



2004 PRCA Xtreme

In a Zone

Schumacher matches Mr. USA to win San Antonio

By Troy Schwindt, photos by James Phifer

Those who play sports know about the "zone," a state of mind in which the athlete — usually for a short-lived time — can do no wrong.

In the NBA Championship Series against Portland, Chicago's Michael Jordan simply shook his head and shrugged his shoulders after knocking down a barrage of 3-pointers. The rim that day looked like an oversized hoola-hoop to the NBA's greatest player.

The Zen-like "zone" happens to athletes at all levels, from the high school baseball player who hits four home runs in a game to the seasoned

professional who breaks a world record.

ProRodeo's B.J. Schumacher discovered that rare sensation when he and Diamond G's standout bull Mr. USA hooked up for an unforgettable eight seconds during the kick-off event of the 2004 PRCA Xtreme Bulls tour on Feb. 6.

In front of a boisterous crowd of 15,083, Schumacher matched Mr. USA jump for heart-stopping jump in the final round en route to an Xtreme Bulls record-tying mark of 95 points.

The cowboy from Hillsboro, Wis., finished the evening with 176.5 points on two rides and with \$28,200 in cold, hard cash.

"It was a weird feeling because everything just came together," said Schumacher, who finished second in the Jack Daniel's World Standings in 2003. "It was like one of the best bull rides, but the easiest feeling. I really don't know how to explain it. It was just an awesome feeling."

"One time when he blew up at me, I kind of felt like I was in trouble a touch, but usually when I make a good ride like that there's more times that I feel that I better do this or better do that."

Schumacher, who last year won the Xtreme Bulls stop in Austin, Texas, knew before his showdown with Mr. USA that he was on the right bull for a potential big score.

Mr. USA and 2000 World Champion Cody Hancock hooked up at the 2001 Wrangler NFR for a NFR-record-breaking 96-point ride, which snapped a 27-year mark held by the legend Don Gay.

And just last month, Cameron Castleberry won the National Western Stock Show and Rodeo in Denver with a 93-point ride on Mr. USA.

"I just made the right moves I guess this time and everything worked out good," said

Schumacher, who spent 90 minutes after the rodeo talking to TV, newspaper and radio reporters.

"Hopefully that will keep happening," he said.

Equally as happy was Mr. USA's owner, Cyndi Gilbert. She and husband, Steve, own Diamond G Rodeo Company in Toquerville, Utah.

The Gilberts also own the bull Schumacher rode in the semifinals, Wanna Dance, a five-time Wrangler NFR bull.

"He's almost 7, but he's just getting stronger," Gilbert said of Mr. USA. "He's pretty wise. You never see the same trip but he always gives 110 percent."

In 2003, Schumacher rode 70 of 113 bulls for a riding percentage of 61.95, while Mr. USA bucked off 11 of 15 cowboys for a 73.3 percent buck-off rate.

"Cameron Castleberry had him in Denver and I said beware of those you don't know about," said Gilbert, donned in her red, white and blue attire. "You know that somebody like B.J. is really good and so you know you have a matchup. That's the way it should be."

With the win, Schumacher vaults into the lead in the Jack Daniel's World Standings, as well as the Xtreme Bulls standings.

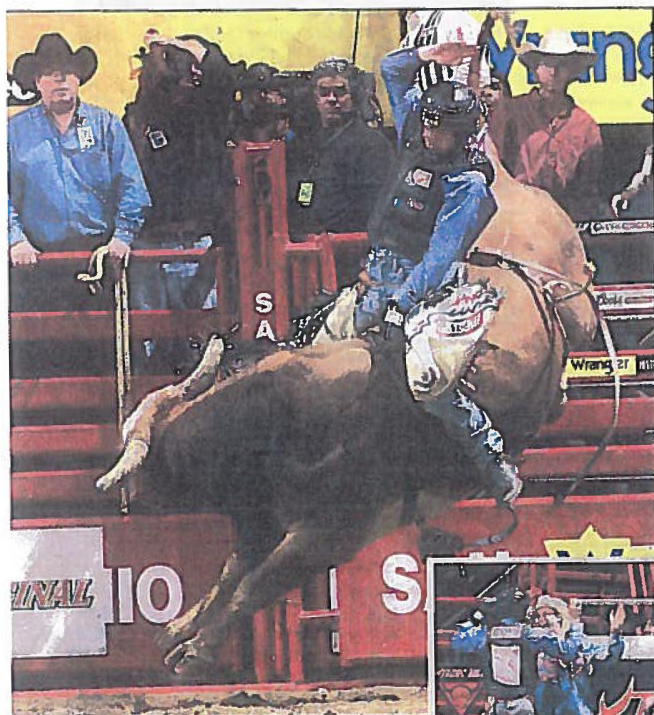
"My goal is to have \$60,000 won after RodeoHouston," he told Gay, who interviewed the champion after the rodeo. With his win in San Antonio and a victory in Fort Worth, Texas, Schumacher won \$43,885 during the first week of February.

