

SPRING 2015

THE TEMPO



ACM



ALL-STAR TEAM


**ONE NIGHT,
TWO CITIES,
ALL MUSIC**

ARTISTS COME TOGETHER
FOR ACM LIFTING LIVES
GALA & BENEFIT

**SUPERSTAR
DUETS**

THE ACADEMY
CELEBRATES 50 YEARS
OF COUNTRY MUSIC
IN ONE AMAZING
CBS SPECIAL

HIGH-ENERGY HOSTS
**LUKE BRYAN &
BLAKE SHELTON**
LEAD THE CHARGE
INTO AT&T STADIUM FOR
THE **50TH ACM AWARDS**



**SUNDAY
APRIL 19TH
LIVE! 8/7c**

©CBS

PLUS: ENTERTAINER NOMINEES FGL, Garth, Jason, Luke & Miranda and New Artist nominees Sam Hunt, Thomas Rhett & Cole Swindell | **ACM 50 FLASHBACK** & Full ACM Award Nominees List



pepsi

Miller Lite

AT&T STADIUM



COWBOY

Team captains
**BLAKE
SHELTON &
LUKE BRYAN**
prepare to lead
the **ACM Awards**
into its 50th
anniversary
celebration at
AT&T Stadium

UP

BY LISA LEE

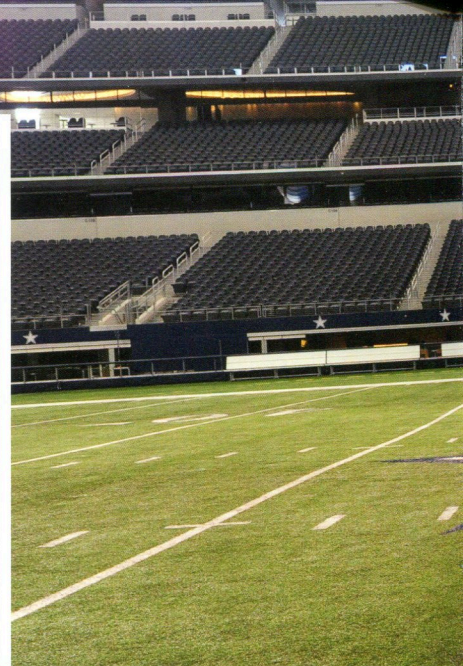
blitz: noun \ˈblɪts\ **1.** A defensive charge on the quarterback. **2.** A deliberate coordinated movement requiring dexterity and skill. **3.** Any sudden intensive attack or concerted effort.

Blitz. Yeah, that sounds about right.

When Blake Shelton and Luke Bryan charge the stage in AT&T Stadium for the *50th Annual Academy of Country Music Awards* on April 19th, they will be putting a concerted effort toward a coordinated movement requiring lots of dexterity and skill. They will be hosting what will be the largest awards show ever staged on live network television during its all-important golden anniversary year.

But for now, they're playing football.

It's January 19th and Shelton and Bryan are in Arlington, Texas, shooting CBS promos at the stadium. Between takes, a football appears, so, naturally, they both take to the famous Dallas Cowboys field. Blake tosses to manager Brandon Blackstock under the massive jumbotron screen, while Luke attempts field goals with CBS Executive Vice President Jack Sussman. They both make the extra point. Despite their cool demeanors, both Blake and Luke appreciate the importance of the night to come in April.



**SCAN TO
WATCH BLAKE
AND LUKE IN
ACTION IN
AT&T STADIUM**

“**T**his is the 50th anniversary, I mean what else can you say?” Blake told *ACM Tempo*. “It’s at the home of the Dallas Cowboys, there’s going to be 60 thousand plus people in this room, it’s going to be the biggest stars in country music, and when I say biggest

stars I mean the past, present, future—it’s all going to come together that night.”

“The ACMs are doing a lot of stuff, and it’s going to be a big week for country music in this area,” Bryan added. “They’ve been planning this for years. I think the people in charge showed me and Blake plans of [the move to Texas] the first year we hosted. This hasn’t been just a ‘snap your fingers and make this thing happen.’ They’ve worked hard.”

The campaign to move the *ACM Awards* to Texas for the 50th anniversary did indeed begin back in 2008, when Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones invited the Academy to christen his brand new stadium set to open in early 2009. Construction on the building ran a little longer than expected and it wasn’t open in time for the *ACM Awards* that year, but the idea never went away.

“We always wanted to do something BIG for our 50th anniversary, and Jerry Jones and the Dallas Cowboys team have been great partners in helping us make that happen,” said ACM CEO Bob Romeo. “I can’t tell you how excited I am—and how excited our staff is—that the time is finally here. We really feel a huge responsibility since this is such

an important and historical year for the Academy. We’re all just proud to be a part of it.”

Plans for both the *ACM Awards* and the *ACM Party for a Cause Festival*, which will now move to Globe Life Park—Home of the Texas Rangers, have kept the ACM staff bustling over the past few years. The scale of the event has made everything—from ticketing to parking to loading people into the building—a much bigger task than ever before. The team at Dick Clark Productions was also challenged with creating staging and seating that would feel at home in such a large space. The stadium will feature two performance stages in the east end zone—each larger than the one stage at MGM Grand Garden Arena—as well as a thrust stage where artists can accept their awards. The famous Cowboys jumbotron—one of the largest in the world—will play into the live show as well. Longtime executive producers Barry Adelman and Rac Clark are now faced with the daunting task of cramming 50 years of country music history into a three-and-a-half hour broadcast.

“The challenge is to keep the show current and on the cutting edge, while still recognizing and embracing the rich history of the *ACM Awards*,” the pair said.



"There are some special awards that specifically honor historic achievements and there are bookings that will remind everyone of our proud past. At the same time, we have a line-up of country's current hottest hitmakers, and as always, our annual awards will honor the best of the year. One of the advantages we both have is that we've been with the ACMs for such a long time. We instinctively feel what this celebration should be about."

The lineup of performers announced so far is a who's who in country history, including hosts and nominees Shelton and Bryan as well as Jason Aldean, Dierks Bentley, Garth Brooks, Kenny Chesney, Eric Church, Miranda Lambert, Reba, George Strait, Keith Urban and Florida Georgia Line plus ACM New Artist of the Year nominees Sam Hunt, Thomas Rhett and Cole Swindell. Even before the performers were released, tickets for the show were high demand. The initial offering of 60,000 back in April 2014—before the staging plot was set—sold out in 18 minutes. Now that the stage plans have been

finalized, more seats were opened up to fans—including a few limited view tickets that will give fans an inside glimpse into some of the production backstage.

"We keep finding ways to accommodate as many of our fans as possible and to give more locals the opportunity to attend the 50th ACM Awards, which has always been our goal," said Romeo. "These seats are affordable and will give a very unique perspective into all of the excitement and backstage moments."

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones is happy about that and is ready to welcome die hard country music fans to Texas.

"I've had the chance to be in Super Bowls, and it's one thing to realize that you're going to have a chance to be involved, but it's another thing when it comes to fruition," Jones told *ACM Tempo*. "To really know that the ACMs are going to be here in this stadium, takes my breath. It's energized our entire organization. The idea that we're going to get to have over 70-something thousand people, in our stadium, and the show going to millions of people at the same time on TV is just great, and we're excited about it." ●



Read more about all the events scheduled for ACM Awards Texas Week beginning on p. 30