

A junior Big Tex upstages the real thing as giant cowboy goes up a week before State Fair opens

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With the fair opening Sept. 28, crew members were hard at work Friday morning setting up Big Tex, who each year towers above fairgoers enjoying the annual celebration of all things Texan.



Workers help Big Tex take his spot on Friday, September 21, 2018 at Fair Park in Dallas. Big Tex has been the official State Fair of Texas' icon for the past 66 years. (Shaban Athuman / Staff Photographer)

A pint-size version of Big Tex briefly upstaged the 55-foot cowboy, who took his rightful place Friday a week before the State Fair of Texas opens.



Visiting Fair Park with his family, 5-year-old Isaiah Lee was decked out Friday in Big Tex's signature

attire. (Shaban Athuman / Staff Photographer)

Five-year-old Isaiah Lee of Weatherford posed in front of the Fair Park icon wearing a perfect replica of the cowboy's attire and even mimicked his signature wave.

"What does Big Tex say?" Holly Lee asked her son, and without hesitation, in the deepest voice he could muster, Isaiah replied, "Howdy, folks! Welcome to the State Fair of Texas!"

With the fair opening Sept. 28, crew members were hard at work Friday morning setting up Big Tex, who each year towers above fair-goers enjoying the annual celebration of all things Texan.

While Lee and her husband, Chad, were busy attending to the needs of their 17-month-old twins and their son's adoring fans, she explained how Isaiah became fascinated by the state fair's mascot.

"We were watching some Youtube videos and we came across some of the ones where Big Tex caught on fire" in 2012, Lee said. "He just became intrigued with him. He started printing out pictures of him and putting them all over the house. You should have seen our kitchen!"



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/D6eODRjkIE8>

A team of master sewers assembles each year to create the traditional Big Tex outfit that Isaiah so perfectly replicated.

The big guy's duds include a Dickies shirt made from awning material that's durable enough to withstand a month in the Texas elements, according to the [fair's website](#). The one-of-a-kind shirt takes two weeks to make, and the cowboy's jeans take another week.

This year's featured accessory is his brand-new pair of Lucchese boots, which took three months to plan for and two weeks to assemble.

And there was no way Isaiah was going to miss the debut of those size 96 boots, rain or shine. While the Lee family has been to the state fair many times, this was their first time coming to see Big Tex arrive at Fair Park.

Even as the rain picked up Friday, Isaiah continued to pose graciously for his fans, much like the giant he adores.

"You know he's just a great hero to have," Holly Lee said. "Sort of a different one, but a great one."

[Sara Magalio](#)



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