



# ABBI JR. BREEDERS

Lynn Montgomery

Mikel Moreno of the Flying U Rodeo Co.

Looking at life in a whole new way and "cherishing life now," 17-year-old Mikel Moreno of Marysville, Calif., has not had much on his plate the last few years.

Diagnosed with leukemia in May 2003, the teenager received a bone marrow transplant in June 2004, from which he is still recovering.

"My favorite thing to do was going to the buck-outs on Tuesday and Saturday nights, but now I am sidelined and watch from the truck," Moreno laments. Occasionally he will film the action, but, "I'd rather be flanking."

Born with arena dust in his diapers and a flanking strap in his hand, this young breeder has been around bucking bulls and rodeos all his life. His parents are Julio and Cindy Moreno of Moreno Bucking Bulls, and his granddad is Cotton Rosser of the legendary Flying U Rodeo Company.

"I am going to become a stock contractor and carry on the family business," the young Moreno states.

Like most junior breeders, his parents helped him obtain his first animal. His dad bought him his first heifer in Stephenville in 2000. Since that time, the herd has increased and includes bloodlines from Durango, Classic Rocker, Whitewater, Typhoon, Houdini and Cowboy Cash, just to name a few. Oh, and don't forget Reindeer Dippin'.

"I have two or three heifers and a bull that is Reindeer Dippin'," he says.

But it is a bull out of Border Patrol and a Whitewater cow named Water Patrol that has Moreno talking.

"I've taken him to two Classics and we are right out of the money. He's 3 coming 4 and he's my bull," Moreno exclaims.

Futures are on the horizon for next year when he will haul a bull out of Skat Kat that was obtained from Barney Berehmer.

Currently, he owns "about 20 heifers/cows and about 10 bulls." But leukemia has taken him away from the pasture for a little while.

"Because of my illness, I haven't gotten to work with them as much as I would like," relates Moreno.

Like most teenagers, Moreno is also interested in other sports, including football, basketball and paintball. Paintball factored into the equation when he received a paintball-shopping spree from the Make-A-Wish Foundation. But, that wasn't his first choice.

"I wanted to meet Jennie Finch (the pitcher for the U.S. Olympic softball team) but that was during the Olympics and couldn't been done so I had to go with my second choice."

Life is going well for Moreno who is looking forward to the PBR Finals— but not for the reason most breeders are.

"I will get to meet my donor for the first time at the PBR Finals. It just so happened her husband is a psychiatrist and they are having a convention in Las Vegas the last weekend of the Finals, and they will be there," he shares enthusiastically.

Exchanging e-mails since he found out who his donor—a teacher from Michigan—was, he states, "We have become good buddies and she basically saved my life."

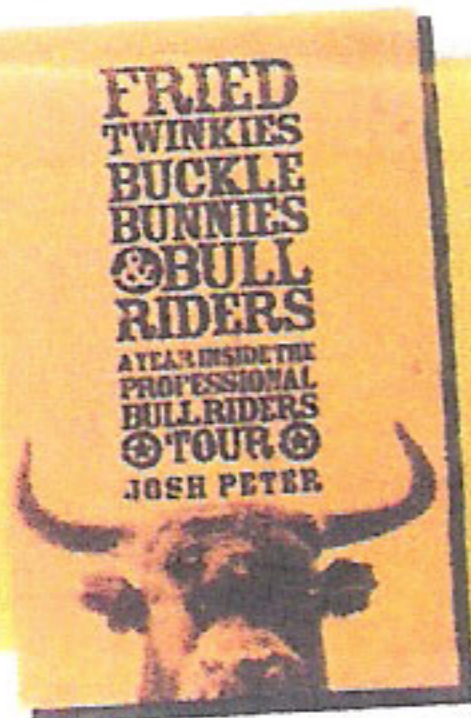
While many kids today don't know how to say

thanks, this young man speaks from the heart when he expresses those words. "I would like to thank Monty Semford, David Fournier and Bob Tallman for helping me with my herd. I also would like to thank ABBI, PBR, and Joe Merrick for the May 2004 benefit in Oklahoma," he concludes.

Mikel Moreno still has an uphill road before him. But for now, his life seems to be on an even playing field—one that will inevitably led him to the paydirt of a rodeo arena.



Mikel Moreno with Water Patrol.  
moreno family photo



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