

## **My Rodeo Journey**

By Jeryn Robinson

Let me start by saying to come I might be called a “city slicker” because I live in the town of Martin and never grew up on a ranch. I always had a love for animals and one summer a friend let me borrow her horse to ride. That did it. I knew I wanted to have my own horse. When I was nine years old I told my mom that I wanted to rodeo. How it happened is by the grace of God. My mom found a horse for me with the help of a local rancher. She then bought a little bumper-pull trailer and so it began... My Rodeo Journey.

My first horse “Shadow” was a 13-year AQHA Gelding that came off the McGinnley Ranch in Nebraska. It was love at first site! At nine years old, I knew I was going to succeed with my trusty mount. “Shadow” was very patient with me and it was like he knew I was new to this horse business thing and he always acted like a gentleman.

For the next five years I competed in Barrels, Pole Bending and Goat Tying with “Shadow” and at first my mom had to help me saddle my horse and help me take care of him. As I grew, I was able to take care of my horse by myself. Although I do believe my mom was always watching to make sure I was doing it correctly. And if at any time, I needed advice, my mom was always there to give me advice on how to take care of my horse properly. One of the main objectives my mom taught me was that when we get to a rodeo, make sure your horse is taken care of first. I would ride my horse around in the arena to let him get used to the new sights and sounds; then I was expected to put my horse up with hay and water available. I was not allowed to ride my horse all over the fairgrounds to have fun. My mom said you are here to compete, you need to be ready and so does your horse. But she also said it is important to have quality fellowship with my fellow riders, which we girls always had time to laugh and tell jokes.

Living in South Dakota and with our winters, I gave “Shadow” the winter off, but from March through October I rode every day. I did not practice in the arena every day, just pasture rode and worked on my riding ability.

I competed on “Shadow” for five years and was very successful: won belt buckles, tack, buckets and blankets to name just a few and let’s not forget some money. Unfortunately “Shadow” got Navicular and I was no longer able to compete on him, which led me to my current mount DHR Okie Boy “AKA Roman” as a 4-year old.

I assumed because I was successful with “Shadow” that I would automatically be successful with “Roman.” Let me tell you, that was not the case. I never won, I was frustrated and finally my mom sat me down and said... here is a humble moment for you. You worked hard with “Shadow” and you were successful and won a lot of great prizes; however, this new horse is not “Shadow” and he never will be that horse. She told me that life is not easy, and you have to work hard to continue to be successful, it just does not “happen.”

For the last four years I have been diligently working with “Roman” and my hard work and dedication is paying off as I am having great success with him. I have won money, buckles and blankets to name just a few things.

When we would pull into a rodeo and I would see all the fancy horse trailers, I remember feeling less than other because all we had was a little bumper-pull horse trailer.

I realize now that it does not matter when you pull up in, it is what comes out of the trailer. Having a fancy trailer or a not so fancy trailer has no true meaning. You have to be satisfied with what the Lord has provided. We are here to love one another and not to judge one another. I cheer for everyone competing, and my mom and I say a prayer when we start out traveling asking for all coming to the event to be safe and have great runs. I truly mean that. I get joy watching others also have success.

On My Rodeo Journey, I understand that it takes hard work, dedication, commitment and sacrifice. Rodeo is not for the faint at heart. I am an athlete but so is my horse. I have to make sure that my horse is in top shape. I have learned that by working hard you can be successful. It is not about winning a buckle all the time, but it is about winning in life. Rodeo has allowed me the opportunity to understand and appreciate that with hard work, you can be successful. It is about making lasting friendships, helping out a friend with a sick horse at a rodeo, or just cheering fellow riders on to compete and succeed. I have made many lasting friendships through the years. I consider them my “rodeo family” and I have learned a lot from them on how to be a better person, not only on the outside but more importantly on the inside.

My Rodeo Journey has really shaped my life in that I know whatever I set my mind to do, I can make it happen with hard work, dedication, commitment and sacrifice. I realize that nobody just becomes successful, it takes years of hard work. I like to think that I am a valuable person to whomever I come into contact with, spreading my passion to others of loving one another. I have been able to do this during my 4H rodeo years and in High School Rodeo.

My Rodeo Journey has prepared me to continue my education in the nursing field at Northwestern Oklahoma State University where I also plan to participate in their rodeo program. My passion to help others has led me to the Nursing field of studies. I look forward to making new and lasting friendships to add to my “Rodeo Family.” Through college and afterwards, I will continue to encourage people to succeed in whatever they are doing. Rodeo, along with my mom’s influence, is the background which that has enabled me to have this character trait.