters is well placed.

Bull riding is long walks to the Justin Sportsmedicine trailer, where cowboys learn if their push for a world championship continues or ends. It is a life of broken bones, deep bruises, torn muscles and occasional concussions.

Bull riding is a scored event, based on the performance of the cowboy and the bull. Judges look for a stylish ride with the cowboy countering the bull's best attempts to dislodge him.

It is the event made famous by cowboys like Freckles Brown, Don Gay, Lane Frost and Tuff Hedeman. It is the intimidating names of the famous bulls, such as Tornado, Bodacious, Unforgiven and Wolfman. Bull riding is crazy. It is dangerous. It sells rodeo tickets. It is a rider and a bull making art, painting this colorful, violent and athletically beautiful rodeo picture.

Poetry in motion: Cody Hancock, the 2000 world bull riding champion, finished second in 2001, but set a Wrangler NFR record with a 96-point ride on Diamond G's Mister USA.



PRCA PHOTO BY MIKE COPEMAN

Bull Riding



2002 OFFICIAL PRCA PRORODEO PROGRAM

MORE BULLS



2001 WORLD CHAMPION BULL RIDER



Blue Stone

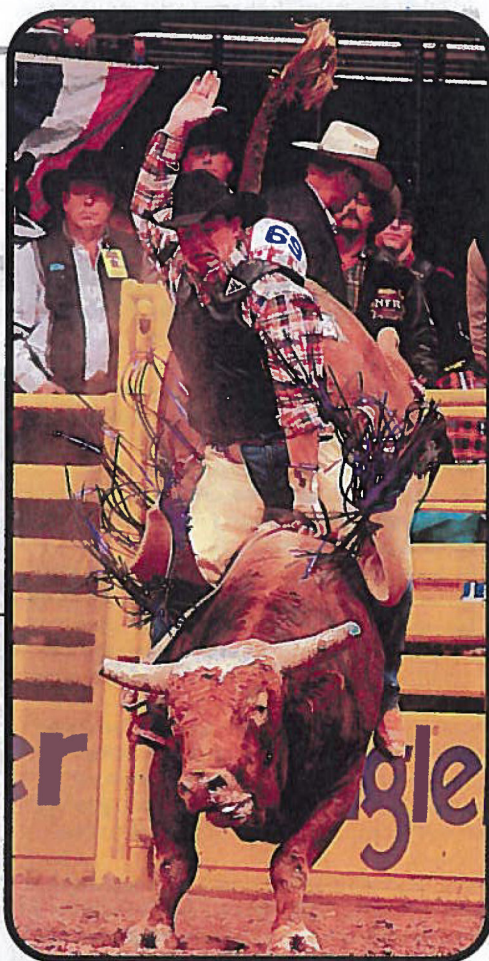
Personal

hometown: Ogden, Utah; height: 5-11; weight: 170; birthdate: May 26, 1978; family: wife, Misty; son, Rowdy; other interests: hunting, fishing.

Career

PRCA membership: 1998; World titles: 1; 2001 earnings: \$174,772; Career earnings: \$277,353; NFR qualifications: 1; 2001 NFR finish: 1st; 2001 NFR earnings: \$112,322.

Out of the Blue: Once again, bull riding provided Wrangler NFR fans a storybook ending. One year after Cody Hancock climbed from No. 15 to a world title, Blue Stone of Ogden, Utah, made a comparable rise from No. 12. Not only did Stone win his first world title in his Wrangler NFR debut, he also left his mark on history, winning the average title and \$112,322 - more than any other bull rider at the NFR. He also broke Ty Murray's single-season bull riding record for prize money with \$174,772.



PRCA PHOTO BY MIKE COPEMAN

Pro Rodeo History

BULL RIDING

► **1951:** Jim Shoulders wins his first world bull riding title. Shoulders went on to claim seven bull riding crowns. The cowboy has 16 combined world championships in bareback riding, bull riding and all-around, a record that stood for 41 years before being equaled in 2001 by steer roper Guy Allen.

