

OFF-CAMPUS ATHLETES

Kyle Maslin’s Achievements in the Rodeo World

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When thinking of sports with horses, you will most likely be thinking about English-style equestrian events — such as dressage and jumping — but Kyle Maslin ‘28 rides his horses in the Western Style, doing Rodeo.

Rodeo is often misunderstood by people. When he tells people he rides horses, Maslin says, “they assume I ride English and do jumping, and when I tell [them] I do Rodeo they think bucking Broncos or bull riding.” The Rodeo events con-

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tain many disciplines, but Maslin competes in reining and cutting as well as boxing. When competing in reining, riders are given a pattern that must be followed in the arena. The pattern includes maneuvers like sliding stops, half turns, and full turns. Then two or three judges evaluate riders and horses on how precisely the pattern was followed. The second event, boxing and cutting, also requires incredible precision and teamwork from the rider and horse, as similar maneuvers are required, but with a cow or herd of cattle in the arena. When competing in boxing, the rider and horse must

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keep one cow on the short side of the arena, and are evaluated on how well the horse and rider worked as a team to control it. Similarly, cutting is another form of “cattle work.” Riders are given a certain amount of time to pick three cows out of a herd of cattle in the arena, and then, using difficult techniques and maneuvers, they must isolate those cows and keep them from returning to the herd. As an additional layer of difficulty, this event requires riders to not use their hand to steer the horse, requiring riders and horses to rely on trust, training, and instinct.

While these disciplines are now scored and competed at competitions, they have a real-world tie to ranching and cattle work. Maslin says, “What I usually have a hard time explaining to people is that what I do are maneuvers that ranchers would’ve done back in the day, and still do now. This means that the reining, cutting, boxing, and going down the fence all resemble a part and ranching.” The competitions are reflections of real-life techniques that are still practiced today, making this sport incredibly unique for its real-life application.

Maslin first became interested in the sport after his family traveled to Montana for a summer, where he found himself riding horses every day. When he moved from New York to California, he was adamant about finding trainers to help him fall in love with the sport.

Now, his typical training regimen requires him to go to the ranch on Sundays, and sometimes stay the night to practice maneuvers by himself or with trainers on both of his horses. He says he either trains to improve on techniques or to practice specific maneuvers that will be performed at the next show. These shows have incredibly long days and require a lot of traveling from participants. Maslin says he often has to stay up late the night before practicing with his horses, and then must wake up early to prepare to compete at 6:00 AM.

What makes this competition so unique is the connection and partnership it requires. Maslin says one of his favorite things about competing in Rodeo is the connection he has with his horses. He says, “You have to try and control an animal with a mind of its own, who is triple your size. So, when riding, it is such a cool thing to be able to have the trust in your horse and for your horse to trust you.” He says that this relationship is what sets him apart most from the on-campus athletics on the fields, courts, and pools. Of course, he still has the responsibility of homework and balancing time management like any student-athlete, but he says at “horse shows [he is] more of a kid who trains horses, has a job, has to take care of living animals, and has a responsibility.”

Maslin says his favorite part about competing in Rodeo is the community that comes with it. He says, “At horse shows parents let their kids run around unsupervised, and all the other adults look after each other’s kids.”

After qualifying for the World Championship for Rodeo, Maslin says he has a goal to win numerous other competitions, such as the World’s Greatest, the Youth Snaflebit Futurity, the Open Run for 1 Million, the Open World’s Greatest, and the Open Snaflebit Futurity. Maslin has exemplified that greatness is being achieved off-campus by many students here at SHP, who all deserve recognition and appreciation.



Photos Provided by Kyle Maslin '28