



One Horned Hook falls onto Diego Mendes Da Costa during the Professional Bull Riders BlueDEF Tour at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor on Saturday.



Diego Mendes Da Costa hangs on as he comes out of the gate riding One Horned Hook at the BlueDEF Tour event Saturday at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor.

Riding

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Cates said Maine was the only state in the continental United States in which he hadn't competed.

"I didn't expect the people to be so laid back. It's such a unique town with a lot of history. We got to explore it a little today. It was a fun," said Cates, who also experienced lobster.

"I'm spoiled now. When I get home, Red Lobster isn't going to do it for me any more," Cates said, grinning.

Indiana native Keith Miller said riding bulls was something "I always wanted to do since I watched it on TV. It's a lot of fun."

Cates and Miller said they would like to return next year as would Brazilian rider Luis Blanco.

"The people here are really nice and the it's beautiful country," Miller said.

"It was really good," Blanco said.

Many of the bull riders grew up on ranches and farms, riding horses and then progressing to livestock.

Jason Brumley of Davidson, North Carolina, rode bulls for 15 years before becoming the man on the horse with the lasso to help ensure the bull rider is safe after his ride is over.

"As a kid, you see your bud-

dies doing it so you want to try it," Brumley said. "Next thing you know, you don't want to lose. If you get thrown off by a bull, you want to get right back on another one.

"Then when you get to this level, it's about the money, adrenaline rush and satisfaction," Brumley added. "You can make a good living. But it's a tough way to make one. If you get to the next level [Built Ford Tough Tour], that's where the big money is."

The BlueDEF tour is the equivalence of AAA baseball, with the Built Ford Tough Tour being the major leagues.

Dave Cordovano, the chief global events officer, said after a block of five events, the top 10 bull-riders in points in the BlueDEF Tour get promoted to the Built Ford Tough Tour and the bottom 10 in that tour drop down to the BlueDEF Tour.

"We also have tours in Australia, Brazil, Mexico and Canada and their goal is to get to the BlueDEF Tour," Cordovano said, noting that once they get to the BlueDEF Tour, they can set their sights on the Built Ford Tough Series.

He said the top three finishers in the Built Ford Tough Tour earn more than \$1 million a year and the best riders in the BlueDEF Tour earn in excess of \$100,000.

The event is much more than just bull riding.

Funny man Matt Merritt entertains the fans by strutting and dancing to rock clas-

sics on top of the shark tank, which is an enclosed circular mini-stage in the middle of the ring. Groups of fans can sit in the shark tank and watch the action up close and personal.

Merritt unveiled his "How to be a Mainer" kit which was comprised of a flannel shirt, a bag of blueberries, maple syrup, a whoopie pie and a bottle of Moxie, which he chugged.

"I think I gained eight pounds in a day," Merritt said, chuckling.

He also led impressive sing-alongs to songs, such as John Mellencamp's "Jack & Diane" and Journey's "Don't Stop Believin'," as the fans gladly obliged him.

The riders walked through a ring of fire on the dirt in pre-event introductions.

Cordovano called the crowds "incredible" and said they want to make it an annual event. And the fans said they will definitely return if it comes back.

"It was better than I expected. It was something totally different," Jessica Rock of Hermon said.

Bill and Tasha Gardner of Brewer said they had a great time.

"You never know what's going to happen when they jump on the backs of those animals," Bill Gardner said. "The unpredictability is the most exciting part."

"It was tons of fun," Tasha Gardner said. "The riders are very talented."

Carol Jankowski of Bangor called it an "energetic" night of entertainment and that it was "pretty cool" to see it up close after watching it on television.

Lew Ireland brought a bunch of Brewer youth football players to the event to reward them for their fundraising efforts and said he will bring them back again next year "because they loved it."

Kyle Kivler of Hermon enjoyed seeing something "I had never seen before," and Tom Bradley of Easton said he enjoyed the entire show and "seeing the bulls up close."

"I don't know how someone doesn't get killed," Bradley said.

Quirt Hunt of Nebraska is one of the reasons the riders are protected. He is called a bull fighter and it is his job and his partner's to distract the bull when the rider falls.

He said he thrives on the challenge of it.

"You have to be able to read the stock [bull] and anticipate the wreck ... watching how the cowboys are getting thrown off and then watching the bull and which way he's coming around," said Hunt, who has been a bullfighter since 1996. "The basic fundamental is breaking down the circle [of the



Douglas Ferreira is bucked from Jacked Up during the Professional Bull Riders BlueDEF Tour at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor on Saturday.

bull's path] because the bull has four wheels and you've got two. It's like a motorcycle and a car. We can beat

him around. So we just keep it going, keep it tight so he's chasing us [instead of the riders]."

Stars

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Piscataquis Community; Jarrett Olson, Washburn; and Noah Caron, Washburn.

The South squad was coached by Jason Furbush of Madison and Luke Hartwell of Valley. Rounding out the South roster were Abel Bryer, Boothbay Region; Riley Robinson, Dirigo; Gavin Arsenault, Dirigo; Chase Malloy, Madison; Cody Lawyerson, Valley; Luke Malloy, Valley; Milo Belleau, Waynflete School; and Brandon Sprague of Wiscasset.