► **1965:** Larry Mahan wins his first world bull riding title. Mahan competed in all three roughstock events, and he and Tom Ferguson shared the record for six world all-around titles until 1998.

► **1974:** Don Gay wins the first of his record eight world bull riding titles. Gay is now an announcer and producer for Mesquite Championship Rodeo.

► **1982:** Charles Sampson of Los Angeles becomes the first African-American cowboy to win a world championship.

► **1991:** Wade Leslie rides Growney Brothers Rodeo Company's Wolfman to the first 100-point score in rodeo history.

► **1993:** Ty Murray wins his first of two world bull riding titles. Murray is considered by many the greatest rodeo cowboy ever and was inducted into the ProRodeo Hall of Fame in 2000.

2001 BR HIGHLIGHTS

AT THE WRANGLER NFR: While reigning world champion Cody Hancock and 2000 NFR champion Philip Elkins might have been favored to win the 2001 world title, bull riding is never a certain thing. Hancock led the world standings after seventh rounds and Elkins rode five of his first six bulls, but Wrangler NFR rookie Blue Stone rode eight of 10 bulls, won four rounds and beat them all in the end.

DURING THE REGULAR SEASON:

► Canadian cowboy Robert Bowers got a jump start to his season, winning the average title at the National Western Rodeo in Denver and taking home \$10,528. Bowers led the world standings through the winter until he was sidelined by a broken collarbone.

► Elkins rolled, winning the San Antonio Livestock Show & Rodeo title and taking home \$9,077. Elkins also won titles in Red Bluff, Calif., (\$5,502) and

Guyton, Okla. (\$3,264).

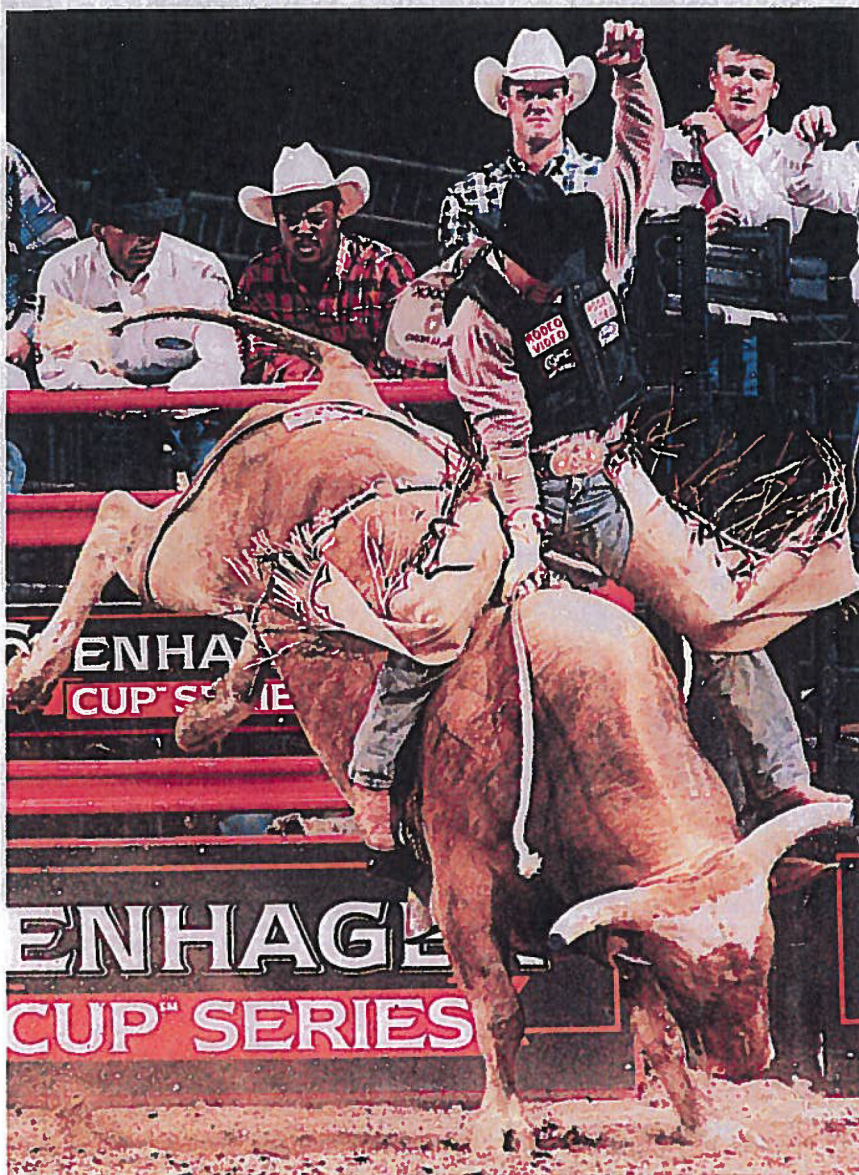
► Hancock silenced anyone who thought his world championship run in 2000 was a fluke by winning the winter and summer Copenhagen Cup Finale bull riding titles, earning \$37,398.

