

The Score: Bethanie Shofner

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This is Chelsea Shaffer, and this is season four of the score. You all have listened to this podcast, three quarters of a million times, and we are here in season four to bring you even more of what you love.

Today's episode of the score is brought to you by Fastback groups. And we are fortunate enough to have a Fastback endorsee and female Bethanie Shofner on the score. Bethany is an active team, Roper and breakaway Roper. She's currently competing in the WPR, a PRCA pro rodeo. And when she is not on the rodeo trail, she's picking up a head rope and competing at world series of team ropings.

She is a great Roper in her own right. She's won so many world series qualifiers. She's recently just won a few pro rodeos. Very quick with the rope. She also tied the college national finals arena record just this year in 2021 with a 1.6 second run. Bethany is a great horse trainer. She's trained a few breakaway ropers that have gone on to, uh, to be very successful for other people and rides great horses herself.

She is always mounted. Uh, on this episode, she talks all about that. She talks about her hauling partner. Her mental aspect, uh, what it's been like being on the pro rodeo road, because that is fairly new for breakaway ropers and so much more. And don't forget, this episode is brought to you by Fastback ropes.

We will tell you more about Fastback at the commercial. Well, Hey Bethany, how's it going? Oh, it's good. How are you? I'm doing well doing well. Uh, I hear you are in big timber Montana right now. Um, Well what's happening there. Oh, we're up tonight and the person over here. So we've been hanging out, um, waiting to rope on tonight.

Yeah. Gotcha. So, uh, and obviously you're on the trail and the breakaway roping, the ProRodeo breakaway roping. Um, how has that been for you? Um, is it a complete game changer for, for, for you as a Roper? You know, tell me how it's been. Um, it's been, it's been a lot of fun. I go a lot with my sister, Abby, uh, Shoffner Johnson and I, there's not, I mean, it's, I couldn't really ask for anyone better to go with all of, you know, push each other and get along and stuff.

So I don't, I mean, it's for sure a game changer, just being out here and driving as far as we, we drive to run one and stuff. Uh, mentally I think, um, it's important for all of us, you know? Focused and whatnot. Yeah. Yeah. And you mentioned you're traveling obviously with your sister, but you're traveling with the world champion and Johnson.

Um, tell me about that, you know, kinda she's, she's been there and done that in her career. Uh what's it like rodeo and with Aaron and, you know, how does she kind of help you? Are there any tips or tricks she kind of tells you? Yeah, I don't really think I could do it without her. You know, not, I don't have to, I don't think you experienced things like the hard way.

Like some, you know, I, she kinda is then helps me with, you know, the entering and how I need to enter in where I need to go and that sort of thing. And, and mentally, you know, she's, it's, it's easy for her to be there and have the confidence which sometimes gets low, you know, when things aren't going good and she's there.

Pers and tell, you know, tell me if it's take, you know, keep going and it'll work out. So yeah, definitely, definitely. Well, uh, you know, I want to take a step back, um, and just kinda like, just so our, our listeners never going to know who. Who Bethany is, you know, how did you get into roping? I know you're a great team Roper and a breakaway you're over in your own.

Right. Um, kind of, you know, growing up, where did you get started? Have you always roped, you know, was it in your family? Uh, tell me, tell me a little bit about your back. Um, so I haven't always rode my coats. Um, we junior rodeoed and, and things like that. Ran barrels as little girls, me and my sister, both.

And then, um, I didn't start, I wanted to start roping around 13. Um, I had called Eddie yet though and asked him, cause he would give lessons, you know, in my hometown. And I called him and wanted to start roping event. I started team roping my sister and I, and um, after that, Couple of years went by team roping.

And then I kinda got into the break way when I was 16 or 17. Um, Glenn Zelle was one of the first people to start to start that I, uh, went, I didn't have my own setup at my parents' house. So we, my sister and I were, we were driving, you know, however much rope and we could get in, we were headed that way.

