

First Listen: The Valley's Tyler Dial Shares New Country Album

Written by Lauren Grifol

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What a lot of people do not accomplish in a lifetime is within reach for Valley native and Brophy College Prep graduate, Tyler Dial. Dial is a new and up-and-coming singer, songwriter and entertainer who never fails to draw his audience in and have them dancing by the end of his show. After turning down multiple Division One scholarships to pursue a collegiate soccer career, Dial decided to continue his education at the University of Texas, and take the path he believed was his calling: his music. While he was a student, he used all of his free time playing at numerous gigs and has opened for multiple well-known artists like Cody Johnson, Pat Green, Wade Bowen, Jack Ingram, Cole Swindell, Jake Owen, and more. He is now taking the country music world by storm and absolutely killing it, to say the least.

After interviewing and getting to know Dial a little bit, I not only am a huge fan but am counting down the days for the release of his new album. And as an amazing gesture to his fellow Arizona natives, Dial decided to give AZ Foothills readers the first look at his new album coming out in May.

AFM: Tell me something most people do not know about you?

TD: A lot of people, especially those I met after high school, don't realize I used to be a very serious soccer player. I played competitive soccer for the Scottsdale Blackhawks where we won five consecutive state championships and made it to two national tournaments. We also won two state championships at Brophy. I had a few D-1 offers to play in college and was very close to playing at the Air Force Academy. I went on an unofficial and an official visit but by the spring of senior year, I understood that music was my true calling and I would regret not pursuing it.

AFM: Do you ever get stage fright? If so, what is your remedy to shake the jitters?

TD: You know what, I've never dealt with stage fright. Going out on stage and performing is something that has always been pretty natural for me. I've definitely been nervous though. Especially early on in my career, I would get nervous about sounding good, people showing up and talking in between songs. All the time we spent playing cover songs on 6th Street in Austin helped me shake that off the nerves pretty quickly. I would say, in general, nerves are a sign of feeling under-prepared.

AFM: When did you start singing?

TD: My dad always had guitars lying around the house, so it was something that sort of happened naturally. In middle school, I would look up guitar lessons on YouTube and started singing covers late at night after soccer practice which quickly turned into me writing my own songs.

AFM: Who is your greatest influence?

TD: My greatest musical influence is Garth Brooks. I've watched his live show countless times on DVDs and have seen him live more than a few times. He's always said he's not the best singer, songwriter or guitar player but he's confident in his ability to entertain. I think of myself in the same sense. I want to be known as an entertainer, not just a singer or a songwriter. I would put Justin Timberlake in the same category.

AFM: Who is your favorite singer?

TD: My favorites are always changing. When I was younger, my dad was always playing music and I immediately gravitated to The Rolling Stones, The Eagles and Garth Brooks. As I got into high school, my influences ranged from Sam Hunt to Keith Urban and John Mayer. Nowadays, I pull a lot of inspiration from the Brothers Osborne, Kings of Leon and Little Big Town.

AFM: Best concert you ever went to?

TD: When I was 13 or 14, my mom took me to see Keith Urban when he came through Phoenix and I will never forget the way he held the crowd in the palm of his hand. At one point in his set, the whole band left the stage and he played "Raining on Sunday" to a silent audience. That moment really left a mark on me and it was when I knew music was my calling.

AFM: Advice you can give to fans trying to follow in your footsteps of success?

TD: Just keep putting one foot in front of the other. That's been our motto over the past couple years when faced with adversity. Eventually you'll be able to look back a year or two and realize how far you've come.

AFM: What is something you want to say to Brophy students?

TD: Brophy made such a positive impact on my life, and I made so many memories there. I miss the walks to soccer practice after school, the fun moments in between class, and the feeling of getting out on a Friday afternoon. I would tell them to enjoy their time at Brophy as much as they can because those four years go by so fast! I also learned later on in my high school career to surround myself with people who make me happy.

AFM: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

TD: If I'm still making music in 10 years, I would consider my career a huge success. However, I definitely have lofty goals of doing a stadium tour, writing and maybe even acting in a country music musical like La La Land, and producing for other artists. Around that time, I hope I'll be starting a family, too!

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AFM: Would you ever think about going on a reality TV "singing" show? If so, which one?

TD: I definitely wanted to when I was younger. But looking back now, I can see a lot of value in the path I've taken. I've learned a lot of lessons about success and failure that I might not have gotten by going on a singing show. I've developed as a songwriter and a businessman. Some amazing artists have found success because of those shows but I don't think that's the way I want to build a fan base. It will be more rewarding in the long run.

AFM: Do you write your own songs? If so, where do you draw inspiration from?

TD: I do! In Nashville, a lot of songs get written with other people, so a lot of inspiration comes from my co-writers. Each person brings different assets to the table. It's pretty amazing that we all have different life experiences and ideas to draw from. I think that makes for the best song.

AFM: Where is your favorite creative space?

TD: I love being in the rehearsal room where I can practice without any inhibitions. When I'm at my apartment, I'm worried about my roommates or the neighbors when practicing. I also get to make music with some of my best buddies when rehearsing.

AFM: What is your best/favorite song you have performed?

TD: I'll never forget opening for Scotty McCreery the summer of senior year at the Wild Horse Pass Hotel and Casino. It was my first time opening for someone on a big stage and I played Garth Brooks' "Friends in Low Places." Hearing the crowd sing the words back to me was an incredible new feeling that has fueled me since.

AFM: Favorite thing to do in the Valley?

TD: I love hiking Camelback Mountain with my buddies when I'm back in town. It's only a 10-minute walk to the foot of the mountain from my house. Sometimes we'll hike up the Echo Canyon side and go down the Cholla trail.

AFM: Favorite restaurant in the Valley?

TD: Oh man... there are so many. I really enjoy biking down the canal and eating/having a cold beer at O.H.S.O with my family. If I have a friend in from out of town, I'll probably take them to Tee Pee and LGO as well.