



Nice catch

Once a year, thousands of cowboys and cowgirls travel to the city of sin to watch 10 exciting rounds of the National Finals Rodeo (NFR).

I wouldn't call myself a cowboy by any means, but that doesn't mean I didn't pack a pair of boots, my PBR bull riding shirt and cowboy hat for a weekend get-a-way to Sin City to attend my first-ever Wrangler National Finals Rodeo. OK, I actually didn't take a cowboy hat, but by the way my feet felt on Sunday when we landed back in Colorado, I know I took boots.

Three days of walking around Las Vegas in those things did a number on my feet. But it was worth it. I was a "cowboy" from Colorado there just like everyone else—to watch some really cool rodeo action.

I was fortunate enough to travel with a couple friends who had some great seats near the roping chutes. We were close enough that one of my buddies actually caught a piggin' string from Clif Cooper of Decatur, Texas on the first night. Cooper won the tie-down roping event the first night.

Here I was, looking at my stupid phone between rounds when all of a sudden Brett (person I had met only hours earlier) leaps over, smashes my head into my lap, spills my drink and then retreats to his seat. Using what were probably a few dirty words, I asked him what had just happened. Turns out while Cooper was doing his victory lap, he launched his piggin' string into the crowd—right at my seat.

Lucky for Brett, he wasn't messing around on his phone and was actually paying attention, so he ended up with the piggin' string.

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Written by Chris Lee

For those of you who don't know, a piggin' string is used to tie three legs of a calf together during tie-down roping. I didn't know what it was called until later when I was in the middle of questioning Brett about his unruly behavior.

Apparently it is a tradition or custom to launch it into the crowd during your victory lap. False! I didn't see one other cowboy throw his piggin' string into the crowd either of the next two nights.

I have never been good at catching things while in a stadium audience. T-shirts seem to never get close enough, drum sticks and guitar picks never make it far enough and hot dogs, well who wants to eat one of those after they travel hundreds of feet into the air and then smash into the ground like hail slapping the city streets.

The one time I had an actual shot at catching anything and I screwed it up by looking at my phone!

The new souvenir proved to be an awesome conversation piece throughout the night. While milling about Vegas, people would comment on Brett's prize possession. He was twirling it around like he had just finished a ride at the Thomas and Mack Center.

Brett made his phone calls to his friends and family and then got reamed out by his father who wasn't too happy. Apparently, work was more important to his dad then three days in Vegas

Not thinking much about it until later that night, I thought, "I bet we were on TV when Cooper threw that at us."

My other buddy used his TiVo to record all 10 rounds of the rodeo so when we made it back to Colorado he went right to his television to check it out. Sure enough, ESPN decided to cut to a commercial rather than show Cooper's celebration.

O well, it's probably for the best. Watching someone leap over two other guys for a short piece

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of rope couldn't have been that amusing. It's not like Brett's catch caused the Cubs to lose or anything.

Nice catch, Brett.