

RODEO: Event spurs Sisters into summer season

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all throughout the weekend. The Xtreme Bulls show on Wednesday night saw the best attendance of all Xtreme showings from years past, with standing-room-only and sold-out seats. Friday night carried the momentum into the weekend with another sold-out show, and Saturday afternoon was just shy of selling out with the night showing leaving standing-room-only once again.

The final rodeo day on Sunday morning offered a reprieve from the weather, with early morning sunshine as the Sisters Kiwanis served breakfast to hundreds of hungry rodeo-goers. The afternoon family show was another sold-out show, as competitors fought for their titles in the final event of the weekend.

Wednesday night launched the Rodeo festivities with the Xtreme Bulls evening performance featuring the first of many bull-riding competitions throughout the weekend. This year's bull line-up tested the mettle of all cowboys; no competitors reached the required eight-second ride to win an outright title that night. Stock providers Corey and Lange provided world-class bulls.

The Friday, Saturday, and Sunday shows displayed professional cowboy sportsmanship in eight different events. Bronc- and bull-riders alike impressed the crowd with their bravery and athleticism on the back of 1,000 to 2,000 pounds of angry muscle, while ropers and wrestlers used strength and technique to claim their titles. Cowgirls displayed speed and agility during the barrel-racing where many won or lost by only tenths of a second.

Among the competitors were many newcomers to the arena, as well as seasoned professionals familiar with the Sisters Rodeo environment. A few local Oregon cowboys

placed in the top three in the steer wrestling and team roping events, while Ryder Wright of Milford, Utah tied for the arena record in saddle bronc riding with a score of 88 points — matching the previous record held by Ryan Gray who set the 88-point record back in 2008.

For event placers, this year's total payout reached a substantial \$150,000.

While spectators huddled in winter parkas, riders, ropers, and bullfighters provided an entertaining show for all. Renowned rodeo announcer Wayne Brooks, Sisters Rodeo clown veteran JJ Harrison, and famed bullfighter Rowdy Barry were among the few of an all-star cast who returned and entertained in their iconic ways.

Bullfighter Rowdy Barry commemorated his final Sisters Rodeo after 26 years. Bullfighters protect the riders when they come off a bull, distracting the bull and



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Steer wrestlers combine timing with strength to master their event.

successors and those he has personally trained retire long before him and expresses his pride in watching two of his sons go on to be successful bullfighters like himself.

Special guest, Mexican Charro Tomas Garcilazo, graced Sisters Rodeo with his traditional rope and horse performance. Originally from Mexico City, Mexico, Tomas launched his busy performance season with his visit to Sisters over the weekend. Riding atop his Andalusian horse, Bolero, he performed rope tricks and displayed a true testament to dedicated horsemanship.

Tomas expressed his utmost appreciation and gratitude to the hospitality and professionalism of the Sisters Rodeo Association as well.

"The community, the hospitality, and the fans have all been good," he said. "I hope to return in the future, most definitely."

Tomas previously visited the Sisters Rodeo in 2008.

While the Sisters Rodeo enjoyed yet another successful year, the volunteers who

remained behind the scenes made the event happen. Glenn Miller expressed his utmost appreciation for the over 200 volunteers present over the weekend at the conclusion of Sunday's show.

"You can't put a value on them," he said. "This couldn't have happened without all of them."

Twelve new sponsors also joined the banners at the Rodeo this year, increasing the total sponsorship to 66 supporting businesses continuing to fund the tradition of the annual Sisters Rodeo.

Despite chilly temperatures, crowds and performers maintained the impenetrable reputation as one of the finest rodeos in the nation — one that also gives back. On Sunday, Sisters Rodeo raised some \$7,800 for the Sara Fisher Project to combat breast cancer.



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

The great traditional event in rodeo — tie-down roping.

keeping them away from the grounded rider. It's a dangerous and demanding trade.

Barry was rewarded with a hand-carved sculpture at the Sunday showing in honor of his many years of service. JJ Harrison made a short emotional speech about Rowdy's influence on his personal and professional life as a rodeo clown, followed by Glenn Miller, president of the Sisters Rodeo Association, expressing his "deepest thanks and gratitude" to the bullfighting legend.

Rowdy has seen his

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