



Congratulations to
Mike Vanzant
for being Inducted into the
2021 USTPA Hall of Fame!



Hall of Fame

Congratulations to this Year's Inductee!

Mike Vanzant was born in Tulsa Oklahoma in 1943. He was raised on a Cherokee allotment by his grandfather who was a rancher himself, training horses and working cattle. It was here Mike found his love of horses and his skill for reading and working cattle.



When Mike was just 16 years old, with dreams of being cowboys on the open range, he and some of his buddies left Oklahoma, venturing out to travel to Wyoming. Soon running out of money Mike ended up in Logan, Kansas. In Logan Mike found employment at the Logan Republican weekly newspaper setting type

with a line and type machine. As part of his employment, he received room and board and was able to attend and finish High School. With charisma and as a natural



leader, Mike was elected class president of the student body. After graduating high school Mike went back to Oklahoma and began working colts and started a breeding program for horses and cattle.

Mike was instrumental in developing the Oklahoma Association of Limosin Cattle. Limosin cattle are the state's most popular breed,



with the Angus a close second. He served on the board and was president in the 70's.

Mike has six children. One of Mike's children, Michael Shane won the 1988 Des Moines, Iowa Herdsman North America Competition. It was a great celebration and important win.

Mike's last child graduated in 1989 leaving Mike the time and energy for team penning. All of Mike's horses were ranch/working horses. He organized the Oklahoma Team Penning Association and served on the board for 6 years.

In 1989 or 1990 Mike sat down at the Lazy E with Marie Scoval, Don Fullerton, Steve Tellham and Willie Tellham to discuss the future of team penning. It was at this meeting that the USTPA was conceived, and Mike was the ninth member. He kicked in \$1000 along with his ideas and time and energy to help get the United States Team Penning Association started. Mike's first involvement as a USTPA producer was hauling cattle for the shows.

As team penning grew and the USTPA gained momentum, California team penners came up to



Oklahoma for a little competition. Mike's teams got beat and learned quickly that the key to team penning was teamwork. In '91 the Texans were winning all the shows, then Oklahoma became competitive as a group.

All in all, Mike won his share of checks and titles. His winnings include 18 saddles, hundreds of belt buckles, breast collars and various tack, as well as several AQHA world titles. Mike was competitive in team penning until around 2000. He has great memories of this sport and contributes his success to good partners and teamwork.



In 1993 Mike started sorting in the open arena. He enjoyed this sport but saw a need for better horsemanship and cattle savvy. He promoted skill over roughness. The sorting arena eventually shortened to half arena, then a square pen and then round pens to enable speed. Mike participated in the Oklahoma state fair competition for 19 years. Other accomplishments in the sorting arena include Southwest Sorting

promotion and participation, High point horse of the year in AQHA, and reserve on a junior horse. In collaboration with Gary Fletcher, Mike was instrumental in helping get sorting included in the AQHA World Competitions around the year 2000.

Mike retired from the sorting arena in 2010. He adopted another daughter, Izzy in 2011. Mike stays busy with his involvement and work with cattle and horses 2 to 3 days a week, selling stock on Monday, bulls and cows on Tuesday, and goes to Auctions in Oklahoma national stockyards where he takes young horses and runs thousands of cattle through each week.





USTPA Hall of Fame Mission Statement

1. Honor the Heroes of Team Penning and Ranch Sorting. We shall recognize and honor those individuals who have made an impact on our sport and our members.
2. Celebrate Excellence. We shall enshrine those who excelled and made our sport better.
3. Preserve our History. We shall honor those who sacrificed and worked whenever they were asked without personal reward.
4. Promote USTPA Values. Family, teamwork, leadership, excellence, horsemanship, community and sportsmanship.

