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75-140

This Bronco-Buster Lives
In OBU President's Home

By David Wilkinson

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--The person who described life as "the school of hard knocks" must have been a rodeo cowboy.

Keith Tanner, son of Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) President and Mrs. William G. Tanner, has been competing in bareback bronco and bull riding events for more than five years. Life's "hard knocks" have included an assortment of cuts, bruises, scrapes and broken bones.

Tanner remains undaunted by the hazards of rodeo competition, however, and the 20-year-old plans to ride in more than 100 rodeos before the year is over. He has the support of both of his parents, although neither of them are avid rodeo fans.

"They were a little hesitant about the whole thing at first because they were afraid I might get hurt," Tanner explains, "especially Mom."

Those parental fears were certainly not unfounded, however. Tanner, a 1973 graduate of Shawnee High School lettered two years in football without an injury, but his career as a rodeo rider has proved to be painful at times. In addition to numerous cuts and bruises, he has broken a total of four ribs and a collar bone from falls.

In fact, at a recent rodeo that Mrs. Tanner was able to attend, Tanner was thrown against a fence and had to have eight stitches to close a cut.

"She hasn't come much since then," he says.

Tanner attended one year at Eastern New Mexico College but he elected to quit school for at least a year in order to work and devote more time to his rodeo pursuits.

He plans to re-enter college as a sophomore and major in either agricultural business or veterinary medicine.

He works for OBU's repair and maintenance and tries to enter at least a rodeo a week. If the event is not nearby, Tanner usually travels with several of his friends in order to cut expenses.

A permit-holding member of the Rodeo Cowboys Association which entitles him to compete in most of the RCA rodeos, he has ridden in rodeos from Florida to Arizona to California.

During the summer, 1975, he rode in competition on the rodeo circuit and worked with a rodeo stock exhibitor. He rides exhibition stock when not in competition.

"I plan to stay on the road until I begin to starve and have to come home," he explains.

Although he usually ends up "a little ahead" financially after paying entry fees and traveling expenses, Tanner says that winning is much harder on the road. Prize money, he says, may vary from \$500 to \$5,000 at some of the top rodeos.

"Of course," he adds, "I went to one that paid only \$67 to the top rider."

Tanner began riding competitively as a member of Shawnee High School's rodeo team. He was among the top four riders in the state in the bareback division his senior year and participated in the national high school finals held in Ogden, Utah.

Although he was offered football scholarships from Mississippi State and several other schools, Tanner elected to accept a rodeo scholarship to Eastern New Mexico.

He was a member of the ENMC team which won the Southwest regional championship, although he was not among the six squad members who defeated Colorado State for the national title in 1974.

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Tanner decided, however, that he was not giving enough time to his studies because of his interest in riding so chose to delay his academic career for a while.

Since coming home, he has found time to ride almost every weekend since January, including a number of indoor rodeos during the winter months. He has also worked an evening Kung Fu class into his busy schedule which has helped him with his balance and coordination in rodeo riding.

As in every sport, practice is essential, so when Tanner is not fighting to stay atop a live bull or bronc, he is practicing in his back yard on a "bucking barrel"--a type of mechanical bull.

The expensive machine (he sold his car to buy it) simulates the actions of a real bull, and Tanner tries to work in some riding time every day.

"It really helps a lot," he claims, "Since I bought it I have placed in most of the rodeos. Besides, it's more convenient than a real bull. You don't have to feed it or go round it up."

Although several OBU students, including Keith's brother, Bill, have given the bucking barrel a try, no other member of the family has shown much interest in riding it.

OBU President Tanner, says Keith, has never ventured aboard the bucking barrel--nor does he plan to.

"He usually runs it for me, and that's about as close as he gets to it," he explains.

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state paper editors

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David Wilkinson is associate editor of The OBU Bison, student newspaper of Oklahoma Baptist University.

CORRECTION

In the BP mailing of 9/5/75, story headlined, "Brotherhood Leader Claims Scouts Misrepresent RAs", 4th graf, 3rd line, should read--11,000 Southern Baptist Churches.-- (instead of 7,000). Thanks--Baptist Press



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75-140

Seminary Extension Achieves Records During 25th Year

NASHVILLE (BP)--During its 25th anniversary year, the Southern Baptist Convention's Seminary Extension Department here has reported establishment of all-time records in student enrollment, course enrollment and establishment of extension centers.