► Rob Bell hit the jackpot in Cody, Wyo., winning \$8,987. That began a streak in which Bell won nearly \$50,000 during a six-week span last summer en route to the No. 2 ranking in the world standings.

Past World Champion Bull Riders

John Schneider, Livermore, Calif. 1929	Ken Roberts, Strong City, Kan. 1943	Jim Shoulders, Henryetta, Okla. 1958	Bobby Stainer, Austin, Texas 1973	Jim Sharp, Kermit, Texas 1988
John Schneider, Livermore, Calif. 1930	Ken Roberts, Strong City, Kan. 1944	Jim Shoulders, Henryetta, Okla. 1959	Don Gay, Mesquite, Texas 1974	Tuff Hedeman, Bowie, Texas 1989
Smokey Snyder, Bellflower, Calif. 1931	Ken Roberts, Strong City, Kan. 1945	Harry Tompkins, Dublin, Texas 1960	Don Gay, Mesquite, Texas 1975	Jim Sharp, Kermit, Texas 1990
John Schneider, Livermore, Calif. (tie) 1932	Pee Wee Morris, Custer, S.D. 1946	Ronnie Rossen, Broadus, Mont. 1961	Don Gay, Mesquite, Texas 1976	Tuff Hedeman, Bowie, Texas 1991
Smokey Snyder, Bellflower, Calif. (tie) 1932	Wag Blasing, Bell, Calif. 1947	Freckles Brown, Lawton, Okla. 1962	Don Gay, Mesquite, Texas 1977	Cody Custer, Wickenburg, Ariz. 1992
Frank Schneider, Caliente, Calif. 1933	Harry Tompkins, Dublin, Texas 1948	Bill Kornell, Palm Springs, Calif. 1963	Butch Kirby, Alamo, Texas 1978	Ty Murray, Stephenville, Texas 1993
Frank Schneider, Caliente, Calif. 1934	Harry Tompkins, Dublin, Texas 1949	Bob Wegner, Auburn, Wash. 1964	Don Gay, Mesquite, Texas 1979	Daryl Mills, Pink Mountain, B.C. 1994
Smokey Snyder, Bellflower, Calif. 1935	Harry Tompkins, Dublin, Texas 1950	Larry Mahan, Brooks, Ore. 1965	Don Gay, Mesquite, Texas 1980	Jerome Davis, Archdale, N.C. 1995
Smokey Snyder, Bellflower, Calif. 1936	Jim Shoulders, Henryetta, Okla. 1951	Ronnie Rossen, Broadus, Mont. 1966	Don Gay, Mesquite, Texas 1981	Terry West, Henryetta, Okla. 1996
Smokey Snyder, Bellflower, Calif. 1937	Harry Tompkins, Dublin, Texas 1952	Larry Mahan, Brooks, Ore. 1967	Charles Sampson, Los Angeles, Calif. 1982	Scott Mendes, Weatherford, Texas 1997
Kid Fletcher, Hugo, Colo. 1938	Todd Whetley, Hugo, Okla. 1953	George Paul, Del Rio, Texas 1968	Cody Snyder, Redcliff, Alberta 1983	Ty Murray, Stephenville, Texas 1998
Dick Griffith, Fort Worth, Texas 1939	Jim Shoulders, Henryetta, Okla. 1954	Doug Brown, Silverton, Ore. 1969	Don Gay, Mesquite, Texas 1984	Mike White, Lake Charles, La. 1999
Dick Griffith, Fort Worth, Texas 1940	Jim Shoulders, Henryetta, Okla. 1955	Gary Leflew, Santa Maria, Calif. 1970	Ted Nuce, Manteca, Calif. 1985	Cody Hancock, Taylor, Ariz. 2000
Dick Griffith, Fort Worth, Texas 1941	Jim Shoulders, Henryetta, Okla. 1956	Bill Nelson, San Francisco, Calif. 1971	Tuff Hedeman, Gainesville, Texas 1986	Blue Stone, Ogden, Utah 2001
Dick Griffith, Fort Worth, Texas 1942	Jim Shoulders, Henryetta, Okla. 1957	John Quintana, Creswell, Ore. 1972	Lane Frost, Lane, Okla. 1987	