Before Schumacher's heroics, Dustin Elliott of Maxwell, Neb., set the bar in the final round at 90.5 points with his trip on Andrews' cream-colored bull Soap Weed. The ride followed qualified efforts by Russ Sanders (87 points) of Livermore, Calif., and Casey Baize (81 points) of San Angelo, Texas.

Elliott led PRCA bull riders in 2003 in riding percentage, riding 34 of 48 bulls for a 70.83 percent clip. He took home \$14,070 from San Antonio.

Schumacher, up eighth in the 15-man final round, was the last bull rider to make the eighth-second whistle.

Howdy Cloud of Kountze, Texas, emerged on top after the semifinals thanks to his 90-point effort on Cervi's Rocky Red Top.



Xtreme fun: B.J. Schumacher of Hillsboro, Wis., thrilled the capacity crowd at the SBC Center in San Antonio with his XB record-tying 95-point trip aboard Diamond G's Mr. USA. He's congratulated after the ride by bullfighters John Brogan and Donny Sparks.



Bulls - San Antonio



Crowd pleasers: The Xtreme Bulls event drew 15,083 fans, which thrilled stock contractor Mike Cervi, left, and San Antonio rodeo arena director Guy Elliott.

Xtreme Bulls hits another home run

Guy Elliott, rodeo arena director of the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo, faced a monumental task when the second season of PRCA Xtreme Bulls kicked off Feb. 6 inside the SBC Center.

His mission: top last year's inaugural Xtreme Bulls in San Antonio. A packed house christened the brand new SBC Center in 2003 with two hours-plus of rock 'n' roll music, spectacular pyrotechnics and dynamite bull riding.

For Elliott and crew, it was mission accomplished. A packed house of 15,083 let their enthusiasm for bull riding be known.

"Last year we started it out, and I told people all over that it was so exciting because from the time that first shot of pryo went off until the last bull was bucked, everybody here was on their feet. Everybody had a good time. It sent shivers up your back just to be here and watch it. We are so proud and we wanted to be sure that we came back the second year and top that and I think we have. These people came here to have a good time and we gave it to them."

Byran McDonald, PRCA bull riding event representative, said PRCA's Xtreme Bulls is fulfilling everyone's expectations.

"It's been really, really good," McDonald said. "San Antonio really went out and sold some tickets for us and we had a full house. PRCA bull

riding has elevated itself because of Xtreme Bulls. The guys are getting on a lot of good bulls and they are really coming to ride now, so their confidence is high. We are going into 87 million homes with ESPN and they are setting records. I think it's a great product and good for rodeo itself."

Brown looking forward, not back

Zack Brown from Chino Hills, Calif., walked back into the SBC Center with only one thing on his mind: riding bulls.

In a spectacular wreck last year in the final round of Xtreme Bulls in San Antonio, Brown



Zack Brown

broke his right ankle after being slammed into the chutes by Salt River's Chiseled in Stone. Brown lasted just 2.57 seconds on the bull, and the injury forced a Justin Sportsmedicine Team doctor to insert a rod into Brown's ankle.

Making matters worse, Brown, who turned 25 on Feb. 17, was leading the competition through the semifinals thanks to a 90-point ride.

This time around, however, Brown put the demons of that night behind him with an 82-point trip in the semifinals aboard Bad Company Rodeo's Hey Ya.

"It's been a whole year since it happened," said Brown, who still managed to finish sixth in the world standings in 2003. "I've pretty much learned that I'm not ever going to be able to forget about it because everybody keeps reminding me of it. I just kind of deal with it."

Transportation desperation

Bull rider Chad Klein probably felt like he should have stayed home after his adventures in getting from Rapid City, S.D., to San Antonio.

Klein, a three-time Wrangler NFR qualifier in the bareback riding, didn't have much luck at the

Black Hills Stock Show and Rodeo in Rapid City before he boarded a plane for Dallas, where he was to pick up a rental car and drive to San Antonio for Xtreme Bulls.

The logistical adventure started when Klein's plane was 30 minutes late. The delay put the roughstock cowboy in the middle of Friday rush-hour traffic.

"I've been driving for five hours in traffic," said Klein. "Dallas, Austin (Texas), San Marcos (Texas) - it was chaos. I could see how people get road rage. Then I get here and say I'm a contestant, could you help me? 'No.'"

To cap the evening, Klein was bucked off his semifinals bull, Guidry's Western Hauler, in 4.96 seconds.



Home of the spurs: Dustin Elliott of Maxwell, Neb., sticks a 90.5-point ride in the final round on Andrews' bull Soap Weed. Elliott, who rode 70 percent of his bulls in 2003, finished second to Schumacher and pocketed \$14,070 from San Antonio.

