

THE CATTLE CALL

Newsletter for Alumni of the TCU Ranch Management Program

Vol. 34 Number 2

Summer 2007

From the President *Gilly Riojas 2002*

First of all, I would like to welcome the recent graduates of the program into our alumni association. I had the privilege of attending their graduation ceremony and seeing what a fine group of students they were. I am sure that they are extremely glad to be finished with the academic aspect of the program and moving into the next phase of their lives.

This past weekend the annual alumni roping was held in San Angelo. I would like to thank everyone that was involved in the organization of this event. I know that a great deal of time and effort was put forth not only to plan this event but to host it as well. It was a great time and always wonderful to not only see your former classmates but to meet and visit with other alumni.

This year we have been very fortunate throughout the state of Texas to have had such abundant moisture not only to fill our water resources, replenish our grasses but to also boost our hopes of what the future holds. I know that the last two years have been very hard due to the extreme drought that we have been through and it is amazing what a few inches (feet) of rain can do to improve everyone's spirits.

Even with the much needed moisture we are still battling high prices in fuel, fertilizer, feed commodities, and labor questions. All of these scenarios make it very interesting for the production agricultural managers of today. I feel that today's agricultural leaders can not only be focused on issues that deal with their operation but with issues that affect this country and the world.

We need to continue to strive to stay "ahead of the curve" because no matter what technology arises, information will always be the most important commodity.

I bring this point up because over the past few months we have been meeting to try and figure out how we can best use the Institute of Ranch Management to serve our alumni. I feel that the Institute does not need to be another "extension" arm but a way to provide our alumni with information and trends that are not only relevant but current to what is happening in the beef industry at this time. We shall see what happens over the next several months as we try and decide what is best for the Institute, but no matter what happens, the Institute will always be geared to providing the best for our alumni.

In closing I wish all of you the best in the coming months and again sincere congratulations to the recent graduates. Good luck and welcome to the alumni association.

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Results from the
2007 Summer Roping
in San Angelo
are on page 6



Job Announcement Process

The Ranch Management office has had several job announcements come in recently. I would like to take this opportunity to explain the process that our office goes through when we receive the employment opportunities and what you can hope to glean from reading this article. We basically have two types of employment opportunities that come in. The first type is one in which the employer would like the job to be posted and sent to any and all alumni who are currently on our job seekers list. The second type is one that the employer would like to keep confidential or would like one of the Ranch Management staff to make a recommendation rather than solicit resumes. In that case, the staff would have to think of an individual who they think may be qualified for the job and then contact that individual to see if there is any interest on their part in pursuing the employment opportunity.

If you are currently working for someone other than yourself or your family, it would be to your advantage to visit with, and get to know the Ranch Management Program staff. Several of our staff members are relatively new and more than likely do not know many of the alumni. I have been at the Program for thirteen years and there are still many alumni that I don't know.

The staff is available to visit with you over the phone or in person any time you are in Fort Worth. We regularly

attend TSCRA meetings and alumni functions in an effort to meet and greet as many people as we can. If you are at one of the meetings or events, please take the opportunity to introduce yourself to us. We would greatly appreciate it.

We feel that the better we know you, the better we can help you when job announcements come into our office that you might be suitable for. By the way, I always mention when visiting with prospective employers that to find and hire someone first-rate, you will most likely find someone happy with their present job. So, it follows that it will probably take more money to attract that type of person away from their current job.

We have seen a definite increase in salaries being offered to alumni who have experience and are able to go out and make management decisions. We may not have the perfect job for you but we do have several good opportunities to choose from right now. It can be both a good and bad problem, not having enough qualified candidates to fill the current job market opportunities. We are asking you to get to know us better so we can better serve you and the industry. Don't be bashful, please make an effort to get to know the staff. We look forward to meeting you and your families. If you already know any of the current staff members, please visit with them and let them know what you have been up to lately and where you are.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Roundup: January 26, 2008

Watch for information in the fall issue of *Cattle Call*!



“Ranch Manager”?

Have you ever considered how freely the word “ranching” is tossed around? Today, it is used to describe business enterprises ranging from subdivisions and resorts to animal enterprises, with animals ranging from those of cattle and horses, to dove and quail, to rattlesnakes and mink. Further, many people simply refer to a piece of property as a “ranch”, simply because it was a ranch at one time. Perhaps I am a bit too cynical or just believe strongly in calling things what they are, but when I hear the word “ranch”, I always ask, “What exactly are they ‘ranching’?”

