

## Scott Grover – Rodeo Announcer

This is Kansas Profile. I'm Ron Wilson, director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University.

It's the Ram National Circuit Finals of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association in Guthrie, Oklahoma. The rodeo announcer is on horseback, in the arena. This nationally-recognized rodeo announcer hails from rural Kansas. It's today's Kansas Profile.

Scott Grover is this nationally-known rodeo announcer who does his announcing while horseback in the arena. Scott grew up in north central Kansas near the Washington County town of Morrowville. "When I was little, my folks took me to a rodeo," Scott said. "I fell in love with the idea of the cowboy."

The pastor of his dad's Methodist church was also interested in rodeo and subscribed to the Pro Rodeo Sports News. When the pastor was done reading each issue, he would pass it along to Scott. Scott was just a kid but he read it with great interest.

"When I was in the third grade, I might not have been able to tell you about the history that we were supposed to be studying, but I could tell you who was in the top 15 standings in pro rodeo," Scott said. In high school, he was active in FFA where he polished his public speaking skills.

Scott modestly downplayed his own abilities as a rodeo competitor, but he knew he wanted to continue to be involved. He attended a Nebraska community college which hosted a collegiate rodeo. He asked the rodeo manager for a job as an announcer. "She told me that they already had an announcer," Scott said. "The next week, that announcer got sick on Saturday night (and I was pressed into service). Sunday morning, I had a job."

This was the break that Scott needed to get a start in the business. He did well and continued to announce rodeos while attending Kansas State where he got a degree in agricultural education. For four years, he taught high school agriculture during the school year and announced rodeos during the summers. Then the time had come to go out on his own to become a full-time rodeo announcer.

Today, Scott and his wife live near Camden Point, Missouri with a three-year old son and a 1 ½ year old daughter. Their home is not far from the Kansas City airport, which is important. Scott travels and announces rodeos from New York to California and from Canada to Texas. He also hosts PBR Live and other rodeo-related media and on-line communications.

Unlike most rodeo announcers who announce the rodeo from a viewing stand up high, Scott chooses to do his announcing on horseback inside the arena, using a wireless microphone. That puts him in a great position to describe the action, but it does require an agile mind and a well-trained horse. "I saw a guy at Abilene announce the rodeo horseback and fell in love with the idea," Scott said. "It gets you close to the crowd," he said. "I'm right in the middle of the action."

Scott's opening announcements also vary from location to location. "I'm not a great memorizer," Scott said. "I find I do better if I can just come out and talk from the heart," he said. This also provides him the flexibility to tailor his comments to the location, the audience, and the events of the day.

His enthusiasm for the sport of rodeo comes naturally. “I’m just a fan of the sport,” Scott said. “I love rodeo and I love talking about it.”

Scott worked his way up through the ranks of announcers. In 2014, he was selected as an announcer for the PRCA Ram National Circuit Finals. That’s quite an accomplishment for a young man from the rural community of Morrowville, population 155 people. Now, that’s rural.

“I’m not curing cancer here,” Scott said with humility. “I just want to make somebody smile and love the sport half as much as I do.”

It’s time to leave the Ram National Circuit Finals where Scott Grover is announcing the rodeo on horseback. We salute Scott Grover for making a difference by advancing his way up through the profession. For Scott, we can literally say: this is not his first rodeo.

For the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development, this is Ron Wilson with Kansas Profile.