



Gene Lyda

Bull Rider



Gene Lyda was born in Nixon, Texas on June 20, 1947. As a youth, he competed in bareback riding, calf roping, team roping and bull riding. In 1966, he won the Texas High School Bull Riding Championship, as well as the 1966 National High School Bull Riding title on Jim Shoulders' previously unriden NFR bull, Exterminator. He was also the runner-up 1966 National High School All Around Cowboy. He was a scholarship member of the Southwest Texas Junior College rodeo team in 1968, winning the Regional NIRA

Champion Bull Riding title as well as the Reserve NIRA Bull Riding title.

With the help of Jim Shoulders, whose dress & spurring style he emulated and RCA Gold Card member Jack Long, Lyda joined the Rodeo Cowboys Association in 1967. In 1969, Lyda rode two RCA Bucking Bull of the Year, Christensen Brothers' "Wilfred" at Salt Lake City and Tommy Steiner's "Booger Bear". He qualified for the 1969 National Finals Rodeo in Oklahoma City where he rode Jim Shoulders' then unriden NFR bull, "Batman," and rode eight of his nine bulls. During only 5 years of RCA competition, Lyda's effortless and high-spurring style became his trademark and earned



him a reputation of riding the truly rank bulls.

At the 1971 Jasper Texas rodeo, he suffered severe head injuries & internal bleeding when Tommy Steiner's #0 bull swung his horn back hitting Lyda in the face near his right eye. In 1974, Lyda returned to rodeoing and placed second in bull riding standings in the Texas Rodeo Association. In 1985, Lyda hung-up his rope for good.

He now lives with his wife Shay and daughter Tyler Shay on their ranch near Fort Stockton Texas. While no longer competing in rodeo, Lyda maintains a horseback lifestyle and is known as a hands-on cattle rancher who dresses stylishly and rides good horses.