

Information Courtesy of <http://www.Mytrisdightman.com>

Myrtis Dightman, born in Crockett, TX in 1935, is a legendary bull rider, who in fact, was the first African American cowboy to qualify for the National Finals Rodeo, and did so a total of seven times. He is the first living African American cowboy to be inducted into the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, as well as the National Cowboys of Color Museum and Hall of Fame in 2003. In addition, he was also inducted into the Texas Rodeo Hall of Fame in 2001 and presented with the Professional Bull Riders Ring of Honor in 2003.

Mr. Dightman began his professional rodeo career riding bulls in 1961. Since that time, Dightman has been compared to baseball great, Jackie Robinson, for charting new waters, for black cowboys, in professional rodeo. Although he wasn't the first black cowboy to compete in the Rodeo Cowboys Association (RCA), he became the first serious contender for the world title. Among his record breaking accomplishments over a lengthy rodeo career was Dightman's seven appearances at the National Finals Rodeo (NFR) and winning the bull riding competition at the world-renowned Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo in 1972, helping to pave the way for black cowboys who have followed in his footsteps. Myrtis was the first black cowboy to qualify and participate at NFR, and in the fall of 1997, Myrtis Dightman was honored with an induction into the National Rodeo Hall of Fame as the first black bull rider and only living black cowboy ever to be so honored.

Myrtis has appeared and acted in numerous Hollywood films and television shows, including appearances on the award-winning TV series, To Tell the Truth and as himself in two major motion pictures: J.W. Coop, with Cliff Robertson, and Junior Bonner, with Steve McQueen.

After seeing Dightman compete in California, one particular youngster expressed an interest in becoming a bull rider. Myrtis counseled him to stay in school and finish his education, at which point, he would teach him to ride bulls. To this day, that pupil credits his success to Myrtis, for sharing his skills, his love for rodeo, and his knowledge of the pro rodeo circuit. That same young man often comments on Myrtis' guidance that, "There is no goal that can't be reached with determination and positive thinking." These are the words of Charlie Sampson, 1982 World Champion Bull Rider, the first and only black cowboy champion at the time.

As he has for his entire adult life, Myrtis continues to display his unwavering leadership by helping to educate today's youth on building a rewarding career on the rodeo circuit. His countless speaking engagements through schools and organizations enable him to display his concern of youth and their involvement in drugs and violent crimes. "Substance abuse prevention must begin at an early age," says Dightman. "

Additional Information located at : <http://www.mytrisdightman.com>