



## Mike Todd



Mike Todd was born in New Jersey circa 1954 to Judy and John Todd. Mike's dad was an FBI agent and was moved to Columbus, Ohio when Mike was about five years old. The family was there for a time and then moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico where Mike spent the rest of his school years . Also, in the Todd family were an older and a younger brother. The older brother John is in Florida and runs a 20,000 head cow operation and his younger brother is in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area working

for an Internet/high tech type company.

Mike was the New Mexico State 90 pound class wrestling champion when he was a freshman in high school and also did some competitive swimming. When Mike was around seventeen he went to the New Mexico State Fair and saw Larry Mahan make a flamboyant ride decked out in a solid white outfit, including white boots— and that's about when Mike decided that he wanted to ride bareback broncs.

Mike's first bronc ride, though, went something like akin to the following: While still in high school Mike's older brother John had gotten a job being horse wrangler at a dude ranch and Mike had also joined him wrangling horses. There were a few bronc riders around and Mike's foreman, an old time type cowboy, figured he and the other boys would take the 'want to' out of Mike and decided to give Mike his wish and put him on an unbroke horse. All



of the boys 'eared' the ole caballo down, put a worn out rigging on his shoulders, put an old strap on for a flank rope, put Mike on top and off they went through the trees and on the rocks (this wasn't an arena at all). The ole boy's trick didn't work and Mike just couldn't wait until he could get on his first real live 'out of the chute' bareback horse at a real rodeo. Mike didn't last too many seconds but in his own words, "I was hooked".

While in high school Mike and his brothers had transferred from the Albuquerque schools to a smaller school called Valley High School because they offered Vo-Ag there and had an active high school rodeo team. He rodeoed in high school and met some other guys who loved the sport and soon they were hitting the high school circuit pretty hard. At either the second or third high school rodeo he won the bareback riding championship. "I may have been the only one who qualified but none the less I won the buckle and \$180. Boy, was I really hooked," said Mike.

Mike's brother John was now attending Texas Tech and so Mike went and joined him there and entered Tech. Todd stated, "My grades weren't all that good and so I mostly traveled to the amateur shows and entered the bareback and bullriding events. I wasn't all that good at bullriding but all of my friends rode bulls and I really liked the adrenalin rush so kept it up for a while. Soon he was rodeoing in earnest hitting all of the bigger PRCA rodeos. Now, it should be mentioned somewhere along here (just in case his mother Judy reads these lines) that Mike didn't at all have his parents permission to do this and he kind of did his rodeoing on the sly. His parents had always had a horse around for the boys but they never had any idea Mike would get so serious about such a thing as riding those ole rank bareback horses. You know Mike never really told me what happened when his parents did finally find out.

I might remind any of you younger ones out there that Mike is not advocating going behind your parents' backs and doing things in secret that you know they would disapprove of. Riding bareback horses is neither illegal nor immoral, it is simply a good, clean and sometimes very dangerous sport. I hear these people all the time say, "Oh, you know all those ole rough stock riders are crazy" little do they know the Scriptures that say the Apostle Paul was a boxer and an Olympic runner!

Todd traveled over the nation rodeoing for several years; Some of his traveling buddies were the Elms brothers along with others. Mike quit the rodeo circuit about 1992 due to several reasons-he

was near 40 years of age, with lots of knee injuries. He figures one of his best achievements was winning the bareback contest at his hometown of Rocksprings, Texas for five consecutive years. That is quite a feat Mike and he is to be congratulated on that. While at Texas Tech Todd met and married Zane Mitchell and they had two daughters, Cassidy and Micah, who along with their mother and dad were outstanding athletes.

Mike judged high school and college rodeos and is now judging on the PRCA circuit and travels many weekends a year to judge. He is now a resident of Austin, Texas.