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Eight Seconds Of Grace: The Stories Of John McBeth



Synopsis

Over the course of his rodeo career John McBeth has been a world champion saddle bronc rider, a horseman, a teacher, a mentor, a businessman, a diplomat, a saddle maker, a pilot, a TV commentator, a rodeo judge and administrator. Above all he is a gifted story teller. John entered the sport in the era of the Old-Timers, a hard drinking and harder fighting tight-knit conglomeration of men from rural and ranch backgrounds who rarely thought of themselves as athletes—they were cowboys! It was a time when you had to be accepted by the group—you had to be hooked up—to make a living. In rodeo, then as now, you were only paid what you were good enough to win. No guarantees. There wasn't much money in the sport and competition for those dollars was fierce. It was a fight for survival. Into this environment John entered with the audacious goal of not just surviving, but earning a living for a wife and family and supporting a home all on his rodeo winnings. Success required a special kind of individual, one for whom the word "can't" held no meaning, an iron-willed individualist with supreme self-confidence and not an ounce of quit. Through the effort of will of John McBeth and many more like him the sport of rodeo was altered in a generation. Sponsors arrived bearing contracts. TV took notice. Fans arrived in droves and the money began to flow. The cowboys themselves changed. The urban cowboy became more than a myth. Rodeo became the prime-time sport of today. Though John fit the times and typifies the businessman cowboy—a teetotaler more adept in the boardroom than a barroom—he still retains that old-time cowboy grit in his bones. In *Eight Seconds Of Grace* he recounts his career from its beginning, breaking colts with his father on the home place in Kansas to the saddle bronc world championship and cowboy hall of fame. Through John's own tales the reader is treated to the sights and sounds that held sway in the champion's mind over all the years to be laid down upon these pages: stories of great broncs and great men; stories of strife and character; stories of the road and the humor and camaraderie that sustained them. Through interviews with multiple world champions, hall of fame cowboys, announcers, stock contractors, students and his fellow competitors, a picture is painted of the Kansas cowboy who seemingly could do no wrong. These are stories of John McBeth and about John McBeth. Stories that define not only who he is and was, but through him describe an entire generation of the truly All-American sport—Rodeo.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As my husband and I know both John and Francie McBeth personally, it was very rewarding to read a book written by John. His stories that we have been told prior to the book are near and dear in our hearts, but to read new ones and find out even more about him/them that we didn't know. John is a very humble man and one that both my husband and I have true respect and love for. We would highly recommend this book to everyone who want humor, stories of rodeo, inspiration.....you name it, it's all in there! ENJOY!!!!

Eight Seconds of Grace was an enjoyable experience! I had the opportunity to watch John ride broncs throughout the 70s. He was a master at his craft and inspirational to many up-and-coming cowboys. If you're a rodeo fan, remember John's world championship runs, or appreciate inspiration, hardwork and dedication, I would recommend this book!

Great book full of wonderful rodeo stories! It was like sitting in my living room listening to a good story-teller! LOVED it!

Fascinating insight and behind-the-scene look into rodeo life and, in particular, the life of Champion John McBeth.

John and Francie are great friends and the book was awesome. Brought back a lot of great memories we had together.

One of the best books I have read in a long time.

As a school librarian for many years I was always looking for interesting short stories and Kansas stories about people who lived here. John's book fills both requirements very well. He is a great story-teller and these stories bring to life a part of what has made Kansas great. It's difficult to find rodeo stories and information about that way of life. I would recommend this book for any school and/or public library and would encourage promoting it to younger children -- at least middle school age. It is an easy read and interesting for all ages. I also have known John for many years but this just adds interest to the book. His choice of title also gives insight into the way he has lived his life. A great read!!

Thad Beery tells the story of John McBeth's amazing rodeo career in a style that brings you into the world and mind of a world champion bronc rider! I've known John for almost 50 years, but after reading this book I know him a whole lot better. It's worth reading whether or not you're involved in rodeo to travel and experience the rodeo world of this hall of fame cowboy, John McBeth!

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