



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jennifer Hellickson

jennifer.hellickson@ariat.com

510-477-6966

Four Ariat Athletes Crowned World Champions at 2008 NFR
ProRodeo Team Members 'Bring It' With Impressive Performances Again This Year

Union City, Calif. December 15, 2008 – Amidst a sea of green and red, Ariat ProRodeo Team athletes Luke Branquinho, Justin McDaniel, Lindsay Sears and Stran Smith are happy to have struck gold at the 2008 Wrangler National Finals Rodeo.

Rodeo fans rang in the holidays early in Las Vegas with 10 rounds of thrills as they watched world-class athletes compete for the top spot in their respective events. Branquinho is the first steer wrestler in 17 years to win a second world title at NFR, while McDaniel, Sears and Smith each brought home their first gold buckle this year. Ariat-sponsored team roper Travis Tryan – along with partner Cory Petska – even managed to tie the world and arena record with a blistering time of 3.5 seconds.

A recap of Ariat-sponsored athlete wins at the 2008 NFR:

- **Luke Branquinho:** Average and world champion in Steer Wrestling
- **Justin McDaniel:** Average and world champion in Bareback Riding
- **Lindsay Sears:** World champion in Barrel Racing
- **Stran Smith:** Average and world champion in Tie-Down Roping

As one of the premier athlete alliances in the sport, the Ariat Pro Rodeo Team consists of competitors who actively participate in the testing and development of new Ariat performance products. The Pro Rodeo Team members are featured in Ariat's national advertising campaigns and also act as spokespersons, addressing the competitive advantage of Ariat footwear and apparel.

"We're proud of our athletes and their unparalleled dedication to the sport of rodeo," says Beth Cross, Ariat's founder and CEO. "What a way to round out a year filled with spectacular performances, and we look forward to what next season holds for each of them."

About Ariat International, Inc.

Ariat International, Inc. is a leading manufacturer of innovative performance equestrian footwear, apparel, handbags and belts. Featuring a patented technology designed to deliver stability, durability and comfort, Ariat pioneered the application of advanced athletic shoe technology into English riding boots and authentic Western boots. Ariat products are sold in a network of retail outlets throughout the world. For more information about Ariat products or for the Ariat retailer nearest you, contact Ariat at 800.899.8141 or visit www.ariat.com.

Official Boot of the Wrangler ProRodeo Tour
Official Apparel Supplier of the U.S. Equestrian Federation
###