The widespread use of the word is really a misnomer, but I think it goes with the changing face of “ranching”. It is my humble opinion that the majority of rangeland and a good majority of tilled land that may now be in introduced grasses is owned by individuals and companies that have an ever-declining interest in or affinity toward the business many of us would consider ranching.

As we have all witnessed, many individuals and companies, through wealth acquired in other businesses, are able to purchase a tract of land or even huge tracts and attach the name “ranch” to it. In reality, the land may be a place to hunt native or exotic species, a place to relax on the weekend away from the owner’s job, or a place to ride horses with friends on the weekend and become that mystical “cowboy”, if only for a little while. If we were really going to refer to these locations based on their main activity, the last three examples might be more correctly referred to as, hunting preserve, weekend retreat and personal resort. However, I don’t think they are ranches; are they?

If we agree for a minute that the above-referenced assets are outside of the long-standing connotation of a “ranch”, then we might further agree that graduates of the ranch management program, if they were hired to manage the above-mentioned places, would need to be deliberate in determining the character of their role in managing the asset. Perhaps the better job description might refer to

these persons as “caretakers” or “property caretakers”. Now, I do not mean for any of these terms to be derogatory in any way. As Ross Angell always notes, “admire excellence wherever you find it”. To me, that means being the best “caretaker” you can be, if that is your role.

For sure, traditional ranchers and ranch managers have always been caretakers of cattle and land. However, it just so happens that in many of today’s “ranches”, the caretaking might have more to do with houses, lawns, wildlife feeders and maintenance, than it does with conversions, cost of gain, animal health and grass management. Again, this is not necessarily a negative situation. I would venture to say that these types of jobs pay far better than many other “ranch” jobs and the benefits are usually outstanding. However, **and this is especially pertinent to recent graduates**, be certain and careful that you and your new employer mean the same thing, when you both say “ranch manager”. I would guess, that in the majority of today’s jobs, other than those on the relatively few, very large, working ranches that remain, there is more “caretaking” to be done than “ranch management”, especially if the latter term means making management-level decisions for a non-family owner on such things as whether or not to use a crop protection aid to sculpt brush and forage, AND, being able to make that decision without crippling deference to such things as wildlife, wildflowers, land values (i.e. trees) and aesthetics.

This oscillation to increased “caretaking” is a natural progression for a change in job duties, as the ownership of ranches is more and more in the hands of absentee, wealthy, metropolitan-based owners and directors, who were not ranch-raised. Why? Well, the goals of these owners include relaxation, rest, good-times, pursuit of hobbies, real estate investment gains from the asset and being known for owning a “ranch”.

So, what does this have to do with TCU Ranch Management? What

these changes mean for new graduates is that the individual should insure that their meaning of “ranch manager” and that of their new employer are in line. For sure, we can call ourselves whatever we think is appropriate, but if you really want to recognize the changing face of ranching, it might be more correct to title the job according to the character of the majority of its’ duties. Again, with reference to new graduates and recent graduates, I think this distinction is critically important to your longevity in the job of “ranch manager”. When interviewing, attempt to tactfully determine if there is a disconnect between the title for the job and the job duties that will be expected of you. Agriculture, like many other industries, sometimes fails to expound upon a term, thinking that the other person knows what it means. If you are precise in your questions, you can usually determine what the term “ranch manager” means to the interviewer, **and more importantly, the owner.** If you determine this initially, you will have a much higher chance of determining the “fit” between your desires for the job and the owner’s needs. This should go a long way toward allowing you longevity in the job, if you take it. In addition, it will keep your wife and family from suffering hardship because of mismatched terms and expectations. My unsolicited advice to the job-seeker is really simple; ask up-front what the owner (not the person doing the hiring, unless they are the owner), considers the job to entail and what term the owner would use to describe the job for which you are interviewing. In that way, you will have a much better idea about where the majority of your time will be spent.

In closing, we should all be very careful in our choice of words and the terms we use to describe things, whether the object of that description be a job, a business, a family member or our view of other people. Our words are reflections of our own individualism; choose them carefully.