Um, so, but Glen is Zelle. As what started the catheter open, and then it just kind of took off from there with you rodeoed and, um, I didn't rodeo junior high, um, just like the smaller ones and then high school come around and I started entering their open the team open-ended breakaway in high school. And then it kinda took off really when I started college rodeoing is when I felt like my roping kind of excelled and, and took off.

Um, there. Gotcha. Gotcha. And are you still in college now? I am. I have one year left in my master's program and then I am done with college. Gotcha. So where, uh, where are you going to college and work? You know, what are you getting your degree in? Right. I am going to New Mexico state and the law school system, Mexico, and I get my master's in ag economics.

And I know it's, you know, we've had people in the team roping industry kind of, you know, th they majority go to high school and then don't want to, you know, don't necessarily want to go to college and get a degree. They just want to rodeo. Um, and I haven't, I've, there's a few girls. I know that I've kind of gone that path as well.

You know, your sites, how important is it to get a degree? Um, going in and especially being a pro rodeo athlete, education was always important in my family. Um, my mom's a pharmacist and my dad's an engineer and I didn't really feel like college. Wasn't an option for my family. Um, you know, but I feel like, and especially today it's important because I mean, you can go a lot of ways.

Certain things, especially the degree I'm in, there's a lot of options to go to, you know, if you need to. And I don't feel, you know, like today I don't, you won't really get stuck somewhere that you, you know, so I feel like education's important and it's not, I mean, it's possible to college rodeo pro rodeo and being in school.

I know that there's a lot of younger people out there that. Feel like they can do all three, but I, it can be done. Priorities are important, I guess. Yeah. Yeah. Definitely. No, I th I think it's good. I mean, obviously I've gotten my four year degree and I, I think it's something that people, you know, once rodeo has done, if you can't compete anymore, you know, you at least have something to fall back on once you're done.

Right. For sure. Yeah, definitely. Well, uh, I want to take a step into your team roping. Um, life and you've been such a phenomenal Roper. I know you've won so many world series qualifiers. Um, tell me, you know, tell me about that kind of excelling in the head. Um, I've always liked heading more than really like, it's my favorite.

And I feel like that's where I'm most comfortable, I guess you could say, um, is my hand and I just, I get to rope a lot at the all girls with my sister, Abby, and there's not, it's pretty hard to be, you know, getting to head for girls like her and those girls that heal real good. I mean, it's, it's a fun event to be able to go and compete with.

With those girls and not always against him, you know what I mean? Um, but my hand and it's slowed down a lot this year just because the breakaways has gotten so big. And I, uh, I don't, the only horse I have now is my little yellow horse stole say. And, um, he's really good to hit on too. But with all the breakaway going on right now on him, I haven't been, I haven't been hitting nearly as much as I, I like or.

Gotcha. Gotcha. So what, uh, and I know, obviously your break going on, Dulce. Um, what, uh, what do you like in a head horse size? I think really, um, there's a lot of little horses that have the ability to be, you know, big time head horses, but I think it really takes a toll on them when they're not quite big enough to take that many runs back to back.

Um, It just their mind. I think it's important to team up with, because there's so many different setups, you know, where we go to a world series and it's not fried versus, you know, you go somewhere for the men, like the BFI where it's a big score and being able to have a horse special kind of do, do all of it is it's hard to find, I think, but it's in our mind.

And a lot of the times I've learned like, yeah, I guess that, yeah. When a horse has the right mind, it's pretty hard to be when they're willing to do that much. Yeah, no, exactly. Um, and also speaking to the heading, I know you, like you said, you haven't really been team roping as much. Right now, but what is, you know, when you were going pretty hard, what is something you constantly were working on?

And were you excelling at the, at the competitive level with what you were working on in the practice pen? Um, I'm going to have to say that my writing, um, last year is really what I was focused on. I had a bad habit of, of Latin. I had horse duck every now and then I was really focused on trying to, you know, give my partners the best opportunities they could have to buy by handling every single one, you know, just fry and, and doing that.

