

Ronnie Fritzlan has taken that inevitable ride – where the grass grows lush, green, and stirrup high, and he is told, “Your Entry Fees Have Been Paid In Full”.

Colorado’s rodeo family lost one of its best. Ronnie Fritzlan passed away June 3, 2001.

Ron was known by many in the sport of rodeo as the “Big Man” of the big man’s event. Ronnie did not miss many rodeos, you could bet that he and Robin would be there in their blue dodge, with Dick and Buford, their black and white bulldogging team. Ron was a unique person. Someone once said that when they made Ronnie they broke the mold. Once you met Ron, you remembered him. His large stature, long arms and hosted hands twice the size of most men’s his Wrangler jeans, white tennis shoes, and his unforgettable laugh are just a few characteristics that described this big man. He was not a big man that died, but a great man who lived.

Ronnie began his rodeo career as a rough stock rider, but realized that his size didn’t allow him to pursue these events. He turned his attention to the other end of the arena, the Steer Wrestling. Ronnie was always up for a challenge. He helped so many achieve their dreams. Ron recognized talent in individuals and acted upon those beliefs. Ron would lend a hand to anyone in need. He was willing to loan out Dick to any bulldogger who needed a mount. He would even jump over to the hazing side and haze for a few cowboys. But that job and the saddling should be left to the professional (which was Ron’s wife Robin).

You always knew where you stood with Ronnie. He was a man with a distinctive personality. Ron’s heart was the only thing bigger than his-confidence. To some he may have seemed “cocky” but to most he was known, as a man who loved his family, loved rodeoing, loved winning, and loved being with the young cowboys who made Ron “get off his butt and bulldog.” Ronnie thrived on competition but he was always the first one to shake his competition’s hand.

It is hard to believe that the big man will not be over at the chutes checking the barrier, looking at the draw saying “mine looks like a good one”, complaining about them “damn team ropers” or leaving the rodeo looking for the restaurant with the best buffet. Ron has left this earth but if anyone could ever say that they lived their life like there was no tomorrow it was Ron. He gave so much to so many and lived a happy and fulfilled life. He was a husband to his much-adored partner in and out of the arena, Robin, a father, a son, a grandpa, a brother, an uncle, and a father figure to many young cowboys and a friend to anyone who he came in contact with. We are truly blessed to have known such a great man with such a tremendous heart.

Ronnie was a member of the CPRA for over 25 years, he also donated his time as the Steer Wrestling Director, he cared about the people, and then the sport of rodeo.

-Author Unknown

The Colorado Professional Rodeo Association is a custodian for the “Ron Fritzlan Memorial Scholarship Award”. Any donation can be forwarded to the State Office. Applicants for the scholarship may find instructions and applications on our website. Applications are accepted in the fall and they need to be turned into the State Office by December 31st of current year. Winners are announced at the beginning of the next calendar year.