Learning

Well it has been a super sonic and fairly painless but rewarding first year. As I reflect over this past year, it is truly humbling to realize how many outstanding Alumni contribute to each and every graduating class’s success. From opening their ranches, to opening their hearts and minds from years of experiences, to opening their wallets, the alumni of this program facilitate the training of the finest group of Ranch Managers in the World. To all of the alumni that are seen or unseen through this process; **My hat is off to you.**

As a former Alumnus from the outside looking in, I was contemplating what some of the common themes were that the current class picked up from other Alumni and industry leaders during the school year? I would like to review some of the highlights that were discussed. These topics are not for every operation but they are currently utilized by Alumni and may need economical consideration for your operation. The economical evaluation of each enterprise within your operation needs current budgets made on them each year. Corn, fuel, fertilizer and many other inputs contribute to your cost of gain and need to be evaluated yearly. During the current economic times, there is increasing need for a written plan for reducing and expanding stocking rates. Based on your forage curve and actual rainfall data, you can have a planned culling system. This plan includes rotations based on forage and marketing of the animals that have the highest return on equity. If you grow 70% of your grass in April, May and June but only receive 25% of normal rainfall, July 1st you will not make up this forage. Additional rainfall during this period may have you planning preconditioning before marketing or even planning to defer a pasture for a summer or winter burn. My suggestion is to keep this a written

plan and “adjust as necessary.” Make your decision based on the information at that time and do not look back. As the cattle industry continues to change, and with the cattle cycle stretching and weather patterns becoming more extreme, the economical cattle operation of the future will be diversified with cows and stockers. The mindset that producers cannot economically run both in their area needs careful consideration.

The class heard a great presentation on ultra sounding the ribeye area in replacements heifers. With the heritability of ribeye being high and her contribution to each calf being 50%, the selection process in replacement heifers seems to be a no brainier. Whether you retain ownership or not, the marketing tool this provides is an economic return. An Alumnus is breeding his heifers to calve at 20 months. With an 87% breed up in first calve heifers at 20 months and additional percentage being breed to calve at 24 months, he is selecting for the earlier maturing cattle. Having no additional calving difficulties and the option of early weaning, he has the highest breed back for second calf heifers.

The most common overall economic concern in the country was the threat of Bovine Trichomoniasis. Trich is becoming a bigger problem, in a wider area, all the time. A rough estimate shows it is affecting 70% of all cow herds’ state wide. Depending on whether you are dealing with a single bull or multi-bull pasture and how many bulls are in the pasture, it may decrease pregnancies by 50-60%. Bulls are the primary carrier, but cows can also carry the infection as a

pyometra in the uterus. The vaccines help keep some cows from getting the infection, but do not do much for the bulls. Prevention of infected bulls is the key to management. Open cows need to be managed properly; culled or used with vaccines and bulls that will need to be retested properly. To be a guaranteed trich free bull, they

must have 3 negative tests at least a week apart.

This information is great for every Alumnus and should be shared during our alumni gatherings. The greatest tool to learning is listening.



Planning for the 2007 “Need for Feed”

The year 2007 is looking pretty good thus far. Although it has given us a bump or two along the way, with a bit of a dry start and a late snow at Easter, the year thus far has been blessed with an abundance of moisture. I never complain about the rain, or an excess thereof, because, by the time this newsletter reaches you, we might all be looking for another shower. But for now, most of us in Texas are enjoying the scenic view of green grass, some for the first time in much too long.

While this might not seem like the time to look for your feed supply for the year, it may be a time to spend researching what products to use and study the market for each. If only we all had a “crystal ball” to find out how the corn will do, what ethanol production will do, how much rain we will get, and list goes on. Corn acres planted are up about 12 million acres and the crop is in fair to excellent condition, mostly good. Cotton acres are down between 13-20%, though progressing nicely in most areas. Soybean acres are down as well. New ethanol plants are being constructed in many areas. Ethanol breakeven price for corn has been reported, or rumored, to range from near \$4.00 to over \$7.00 per bushel, depending upon the price of crude oil as well as tariffs, tax credits, and other variables. So, what conclusions can we draw from all of this?

Well, obviously this will be a unique year in the feed market. With all of

these new variables and occurrences in the market, as well as the resulting influx of byproduct feedstuffs, we will be forced to adapt to the changes in order to survive. With both cotton and soybean acres down, one might worry of higher prices for protein. Corn and sorghum acres are up, but so is the demand for grain to manufacture ethanol. This puts us in a crunch with both high priced grains and proteins. What can we do? We may not be able to answer all the questions that we have just asked, but hopefully, we will be able to arm ourselves with useful information to assist in the finding answers.