Um, I think I needed, you know, I needed to work on my writing and being able to push one up when I needed to and rope at the same time. Was difficult to, you know, focus on making a good run, but also being correct and riding my horse. Right. It was something I for sure had to work on the last year. Pretty hard.

Gotcha. Yeah. And I mean, I mean, that goes into the breakaway as well. I mean, you have to be riding your horse right. Um, to make sure they don't cheat you or anything. So that's definitely crucial in all events. Yes. Ma'am. I agree. You know, speaking of that crossover, um, into the breakaway, what, uh, like I said, you're, you're great.

I know you at the college finals, you tied the record this year with the one six, you were recently just won six, um, at a pro rodeo kind of. What, how do you do it? What's the secret? Well, I don't, I mean, I don't really think there's a big secret. It's kind of your, your body, you know, we trained for that tennis stuff in the practice there.

So it's, it's no different, our bodies are trained to do what we're preparing ourselves to do. And when you go in the breakaway box, I mean, it's kind of just, I, you know, it's like, Muscle memory, I would say, but, gotcha. Gotcha. And so speaking of that yellow horse as well, um, in the breakaway, what do you like with that horse in the breakaway?

So, well, his mind, he's probably one of the best minded horses I've really ever been on. I mean, I could take him to a world series and head 20 series and come back and run one in Cheyenne and he'll sit there and you know, he's not, he's. And that's why I, you know, I, that's why I said earlier that I thought it was so important their mind, just because you can, you don't have to worry so much.

He doesn't get hot. He's, he's real laid back. And if I feel like I can focus more on myself and my job and not worry so much about him and how I need to ride him in the box or, or how I'm going to get the right start or, or anything like that. Yeah. No, that's definitely crucial. Um, yeah. I've noticed. I mean, you've, you've trained a lot of really good breakaway horses.

I know that paint a steak sauce that you rode. Yes ma'am. Um, and then you trained Beasley who hope Thompson bought, and then she just sold to, I believe Taylor mom sold if I'm not, uh, I believe Whitney, Whitney sermon, that's it? Yes. Ma'am what, uh, what goes into the training process and having such success with it?

I patience and just kind of getting a feel and not rushing anything, you know, any of those horses into anything. It took me a while before I felt confident to hold up, paint, horse, um, one called steak sauce. You know, I, I just, I feel like a lot of people now they start them and they, they, they feel like they're ready and they take them too soon.

And I almost feel like. Can ruin one, just as fast as, you know, you started one and, and having a good horse to start with, you know, is always, it makes it a lot easier. And I was, I was blessed with steak sauce and Beasley. They were, I mean, they wanted to be naturally just good in the breakaway, for sure. So I don't, I don't know if I could take credit for those two.

They, they wanted to be, you know, and there's a lot of horses out there that, that do want to be that good. Yeah. No, exactly. Based out of Granbury, Texas, fast facts. Recently released their new rope, the cure, which is in nylon four strand with purple poly core construction. It's small light and performs.

Well in all weather conditions for every cure sold, \$1 will be notated to St. Jude's children's research hospital also. So definition offers tells you all about her favorite grubs. The ultimate four is a small snappy nylon poly blend. Headers love the smooth and quick feel of this rope. The Excalibur is a nylon Polyblend with core construction.

This bestseller is medium in diameter and weight. Bethany has an active breakaway Roper, so she swings. Which is a four strand breakaway rope with purple dyed, poly core. This tough and durable rope stands up in all conditions and gives a snappy finish and close. If you're interested in ordering a set of Fastback head heel or breakaway ropes, get online@fastbackropes.com and order yours today in the PR you know, going in, in the program ideas for the breakaway roping, what is something that you're working on?

Or something that you have to keep reminding yourself to keep, keep entering and keep going. I know it's it's you can't want them all what? Unfortunately, sometimes you can, but, um, my traveling partners are he's on that. They, we all kind of push each other when it's a little bit hard to, you know, enter the next one when it plays out.

Babe, just, just knowing that we all three get to go. You know, to these rodeos and have this opportunity is something that, you know, has never really happened before. I just, the fact that we're all able to ability to start. I mean, there's a lot of people that aren't, aren't able to come out here and be in Montana, you know, and drive this far.