AA/AB Boys North 97, South 91

Amir Moss of Portland and Hunter Smith of Foxcroft Academy led the North squad with 19 points each, while Andrew Fleming of Oxford Hills and Nicholas DePatsy of Medomak Valley each added 17.

Leading the way for the South team was Shyheim Ulrickson of Mt. Ararat with 20 points, and Sam Kilborn of Gorham with 19 points.

The North team was coached by Mike Adams of Edward Little, Russ Barrett of Hampden Academy and Brian McDormand of Old Town. Other North players included Matt Pushard, Brewer; Donovan Savage, Caribou; Nick Gilpin, Hampden; Brendan McIntyre, Hampden; Andre Miller, Old Town; and Stefan Milivojevic, Washington Academy.

The South squad was coached by Todd Hanson, Brunswick; Rob Schmidt, Maranacook Community; and Bob Davies of Thornton Academy. Other players on the South team were Thomas Hanson, Brunswick; Thomas Coyne, Falmouth; Zach MacKinnon, Kennebunk; Jackson Lesure, Lake Region; Kent Mohlar, Maranacook; Ryan O'Neil, Marshwood; Tyus Sprague Ripley, Massachusetts; and John Fossett, Poland Regional.

Girls AA/A/B South 86, North 69

Shannon Todd of York led the way for the South squad with 18 points, followed by Maddie Hasson of South Portland who had 15 points.

Tianna Sugars was the top scorer for the North team with 16 points, while Emily Jacques of Edward Little scored 15 points.

The North team was coached by Nate Pelletier of Oxford Hills, Keith Derosby of Mesalonskee and Lindsey Welch of Winslow. Other North players included Madison Card, Ellsworth; Katie Condon, Houlton; Natalie Hill, Houlton; Nia Irving, Lawrence; Dominique Lewis, Lawrence; Sierra Tapley, Mount Desert Island; Kelsey Shaw, MDI; Caitlin Kane, Mt. Blue; Taylor Williams, Presque Isle; and Sadie Nelson of Windham.

The South squad was coached by Laughn Berthiaume of Gorham, Ryan Casey of Mountain Valley and Rick Clark of York. The South roster was rounded out by Mad-



South's Emma Lueders (right) tries for two against North's Jessica Girsu during the Maine McDonald's Senior All-Star girls Class C/D basketball game at Husson University in Bangor on Saturday.

die Bowe, Cape Elizabeth; Jess Willerson, Catherine McAuley; Sarah Clement, Catherine McAuley; Julia Quinn, Fryeburg Academy; Alexis L'Heureux-Carland, Fryeburg Academy; Sydney Petrie, Mountain Valley; Ashley Howe, Thornton Academy; and Chloe Smedley, York.

Quinn, Fleming win contests

Julia Quinn won the Maine Athletic Fundraising 3-Point Shooting Competition, and Andrew Fleming won the Dr. Pepper Slam Dunk Competition.

Quinn, of Fryeburg Academy, topped Dominique Lewis of Lawrence in a 15-second shoot-off to claim the 3-point title. Both players made nine baskets in the first round when contestants had one minute to shoot from five positions with a total of 25 balls.

Fleming, of Oxford Hills, scored a perfect 30 in the final round of the dunk contest to win over Hunter Smith of Foxcroft Academy and Cody Lawyerson of Valley.

Porter, Fish win foul shooting

Isabel Porter of Greely made 48 of 50 shots to win the Maine State Foul Shooting competition for the girls. Runner-up Emily Lagerstrom of Presque Isle connected on 47 shots.

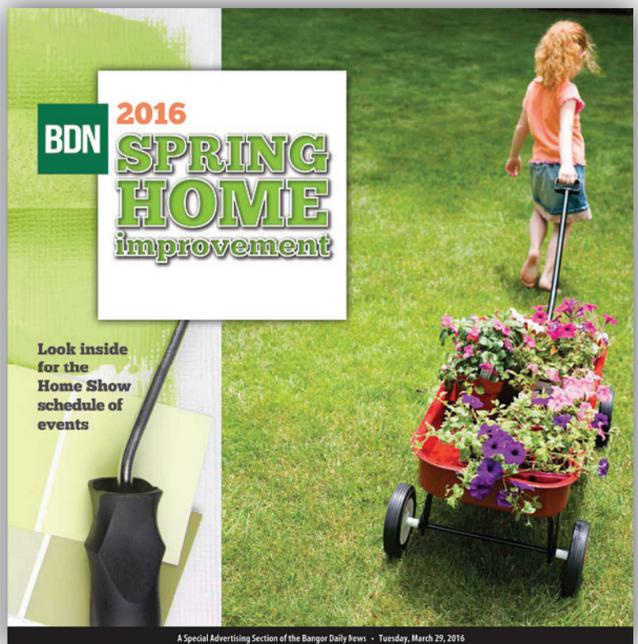
Elijah Fish of Gardiner Area won the boys state championship by making 48 shots out of 50. Donovan Savage of Caribou made 47 shots to take second place.

Net proceeds from the All-Star Games benefit Ronald McDonald House Charities of Maine. Last year's All-Star Weekend raised more than \$32,000.00 for the charities.

More information is available at www.rmhcmaine.org.

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