

Medicine Hat Stampede Queen becomes Miss Rodeo Canada

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Of The News

The first time I saw Dode Minor, Miss Rodeo Canada, she was watching her sister Cathy compete in the Medicine Hat Stampede Queen competition back in 1983.

Cathy became a princess and I remember Laurie Sharland, contest co-ordinator, predicting that young Dode would be a future competitor.

Dode was just a slip of a thing with a big smile. A puff of wind would have blown her over.

The next time I saw her she wasn't much taller (even though she was mounted on her horse) but she'd gained in confidence.

This time she was the one doing the competing.

It was at the 1987 Table Rock Roping Club's Jenner Rodeo Queen competition. Dode was crowned queen.

She was only 17 but her dream was to enter the Medicine Hat contest.

She fulfilled Sharland's prediction and her dream four years later when she entered and won the contest.

In an interview afterwards she told me that she'd "always wanted to be a queen".

"Since I was 13 I've wanted to run for the Medicine Hat contest."

That determined little girl with the big smile and dream has gone even further than she'd hoped.

On November 13, 1992, the 21-year-old daughter of Tony and Susan Minor of Bindloss, won the coveted Miss Rodeo Canada crown at the Canadian National finals.

"After winning in Medicine Hat it seemed like the next step. Deep down I've always wanted to run. Several friends had run and a couple had won. It made me want to see what it was all about," she says.

"I felt pretty confident going from Medicine Hat to Miss Rodeo Canada because the

competition format is similar — modelling, speeches, horsemanship and exam. I also kinda felt like I had a little advantage because I represented Medicine Hat for a year before I entered Miss Rodeo Canada. Other girls often win in July and go in in November."

Plus she says, the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede board and queen committee and Sharland (who is the co-ordinator of both the Medicine Hat and Miss Rodeo Canada contests) have been very supportive.

"I felt like I had a lot of backing behind me."

During this past winter she

'Calgary's pretty exciting especially with the stakes so high, but I'm looking forward to coming back for the home town rodeo.'

— Minor

says, she had time to relax and get caught up on all her correspondence. But in January things began to heat up.

"I went to Denver for the stock show and rodeo. It's a big western apparel market and a lot of sponsors were there. Most of my duties were to visit though I was introduced two nights at the rodeo. They introduced queens from different states each night.

"They had a Canada Night so it was really a proud moment. I rode in the Grand Entry. It's really, really big — 24 days straight!"

She then travelled British Columbia through April and May attending rodeos at Kamloops, Kelowna and Cloverdale.

She's been in Alberta since. Most people don't realize that when she attends rodeos she usually arrives a few days before to do promotional activities.

Sharland takes care of all her bookings making sure she has a place to stay — not in hotels, but with host families.

"When I was at Ponoka I hit lots of rain. My raincoat and hat cover were my most used prizes. I had a pancake breakfast five days in a row with the Ponoka Stampede Queen and Princess," she recalled with a chuckle.

Ponoka was her 13th rodeo. If she's unable to attend then her princess Tanya Vair takes her place. The pair joined forces for the Calgary Stampede. They were there for 10 days.

"I really look forward to each rodeo because each town is different. Calgary's pretty exciting especially with the stakes so high, but I'm looking forward to coming back to the home town rodeo."

Dode has been helping out this past week at the Stampede Queen contest and she'll be riding in the parade as well as being very visible at the grounds this coming week.

Dode travels from rodeo to rodeo in her Dodge mini-van leaving the fur coat she won at home. That's where her horse is too.

Wherever she goes a horse is provided for her. Both horse and rider have been well outfitted — she with a complete wardrobe from her hats down to her boots, her horse with a saddle, blankets and head stall.

"Once fall arrives the rodeos will slow down. I'll attend the Bud Pro-Tour finals in Saskatoon. With the contest in November and the finals I'll be very busy.

"In December I'm going to the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas. That's my last function," she says a little sadly.

Dode attended the University of Lethbridge majoring in English and only has one semester left to complete her Bachelor of Education degree. She'd like to teach at the elementary level but realizes with the job market the way it is, she may not get a job near home.

So she's prepared to go where the jobs are.

"It's nice to know I've not got much left to do, especially after a year of travelling I can see the end of the tunnel.

"It's been really nice to travel



MISS RODEO CANADA — Dode Minor, the 1992 Miss Rodeo Canada, will be in Medicine Hat to open the Exhibition and Stampede. She'll be riding in the parade and Grand Entry at the rodeo.

around Canada because I hadn't really travelled much before. I wanted to see Canada and I've met some wonderful people.

"It's really taught me lots of independence. When you travel by yourself you stand on your own feet."

With always having people around, at times she's found it refreshing to have a couple of days off.

With a chuckle she says the only problem she's encountered is everytime she goes through airport security she sets off the whistles and bells.

"I travel with my crown on

and my buckle, so the bells go off. It's a challenge going through security checks."

Does she have any advice for those who maybe are unsure whether to run or not?

"It depends on the girl's ability. Set goals you want to achieve and if you accomplish them, then you're a winner. Prepare as much as you can before the contest and when it arrives have fun and be yourself.

"A friend once said, 'I compete not to out-perform the others, but to out-perform myself'.

"I always thought that was such good advice."

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