XTREME BULLS

Unofficial standings
as of Feb. 6, 2004

1. B.J. Schumacher, Hillsboro, Wis.\$28,200
2. Dustin Elliott, Maxwell, Neb.14,070
3. Russ Sanders, Livermore, Calif.8,490
4. Howdy Cloud, Kountze, Texas6,580
5. Casey Balza, San Angelo, Texas5,170
6. Dan Wolfe, Redmond, Ore.2,350
- Willi Farrell, Thermopolis, Wyo.2,350
8. Blu Bryant, Robinson, Texas1,410

XTREME BULLS San Antonio, Feb. 6

Semifinals: 1. Howdy Cloud, 90 points on Cervi's Rocky Red Top, \$4,700; 2. (tie) William Farrell on Bad Company's Bad Company and Dan Wolfe on Guidry's Central Freight Line, 88, \$2,350 each; 4. Blu Bryant, 87 on Andrews' Big Time, \$1,410; 5. Philip Eldins, 86.5 on Andrews' Alley Cat, \$940; 6. Justin Andrade, 84.5 on Guidry's Snuff's Hot Dem; 7. Clint Craig, 84 on Bad Company's Free Rider; 8. Zack Brown, 82 on Bad Company's Hey Ya; 9. B.J. Schumacher, 81.5 on Diamond G's Wanna Dance; 10. (tie) Myron Duarte on Andrews' All Star and Beau Hill on Salt River's Chickenbones, 80; 12. Dustin Elliott, 78 on Bad Company's Love Shack; 13. Casey Balza, 75 on Bad Company's Smoke; 14. Russ Sanders, 70 on Bad Company's Unbelievable; 15. Colby Yates, 69 points on Andrews' Hard Candy; 16. Jesse Ball, 6.84 seconds on Cervi's Boyfriend; 17. Jerry Shepherd, 6.79 seconds on Andrews' Hetter Skelter; 18. Zack Oakes, 6.45 seconds on Andrews' Jim BQ; 19. Billy Burt, 5.84 seconds on Salt

River's Shuffling Madness; 20. Chad Klein, 4.96 seconds on Guidry's Western Hauler; 21. Jason McClain, 4.84 seconds on Guidry's XS Energy; 22. Blue Stone, 4.12 seconds on Diamond G's Crush Box; 23. Scott Schiffer, 3.52 seconds on Salt River's Sandstorm; 24. Ryan Brown, 3.45 seconds on Salt River's Chili Pepper; 25. Steven Turner, 3.45 seconds on Andrews' Jim Dipplin' 26. J.C. Bean, 3.37 seconds on Cervi's Table Dancer; 27. Bryan Richardson, 3.31 seconds on Diamond G's Captain Crunch; 28. Cody Hancock, 2.61 seconds on Salt River's Wyche Mountain; 29. Terry Don West, 1.95 seconds on Salt River's T Bird; 30. Colt Munden, 1.94 seconds on Bad Company's Superstitious. Final round: 1. B.J. Schumacher, 95 points on Diamond G's Mr. USA, \$4,700; 2. Dustin Elliott, 90.5 on Andrews' Soap Weed, \$2,820; 3. Russ Sanders, 87.5 points on Cervi's Johnny Walker Red, \$1,880; 4. Casey Balza, 81 on Salt River's Payback, \$1,410; 5. Beau Hill, 7.81 seconds on Salt River's Broken Opportunity; 6. William Farrell, 7.19 seconds on Andrews' Go Dippin'; 7. Howdy Cloud, 7.06 seconds on Salt River's Shimmering Oz; 8. Jerry Shepherd, 6.74 seconds on

Diamond G's Whisky Gig; 9. Justin Andrade, 5.06 seconds on Andrews' Wild Weed; 10. Jesse Ball, 4.84 seconds on Andrews' Slim; 11. Clint Craig, 4.38 seconds on Bad Company's Satan's Own; 12. Dan Wolfe, 3.13 seconds on Andrews' Little Weed; 13. Myron Duarte, 2.6 seconds on Cervi's Indian Blanket; 14. Zack Brown, 2.25 seconds on Salt River's Blood of Eden; 15. Blu Bryant, 2.16 seconds on Bad Company's Smokeless Hammer Time. Aggregate: 1. B.J. Schumacher, 176.5 points on two head, \$23,500; 2. Dustin Elliott, 168.5/2, \$11,250; 3. Russ Sanders, 157.5/2, \$8,610; 4. Casey Balza, 156/2, \$3,760; 5. Howdy Cloud, 99/1, \$1,880; 6. (tie) William Farrell and Dan Wolfe, 88/1; 8. Blu Bryant, 87/1; 9. Justin Andrade, 84.5/1; 10. Clint Craig, 84/1; 11. Zack Brown, 82/1; 12. (tie) Myron Duarte and Beau Hill, 80/1. Top money winners: 1. B.J. Schumacher, \$28,200; 2. Dustin Elliott, \$14,070; 3. Russ Sanders, \$8,490; 4. Howdy Cloud, \$6,580; 5. Casey Balza, \$5,170; 6. (tie) William Farrell, \$2,350; Dan Wolfe, Redmond, Ore., \$2,350; 8. Blu Bryant, Robinson, Texas, \$1,410.