

Tattoo owner drawn to reality TV

By: David Benda, Record Searchlight

Redding tattoo artist Jamie Davies made his mark on Tuesday's debut of "Ink Master."

"I had faith the whole time," Davies quipped the day after watching the Spike TV show at home with friends and family.

Of course, Davies, who owns Tattoo Ink on Bechelli Lane, knows his fate up until the live season finale in December. But he and the other 16 cast members have been sworn to secrecy.

Tuesday's debut featured back-to-back episodes and the elimination of two contestants - Cee Jay Jones and Little Mike.

The show also featured unexpected drama when tattoo artist TJ Halvorsen, a former sniper in the U.S. Army, took himself out of the competition after slipping a disc during a challenge.

"He had like five bad discs from being blown up in a tank when he was in the military," Davies said. "It locked up on him and he was in really bad shape."

Having suffered his own back problems, Davies understood Halvorsen's decision.

"That is no joke," Davies said. "If you ever want to hold your children or plan on walking" that is something you want to take care of.

But it's not his trick back that sets Davies apart.

What makes Davies somewhat of an oddity in his industry is he doesn't have any visible tattoos anywhere on his body.

Davies, 35, was gone for several weeks earlier this year to film the reality show in New York. He said watching the first two episodes last week "was really weird."

"I got a little anxious before," Davies told me. "All the cast members started texting (each other) really quick, so you could feel the momentum getting started. It was a lot of fun."

The 13 remaining competitors are vying for \$100,000 and a feature story of themselves in Inked magazine.

All but the live season finale, to be aired at 10 p.m. Dec. 18, has been shot.

A portion of the players' fate will be calculated from viewers who each week can vote on the Ink Master website (www.spike.com/shows/ink-master) for their favorite tattoo.

"It's important for people to get out there and vote," Spike TV spokeswoman Debra Fazio said last week. "It will affect who gets crowned 'Ink Master'."

If you missed last week's opener, a rebroadcast runs 2 to 4 p.m. today.

"The tragedy of air bag fraud is nobody knows exactly how severe it is," James Quiggle, spokesman for the nonprofit Coalition Against Insurance Fraud.



Coalition Against Insurance Fraud

Meanwhile, Davies will host a party Tuesday night at 9 o'clock at Shameless O'Leary's in downtown Redding to watch the next new episode, which airs at 10. Davies said cast member Sebastian Murphy of Detroit will join him for the viewing party.

They're mixing it up at Market Street Wines, the boutique wine and beer bar near the Cascade Theatre in downtown Redding.

The business reopened in mid-September after a six-week remodel.

COUNTERFEIT AIR BAGS

Federal transportation officials are alerting consumers to be aware of bogus vehicle air bags.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) knows of the sale of counterfeit air bags in some parts of the country.

Cars, trucks and SUVs that have had an air bag replaced within the past three years by a repair shop that is not part of a dealership may be at risk, the NHTSA said.

"The tragedy of air bag fraud is nobody knows exactly how severe it is," James Quiggle, spokesman for the nonprofit **Coalition Against Insurance Fraud**, told me over the phone last week. "It's because we are still looking for comprehensive data to nail down the problem."

Breedlove and Wes Matthews own Market Street Steakhouse next door.