First, we should take a brief look at the term byproduct. I have an [Agriscience Dictionary](#) that defines a byproduct as a product of significantly less value than the major product. It goes on to give an excellent example for us in the beef cattle industry, our major product is meat, or beef; one of our byproducts is the hide. Those in grain milling have realized the value of their byproduct. This is where the term co-product has come out recently. I always try to impress that a byproduct has had something desirable removed from the whole, something that someone else wanted, leaving only leftovers. These leftovers should obviously be worth less than the whole, but the thing to remember is that there is a reason that they are worth less. Here is where the old saying about getting what you pay for comes into good use. I should note that many of our feedstuffs are actually a byproduct of human food processing and remain great nutrient sources, such as cottonseed meal and soybean meal.

We must be informed on what we are getting before making the determination of whether it is a good buy or not. These byproducts are not new, but are certainly available in larger volume than ever before. For those who have not used them in the past, they are brand new and unfamiliar. I will try to list and briefly explain a few of these byproducts later in this article, but for now, we should lay out some checkpoints for use in selecting the best buy. First and

foremost, one should compare the byproduct feedstuffs on a dry matter basis. For example, if you are quoted some wet brewer’s grains (which contain 7% crude protein) at \$45.00 per ton, that would sound like a pretty good deal until you find that it contains 75% moisture, or water. We know that we have 25% dry matter (DM) and then we can establish that we have 28% crude protein (CP) on a dry matter basis ($7\% \text{ CP} \div 25\% \text{ DM} = \mathbf{28\% \text{ CP, DM.}}$) Now we work through the example by breaking down one ton. $2000 \text{ lbs} \times 25\% \text{ Dry Matter (DM)} = 500 \text{ lbs DM} \times 28\% \text{ CP, DM} = \mathbf{140 \text{ lbs. of CP, DM.}}$ You will pay \$45 for 140 lbs. of dry matter crude protein or $\$45 \div 140 \text{ lbs.} = \mathbf{\$0.32 \text{ per lb of CP, DM} (\$642.86/\text{ton})}$. This is the amount that you will pay for a pound (ton) of dry matter crude protein. Now we can compare feedstuffs more effectively. To compare according to percentages of dry matter, crude protein, TDN, and other nutrients is essential because of the immense variation in the nutrient levels from one load to another. Unfortunately, this variation may show up from one batch to the next from the same mill.

As we look back at the term byproduct and relate it to the lower quality leftovers, we need to note some of the possible problems from both a ration balancing and a handling standpoint. Some of the byproduct feedstuffs have a high level of sulfur content ranging from 0.46% up to 0.9% on a dry matter basis. Some of the liquid byproduct feedstuffs, such the corn steep liquor type products may carry 1.5% - 2.0% sulfur. The latest National Research Council for Beef Cattle says the maximum concentration of sulfur in the diet should be 0.40%. One needs to be careful to consider the amount of sulfur in the diet, not only from the byproduct feedstuffs, but also from sulfur found in the forages and water. Many types of forage may carry as much 0.12 – 0.25% sulfur. This could definitely put a ceiling upon the amount of byproduct that we feed per head per day. Handling and storage may be an issue for some operations as well. The dry forms can be pelleted

or handled in meal form with little problem. Some of the products have been known to bridge in storage bins. The high moisture forms require much different storage and handling. These are usually stored in an open faced pit and loaded manually with a front end loader. These have a much shorter shelf life and, in hot summer temperatures, will spoil rapidly if not fed in 2-4 days. This requires careful planning to ensure that supply and usage will match up closely to prevent shortage or spoilage. The high moisture forms usually work best in a total mixed ration (TMR), such as that mixed for a feedyard ration. Otherwise, handling and feeding are too difficult and spoilage becomes a problem if the proper equipment is not available. An additional caution on the higher moisture forms is the high cost of freight today. Hauling water is usually not profitable.

My goal in this article is not to discount the value of these byproduct feedstuffs, but to discuss a few of the considerations to be made in choosing which one to use. Most of these byproducts have a great place in their respective parts of a ration; we just have to find out where that part is and use it properly. I would like to list a few of the common byproducts in the feed supply today and give the “book” value of some of the nutrients, along with a note about the form and use of each.