So I telling myself that, you know, I'm able to be out here and, and do what I can is I think something that motivates me the most. Gotcha. And what do you do? You know, it's hard. You guys don't really get to practice a whole lot being out on the road and that's, I feel like that's a complete game changer.

Um, what are you doing to stay sharp with your roping? Um, well we wrote the dummy quite a bit. Um, that's obvious. I mean, well, something we can work on while everybody's on the road, it's just dropping the dummy, but just believing that you can be, you know, even when you're down and don't feel like. I gotten to practice and be sharp, just believing that you can, and you can do it is a big part of it.

And so I would say, you know, being mental and not, not letting yourself get down about your roping and not worrying about not getting to practice or not fixing something before the next one. And just kind of believing that, that you can do it without, you know, practicing and sets. Okay. Definitely. And what's, uh, you know, what is something in the breakaway?

I know we kind of talked about it a little bit, but what's something directly in the brake line with your roping that you are focusing on. Um, you know, every run, um, my start, I know, I mean, in the breakaway officer, your start, it sets everything up. I mean, if you're a little bit late, it costs you quite a bit and, and how fast the brake light gets these days.

It's hard to break it or be off of it at all. So, I mean, it's, I've really been trying to really just focus on my stuff because I feel like if I, if I can get a good start and get up and everything is, is, I guess you could say timed, right. But I feel it's just set up better from there. And, and, you know, you have a better chance.

Yeah, no. I mean, obviously the start is very crucial, uh, in the breakaway, um, completely sets up your whole run. So, um, and you know, I know obviously you said Erin, Johnson's a big, big support system in your, in your life for roping and everything. Are there any other like professionals out there that you kind of watch their styles or kind of talk to and get some tips or.

I try and really watch everybody. I think somebody can learn a lot from watching several people and getting to watch Jackie and Meridian hope and Kelsey and those girls. I mean, it pushes you to, because they hardly ever make mistakes. And, and to watch them too and getting to travel with somebody like Aaron, it, I feel like I, I learned quite a bit just from watching.

That many, you know, good, good girl ropers. Definitely. Definitely. And, um, you know, right now you're 35th in the standings. Um, how, you know, how are you feeling with that and where, you know, what are you going to do moving forward entering for the rest of the season? Um, I wasn't super motivated to be honest before Lewis town and after Lewis town, it kind of bumps me a little bit of a ways.

And I, and when Aaron had had a talk and she said, Bethany, if you just keep pushing and keep trying and you know, doing your job, you're going to play this and you're going to win more like Lewistown that pays, you know, pretty decent. And you're not that far right now. Before Cheyenne kicks in. Obviously I wasn't too.

I'm not too far behind for 15th. And if I can just get, keep pushing and just try, it's really all I can do. And just hope you know, that I can do my job at where's left. So yeah, no, definitely. I feel. Not the most ideal spot, but you still have a good chance, um, with how many rodeos are left. So that's, I mean, yeah, exactly.

As long as you just keep pushing you, you definitely can give yourself a huge chance right there. Right. And that's all I can do is just, you know, do what I can. Yeah, no, exactly. Exactly. Do you, I mean, being out on the road so different, what, uh, what do you guys do as a group? Like how's the driving, how's how, you know, are you seeing all the new sites?

What do you guys do on your downtime? Um, we're kind of, I'm kind of fun, right? To be with Abby, my sister, and we kind of all. Are pretty relaxed. And I mean, we like to go and if we have time, see, see some sights or go hiking, maybe see some, a couple of things and, or Erin, the big shopper. We, you go shopping quite often if we have the time, but during on the drives, really, we all kind of just hang out, really listen to some good stuff and.

Build a build a phone separately. So who drives the most? Um, Uh, I don't know. They're probably going to get mad if I say so I'm going to have to say here, and it's really hard. We all try to be pretty fair and even it out, could he pretty close? Yeah. Has there been any like funny moments or scary moments on the road?