Student enrollments in 1975, says the department's director, Raymond M. Rigdon, has reached 6,702 students taking 8,983 courses. Both figures top the previous record, set last year, of 5,163 students in 7,814 courses.

Rigdon said 230 extension centers are operating in 1975, compared to the previous all-time high of 220 last year. Seminary Extension provides courses through both centers and home study. Most students earn Seminary Extension credit through centers. This year, 5,209 enrolled in centers and 1,495 in home study.

Five year growth percentages for the department of the SBC's six theological seminaries show a 42.4 percent increase in course enrollments between 1970 and 1975 and about a 50 percent increase in students. Establishment of extension centers has shown a 23 percent increase.

Rigdon cited several factors in the Seminary Extension Department's growth--development of its basic curriculum for those with limited formal training, upgrading and expansion of its college-level series, increase in state Baptist conventions assigning staff persons to help promote the program (now 14), the adult education boom in the U.S. and endorsement of the college-level series by both the National Home Study Council and the National University Extension Association (NUEA). The endorsements, he said, have subsequently increased acceptance of Seminary Extension courses as transfer credit on transcripts of accredited colleges and universities across the country.

"An increasing number of seminary-trained pastors are realizing that preparation for ministry cannot be completed during formal schooling alone," noted Rigdon, citing another example which has caused increased interest in another curriculum series--Seminary Extension's personal growth/development series, designed primarily for seminary-trained persons.

Rigdon also cited the "sound foundation laid during the department's earlier years" by Ralph A. Herring, Lee Gallman and other Seminary Extension leaders, who preceded him and his staff in Seminary Extension work. The department was formed in 1950.

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Bicentennial Feature

Officers Interrupt Meeting,
Arrest Baptist Minister

Baptist Press
9/9/75

CARTER'S RUN, Va., November, 1769 (BP)--A Baptist meeting near here was broken up today when sheriff's deputies seized the minister as he was pronouncing the benediction and charged him with conducting unlawful services.

The Baptist preacher, James Ireland, was charged by officers with conducting worship without authority from the state church of Virginia. Ireland was released under bond.

The minister later said he had known before the meeting that officers had threatened to intervene and fine those present. He decided to go ahead with services in spite of opposition.

"I sat down," Ireland said, "and counted the cost of liberty or prison. Having ventured all upon Christ, I determined to suffer all for him."

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Services were held at the home of a Baptist layman, who warned Ireland when he arrived that authorities had told him that if Ireland preached he would be placed under arrest, those present would be fined, and the layman would be fined 20 pounds for allowing the meeting to be held on his property.

"When he told me to go ahead with the service if I felt it my duty," Ireland said, "I asked him to show me his property line. I put a table across the line and preached from the tabletop so I would be no more on his property than on any one else's."

While Ireland was standing on top of the table praying, officers seized him by the collar and demanded by what authority he was conducting services. The Baptist presented his credentials, which officers said they considered worthless because they were not issued by the state church.

Informed that he must give security not to "teach, preach, or exhort" for 12 months and a day or go to jail, Ireland told the deputies he would go to jail first.

Those assembled to hear Ireland's sermon, were told by officers that while they had broken the law, it was obvious they had been deceived by Ireland.

"Leave Ireland's table," the congregation was told by the deputies, "stand with us to show that you are ready to comply with the law, and no charges will be made."

In reply the Baptists told officers that they had heard nothing preached but "the gospel of Christ," and that if they did not have enough money to pay their fines they would go to jail with Ireland.

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Prepared for Baptist Press by the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, Nashville, Tenn.

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Texas Baptists Pick
Assistant To Chief Executive

Baptist Press
9/9/75

DALLAS (BP)--Lloyd Elder, pastor of Gambrell Street Baptist Church, Fort Worth, has been elected assistant to James H. Landes, executive secretary of the two-million-member Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Elder, who is completing his second term as chairman of the Texas Baptist Executive Board, will assist Landes as a resource person and liaison officer.

Pastor of Gambrell Street Church for nearly eight years, Elder is former pastor of three Texas Baptist churches--the First Baptist Churches of College Station, Holland and Princeton.

Elder has served on a number of civic and denominational boards. He is a member of the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board and president of the Texas Alumni Association of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

A native of Dallas, Elder is a graduate of Howard Payne College, Brownwood, Tex., and earned bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southwestern Seminary.

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