Corn Gluten Feed (Wet or Dry) – Byproduct of the “Wet Milling” process that is used to produce human food sweeteners and corn syrup, thus is one of the more consistent byproducts. The dry form will have crude protein levels from 20-25%. It is relatively high in fiber (8%), low in starch, and low in fat (2.5%). Therefore it is fairly low in energy. A caution to this one is that it will bridge in a storage bin. The wet form will usually contain 40-45% dry matter; therefore the shelf life is greatly reduced.

Corn Gluten Meal – Not to be confused with the above. It is much higher in crude protein (60-65%) and is higher in energy. Much lower in

fiber (1%). Very good source of high quality protein.

Distillers Grains (Wet or Dry) – byproduct of the dry milling process of ethanol production. The starch in the grain is converted to ethanol during fermentation. Usually contains 23-28% crude protein and high fat (9-15%), making it a good source of energy and a protein. Because it is not a byproduct of human foods, it is much more variable from load to load. Wet forms usually run approximately 35-40% dry matter. A few cautions are the fact that it can be higher in sulfur and phosphorus and the dry form can bridge in the bins.

Solubles – Many times we see Distillers Grains with solubles. Solubles are either the liquid fermentation product from dry milling or the steep liquid from the wet milling process. Because of the high moisture content, these can be used in liquid feeds, and therefore, can sometimes be confused with molasses. They are high in protein (25-35%). The solubles that we see in conjunction with dry milling are very high in sulfur. Because this liquid “waste” product is a problem for ethanol milling plants to deal with, the liquid is added back to the distiller’s grains and then dried by evaporation. The resulting product is called dried distillers grains with solubles. It is usually much higher in most nutrients, but many times this process of saturating the grains, then drying, and then repeating will be cause for much variability in nutrient content. There has been some research involving mixing this liquid with ground hay or even free choice liquid feeding the solubles. I would recommend using extreme caution in trying these, due to the variation in product and high levels of nutrient and mineral.

Class Agents

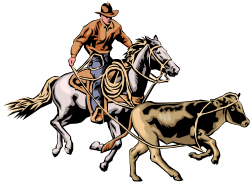
Communication is the key to success in all aspects of life. The class agents of each year’s class are the foundation of our great Alumni. Personally, I feel as a class agent and as a staff member that we need to shore up our class agent structure. I will be the first to admit that I have not kept my

classmates as informed and more importantly as involved as I should have. I would like to work to change that and help any other Alumni that need help to strengthen their classes. If you are currently a class agent and for whatever reason would prefer not to continue that role or if you have a class agent who has not been active and you would like to volunteer, please call or email us so that we can help each class strengthen their class participation. It may be necessary to appoint new class agents for those who have not been participating.

There is an increasing need from the Ranch Management staff to communicate more information to the Alumni. Some of this information is time sensitive or confidential. Examples of this would be recruiting information, illness of a classmate, unpublished job opportunities as well as just sharing ideas. If this information could be shared via email, it could be a great cost saving alternative for the program. Alumni that prefer hard copy mail would not be excluded.

The bottom line is, the better the TCU Ranch Management Program can communicate with each class agent and in turn have the agents communicate with their classmates the stronger the alumni association will be. I welcome any comments or suggestions you may have on this issue.

Chris Farley



**Summer Roping '07
San Angelo, Texas**

A special thanks and recognition to Larry and Linda Horwood, Bob and Mary Bucholz, Paul and Stacy Turner, Bud and Harriet Lupton along with the rest of the San Angelo area alumni, too numerous to mention – for planning, hosting, and sponsoring an outstanding weekend. We would also like to thank Danny and Shanna Mitchell for bringing the cattle and for Shanna running the office. Last but not least, Dick Winters for another great job of announcing the event. Thank you again one and all for your efforts.

