



# A lifetime on horseback

By Andrew Johnston

■ **RODEO**

HE'S seen the better part of four generations of rodeo riders come and go from the back of a bucking, 650kg steed.

But even as he approaches his 50th year, Bungendore raised horseman Beau 'Woody' Guy isn't ready to hang up his hat just yet.

Guy, 48, will be one of the leading bareback riding competitors at next month's Queanbeyan Rodeo.

Bareback riding is a rodeo discipline generally regarded as one of the most physically demanding out there - a young man's game.

That hasn't stopped Guy however, who is still ranked among the top five bareback riders in the country on the national circuit by the Australian Bushmen's Campdraft and Rodeo Association.

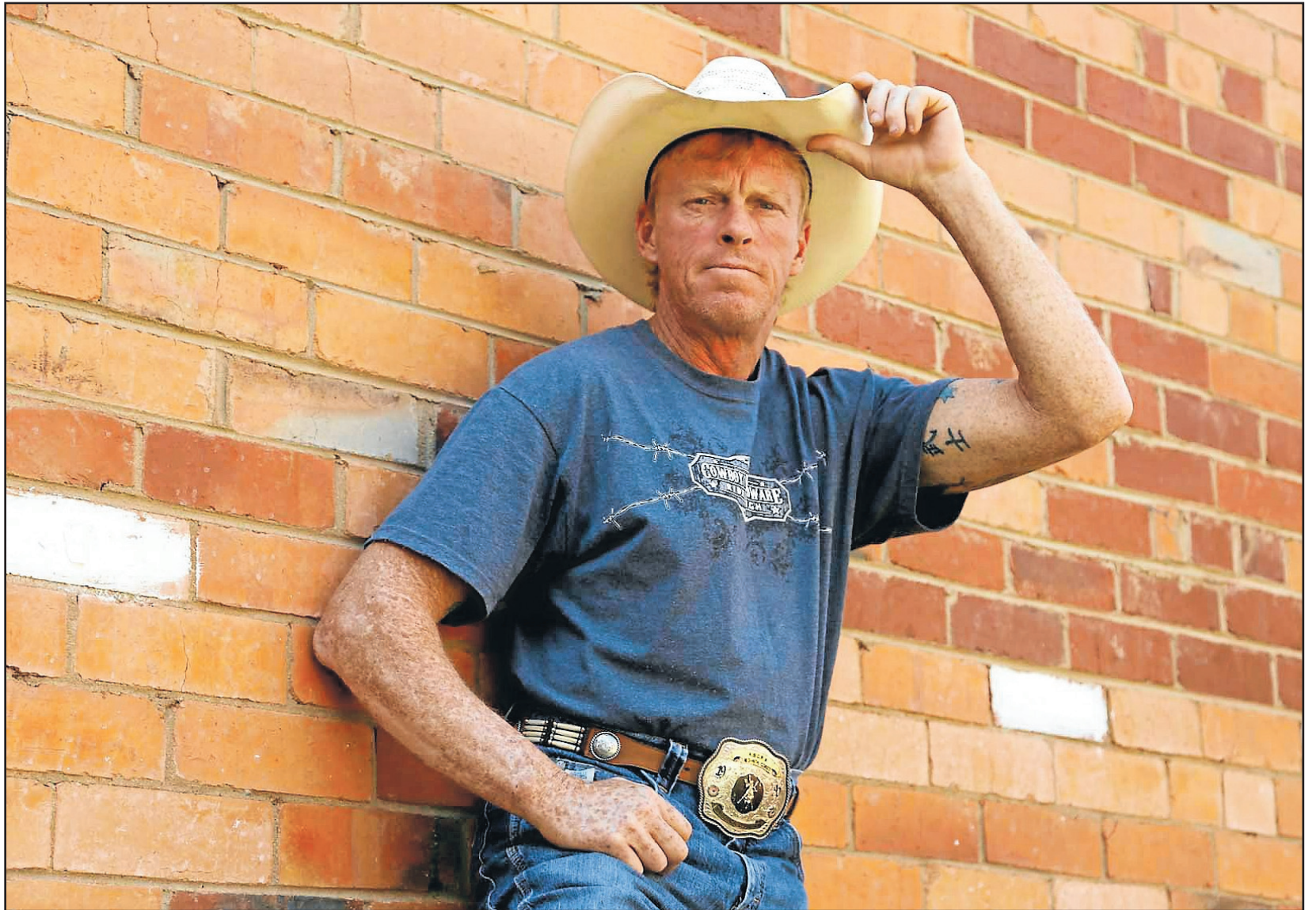
It's a remarkable longevity in a sport marked by hard falls and even harder recoveries, an aspect of rodeo life with which Guy is only too familiar.

But even has he could rattle off an injury list that would rival that of any ER casualty, Guy instead prefers to focus on the many positives of the sport that has seen him travel the world over the past three decades.

"I've had my fair share dished out to me but it's what I've been doing ever since I was 18," Guy says. It's been such a big part of my life.

"A lot of things come and go in life so you do try to hold onto the important things and get as much out of them while you can."

"I love riding bareback horses. I love the lifestyle of it. These days I'm just trying to do as many shows as I



Bungendore raised Cowboy Beau 'Woody' Guy will be competing at next month's Queanbeyan Rodeo at 48 years of age.

can to try to finish on top and go out on a high note."

And Guy hasn't been going around all these years simply to make up the numbers.

A nine-time world finals qualifier, 12-time national finalist and a three-time NSW state champion, Guy has also picked up two Australian Championships

and a Queensland state title over the years.

In 2011 he was ranked as the number two bareback rider on the American senior pro circuit before injury forced him to return to Australia.

But amid the national and international accolades, there remains one prize close to his heart

that remains elusive.

This year's Queanbeyan Rodeo will once again see Guy competing in the Bruce Neal Shoot Out, a contest decided each year among the rodeo's top bareback riders.

The shootout is named in honour of Bruce Neal, a local rodeo rider and close friend of Guy who lost his

fight with cancer at the age of just 29 in 2000.

"When he started off Bruce was one of the guys I had under my wing so that's how far we go back," Guy said. "I carted him all around NSW for a couple of years while we were Cowboys together but unfortunately things didn't pan out for him."

"His shootout isn't something I've ever been able to win though. Everyone's been at me for the past 10 years telling me to get my name on that plaque but that's the way it goes."

"Fingers crossed everything works out and I might be able to scratch it on there this year."

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