Uh, I always, like, I love hearing those stories cause I feel like there's quite a few. I, yes, there's been probably more funny ones than there has real scary. Um, I think in the ground today though, the tax on all the way through the ground. So that was exciting. Um, we've gone through two trucks, one was leaking oil, so we left it at home and pick up another one and it's leaking coolant, but I think that's just part of it.

I don't know. There's a lot of stories to tell, but yeah, yeah, no, I know there's which it's funny. I feel like there's been a lot of truck issues this, this summer that I've heard of. I, I agree. There has been a couple of truck issues. I don't know what's going on. And that's very unfortunate because that's obviously how everyone's going to get everywhere trailers.

Just drive themselves. No, they don't. Oh, I guess. Yeah. I know you got to go get an old, like 2009 or something.

Um, what has been your favorite rodeo so far? Oh, that's a tough one. There's a lot of really, really good ones. Um, it's, it's hard to be Cheyenne just because it, it was just happened, you know, and that feeling of, of us, frankly, ropers getting to Trump. At that rodeo with equal equal money was something that, you know, that was new for a lot of us, just the people, the fans, and the whole, the whole committee, you know, just the way they, they care and they want it to be that good.

And so it's, I, I don't know. Okay. And, uh, what, uh, I know there's a lot more left. What are, what's the rodeo you're looking forward to the most?

That's a good question. Yeah. There's, there's a lot of good ones. There is a lot I'm kind of wanting to get into and kind of just be excited about all of them, but that's not bad. I feel like, you know, at least you're getting out there, you're getting to go do what you love. So that's, I mean, that's a good way to look at it.

And a lot of these rodeos too, we, you know, we haven't, I've never been to, so I I'm just pumped to get to go. Yeah. Definitely. Oh, and I, you know, I want to talk about it too. I know, like jackpots, I feel like the breakaway roping jackpots and I could be wrong. I feel like they're kind of not as big as they used to be because right.

And those things are not those days. Not as many, you know, I don't think, I think a lot of producers are seeing how, how much everybody's gone and there's really not enough time in between everything to get a big, big turnout. So I feel like it, they're not quite as big or there's not really a lot of people having as many either.

Yeah. That's what I really want to talk about that. Cause I've, I've noticed that. I mean, I personally, I don't think I've been to a breakaway jackpot in a very long time. Um, and I don't, I don't even rodeo as much as all of you guys, so, uh, it's just, it's crazy. Cause you know, a couple years ago that was the big thing.

All the, everyone was going to all the. You know, the rafter L jackpots and the three-star, which the three-star is still huge. And you know, those big ropings and now everyone's out on the road. So it's totally different. It is totally different. I don't, there's a lot of girls that I think, especially this year that are rodeo and over jackpots and we'll skip a jackpot, you

know, to get to rodeo and to go, to, to go to as many as they can, especially getting out close to.

The end. There's going to be a lot of girls that are going to try to go to for sure as many as they can, you know? Yeah, definitely. So do you like the rodeo run better than the three or four? Um, no, I, I, more a jackpot or because I, especially the breakaway, it's hard to make any sort of like, like I said earlier to make any sort of mistake and maybe say lucky off the barrier at a rodeo and still win anything where I feel like at a jackpot, it's not as, I mean, it's still assuming tough with the girls these days, but.

I feel you can kind of make up for for some time and try to still win a little bit. We're at a rodeo. If you do ancient, not near perfect. It's hard. Yeah, no, definitely. Yeah. And speaking of three-star, I just remembered you also are a champion of the three-star, uh, previously. So you are a very solid jackpot Roper as well as one header.

It's funny how little things just pop up randomly and you remember got it. Um, and you know, we gotta talk about it because this podcast is brought to you by Fastback ropes, which you are a, or your sponsored by them. Let's kind of break down. What's the, what's your favorite head rope from Fastback? Um, it depends on where I'm at and kind of, you know, I don't know the ultimate form.