PRCA PHOTO BY DAN HUBBELL

A springboard: 2000 World Bull Riding Champion Cody Hancock qualified for the 2001 Wrangler NFR thanks to wins at both Copenhagen Cup Finales.

Tour from page b-6
the Wrangler ProRodeo Tour delivered excellent prime-time TV ratings.

The unique format of the Wrangler ProRodeo Tour promotes exciting races in all events, as contestants battle through each of the Tour's stops. Champions of each Tour are crowned at the Tour Finales, sponsored by U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Co.

The Tour rodeos are vitally important to the contestants, who earn points at each Tour stop. Only the top 12 contestants in each event qualify for the winter and summer Finales, which last year offered a heart-pounding \$1.2 million in combined prize money. The summer Finale at the American

ESPN 2

Airlines Center in Dallas paid a whopping \$700,000, the

biggest purse of rodeo's regular season. And all Finale prize money won counts toward Wrangler NFR qualification.

If cowboys want to qualify for the Wrangler NFR – and they all do – competing in and winning money at one or both of the Finales is crucial. And that makes for intense competition. This year, the Winter Tour began at the National

U.S. Smokeless TOBACCO CO.

Western Stock Show and Rodeo in Denver in January, and ends with the Pioneer Days Rodeo in May in Guymon, Okla.

The Finale will again be held at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, June 13-15.

Bareback rider Kelly Wardell's victory in the winter Copenhagen Cup Finale in 2001 illustrated the importance of Tour success for the contestants. Wardell had always dreamed of winning a world championship, but he had never finished higher than ninth in the Jack Daniel's World Standings. But he won the bareback riding title and \$19,000 at the winter Finale. That big payday helped send him to the 2001 Wrangler NFR as the No. 1 bareback rider with \$105,903, and it gave him a chance to claim the bareback riding world championship.

The 2001 summer Copenhagen Cup Finale followed a 10-rodeo Tour and provided one of the greatest finishes in rodeo history with calf ropers stealing the spotlight. A sold-out crowd stood and cheered as Stran Smith and Cody Ohl recorded back-to-back 6.7-second runs in the championship round to tie the world record, originally set by Joe Beaver in 1986.

"Big players make big plays on big days," said Smith, who claimed \$17,250 to secure a spot in the \$4.5 million Wrangler NFR.

It was a knockout effort by both cow-



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The National Network

Wrangler

boys. More importantly, it was a knockout by the Finale. All five performances at the new American Airlines Center were sold out as Dallas embraced the return of big-time rodeo.

"This is rodeo for the future," said Hatchell. "It isolates great performers and performances. It's fast-paced and gives people what they want. It can't get any better than this."

Smith was awarded the victory according to tie-breaking rules, but the real message had been sent and received. The Wrangler ProRodeo Tour and the Finales sponsored by U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Co. provide a superb platform for the world's greatest rodeo athletes.