Summer Roping Results

Shotgun Clay Shoot
High Shooting Alumni-
T.E. Warren '84

Buckle Donated by Paul '81 and Stacey Turney

Buckle Calf
1st Jim Parker '81

Ribbon Roping
1st Matt Snelus '04
2nd Craig Buford '78

Goat Roping
1st Matt Snelus '04
2nd Danny Mitchell '96

Buckle Donated by Clint '93 and Sammy Jackson

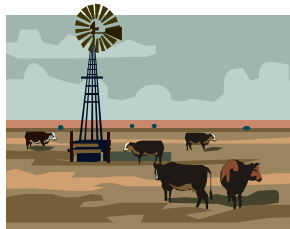
Graduating Class
1st Matt Snelus '04/ Zeb York '04
2nd Chase Seaney '03/ Bill Angell '03

Buckles bought by last year's winners Chase Seaney '03 and Bill Angel '03

Buckle Draw
1st Skyler Flake '06/ Bill Angell '03
2nd Bob Buchholz '75/ Matt Snelus '04
3rd David Mayfield '99/T.E. Warren '84

Alumni Open
1st Jeff Mitchell '02/ Bobby Harter '05
2nd Bill Angell '03/ Clint Jackson '93

Mix
Clint Jackson '93/ Wesley Jackson TBA



Alumni Survey

On behalf of the TCU Ranch Management & Institute of Ranch Management, we would like to thank each and everyone who has completed and returned their Alumni Survey. For those of you who have not yet completed your survey, please take a few minutes to do so; your participation is vital in allowing us to gain a better knowledge of the effects our graduates are having on the ranching business. This knowledge will allow us a broad base of information to share with prospective students, program supporters and university administration.



**2006-2007
Evening Program Graduates**

The Evening Division Graduation and Field Day was held at Marti Charolais in Cleburne, Texas on May 19, 2007. Marti Charolais is a registered Charolais operation. Wes Marti, a 1973 graduate of the Ranch Management Program, is the owner. He discussed how he is using artificial insemination to increase the genetic merit of his herd. Both tame and native pastures are utilized. Mr. Marti sells his bulls both in the domestic market and to Mexico, and he has been very successful at promoting his cattle through the show ring. After a barbecue lunch the new graduates were presented with their Evening Division certificates. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them on their accomplishments and welcome them into the Alumni.

Fall of 2006

*Virginia "Bitsy" Dotin
Detroit, Texas

Spring of 2007

Karen A. Burdack
Azle, Texas

***Tony Bradley**
Arlington, Texas

***Herbert Hunt Allred**
Dallas, Texas

Susan Pare
Bryan, Texas

William Cole Sager
Dallas, Texas

* Graduation attendees

2007 Ranch Management Graduates



On Thursday, the 10th of May, 2 women and 26 men graduated from the Ranch Management Program to Alumni. Family and friends of the graduates came from as far away as Venezuela and California and as close as Fort Worth to join in the celebration. It was our pleasure and honor to work with this group of young people for the past nine months and we want to congratulate them on their accomplishments thus far. The class members are:

First Row: **Kipp Layton**, Corpus Christi, Texas; **James Gripp**, Midland, Texas; **Andres' Saponaro**, Maracaibo, Venezuela; **Collin Bowers**, Pampa, Texas; **Chance Bowers**, Pampa, Texas; **Mason Becker**, Brownfield, Texas; **Jack Pardue**, Arlington, Texas; **Clint Counts**, Azle, Texas.

Second Row: **Tim Hayter**, Fort Stockton, Texas; *Eric Brast, Kerry Cornelius, Chancellor Boschini, Dr. Bonnie Melhart, Luther King, Jeff Geider, Chris Farley, Jason Faubion.*

Third Row: **Russell Dorward, Jr.**, Clifton, Texas; **James Millett**, Fort Worth, Texas; **James McGilvray**, Paradise, Texas; **Zack Austin**, Bellevue, Texas; **Clayton, McMahan**, Hope, Arkansas; **Tylor Braden**, Stamford, Texas; **Bronson Corn**, Roswell, New Mexico; **Caitlin Holmes**, Mosquero, New Mexico; **Casey Hoffman**, Paint Rock, Texas.

Fourth Row: **Ryan Weatherston**, Charlotte, Texas; **Jess Kane**, Bartlesville, Oklahoma; **Kimberly Ratcliff**, Oakwood, Texas; **Cree Wells**, Alpine, Texas; **Luke Scott**, Shingletown, California; **Frank Heeren**, Leander, Texas; **Robbie Barnard**, Celeste, Texas; **Wade Perks**, Rockford, Illinois; **Brooks Hodges**, Masterson, Texas; **Zac Pogue**, Velma, Oklahoma.