

News

Ex-rodeo rider has taken the plunger and changed jobs

A North Bersted man is a cowboy plumber with a difference.

Former rodeo rider Martin Cornell is training for a new career fixing taps.

He has swapped his saddle for his spanner as he prepares to fit washers rather than round up cattle.

His future plans will also see him concentrate on renewable materials to cater for a demand in green plumbing which he expects to grow.

Martin, 41, of Ash Grove, said: "I'm really enjoying the course.

"I'm due to finish in November but hope to complete it even sooner.

"I think the green-side of things is going to be a big market and it's something I'd like to be trained to do."

Martin started his unusual early career in his mid-twenties when his cousin introduced him

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to horse riding.

He spent 15 years as a western rider - earning the title of UK champion in 1994 - and travelled around the country.

"I would have to chase cattle and round them up using a lasso and I'd also do bull riding - that was quite difficult," he said.

"I suppose it's a bit of thrill knowing it's dangerous.

"It's an adrenaline rush. I enjoyed that and, of course, meeting lots of great people."

Martin moved on to work as a printer and production manager for 18 years but the arrival of digital technology dimmed his enthusiasm by replacing skill with button pushing.

He has since worked at B&Q and became a trading manager in just five years.

The hours involved, though, meant he rarely saw his wife, Rachel, 31, and son, Toby, five.

This was repeating a pattern where his father worked all the time.

So, Martin wanted a career with more flexibility.

Last June saw him take his interest in plumbing and electrics a stage further by enrolling on a course with New Career Skills.

Staff at the Southampton-based training centre are helping him to gain the training and qualifications he requires as well as start his own business.

It has been tough squeezing this around his working life but B&Q has assisted by allowing him to work nights.

Martin has urged everyone thinking of changing careers to go ahead with the support of their family and friends.



Former rodeo rider Martin Cornell who has changed his job and become a plumber

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