I've just off just pretty hard to be. Um, but the Excalibur extra soft too is also one of my favorites. It depends like on a hotter day, I'll use the Excalibur and if it's a little bit chilly outside, I'll use the ultimate four. They both are really, really good ropes. So it's hard to gotcha. Like how do you, you know, how, what do they feel like?

How's the body of them? Um, to me, I feel like the ultimate forest is a little bit lighter and it's a little bit, has a little, a little more of a snap, I guess you could say to it where the Excalibur is. Like smoother. It's not as quick maybe, and has a little bit more of a feel if that makes sense, but it's hard that they, they both do feel pretty good.

Definitely. And, uh, uh, what about, you know, what about the break, all your output and what are you liking right now? I'm using the Athena. They're size 10 and extra soft. Um, I switched to those just because I felt like I could feel, um, you know, the weight in my pinky and my tip, and I felt like I could control it a little bit.

Um, better than maybe a softer edge, just because the core, I thought maybe had had something to do with that, you know, and I, I, I'm wanting to swing a little bit heavy of a rope and those, those, you don't have to have one to two stiff to kind of get that heavier type of a feel. Yeah. Yeah. So it's obviously not, not, not as stiff as a head rope, but it's still low enough.

You can control it and it's not heavy in hand. Yeah. What, uh, what would you, you know, what size or lay would you recommend for like women coming into the sport or the little girls and they're not sure which road or which side? Um, I started, you know, when I was little with a four strand, just like a nine and.

I feel of swinging a rope and, and building your arm muscles and stuff. It's hard to go straight to, you know, attend two or 10, five, or even a 10 for a lot of people. It's hard because cause that, that arm muscle is not built up and you know, they don't have the strength for that. So really starting at a nine or, you know, beginners or little girls would, would be a good, a good starting spot.

Yeah, no, that's great. I know we get a lot of people, you know, messaging Jane and asking what ropes should we start with? You know, they're all new and the sport. And so it's good to get insights from, from girls that have been doing it for a long time. Um, right. It's hard to get. And you talked about building muscle.

Do you do do any sort of workout or anything to help keep, keep that strength or keep you strong? I used to play a lot of basketball. Um, through high school, I played basketball and then in college I used to work out quite a bit, my freshman and sophomore year. And then I kind of just got to where I broke so much.

I, I hardly didn't go to a gym or anything, but I do feel like roping the dummy and trying to be real accurate on a dummy helps field, you know, or strengthening or just maintain. Those muscles that are needed. But I do think that it is important for, to have some, some strength in your arm to get, you know, to get your rope when you need it and that sort of thing.

Yeah, no, a hundred percent. It's definitely in it. You know, it's definitely muscle memory as well. Um, in the sport. Yes. Ma'am. Yeah. So, uh, for little girls or women, or even men coming up into the team roping and the breakaway roping, what is, what is a piece of advice that you could do give them? Um, just if, if you feel like you can and you know, some things are hard.

To believe that you can, but if you work hard enough and want it bad enough, it's, it's possible. And it's, it's, you know, dreams for little girls may seem, you know, hard to, to get to and stuff, but it's not, it's not impossible. Definitely. That's awesome. I love that a lot. Yeah, definitely. If, if you want it bad enough, get your butt out.

It'll be there for sure. If you want it bad enough, it can happen. Yeah, definitely. Awesome. Well, Bethany, I so appreciate you being on this episode with me. Thank you for taking the time to answer the phone. Yes. Ma'am. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you, Bethany, for taking the time to chat with me. I hope you guys got your trailer unstuck from the mud and Montana. Uh, um, and I hope you guys have a great rest of your pro rodeo season and win lots of money. Thank you. Taking the time to chat and tell everyone about the Fastback ropes you love.

Don't forget you guys. This episode is brought to you by Fastback ropes. You can, you can check out their ropes@fastbackropes.com and don't forget, leave us a rating and review. We do look at those and we love to see what you guys love, what you guys want. More of who you guys want on the score. We're trying to dip into all aspects of team roping and now breakaway roping.

So let us know.

