

Exciting, action-packed shows planned for 77th Heppner rodeo

One of the oldest rodeos in Oregon is celebrating its 77th year. Two exciting, action packed shows are planned for the Heppner Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) rodeo.

The Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo will bring all the fast action events the crowd loves such as bull riding, barrel racing, calf roping, team roping, steer wrestling, saddle bronc riding, bareback riding and the popular mutton bustin'.

This year's stock will be provided by Big Bend Rodeo Company. This is the same contractor that OPR used last year that left the audience in awe over the fabulous bucking horses. Some of the best cowboys around the United States come to challenge this stock. The bucking horse of the year in 1997, "Spring Fling" will be back, but instead of a bareback horse, she will be under saddle and the contractor says she bucks even harder with this rigging.

"Miss Kitty" will be bucking out this year as well. She is the 1998 champion saddle bronc horse for the circuit finals.

The spinning bull that left everyone cheering in 1998, "Rapid Fire," will be in the chutes and ready to take on any cowboy who wants to climb on his back.

Big Bend Rodeo said that the trucks will be full of NFR horses and bulls, so, if you want a preview, don't miss the rough stock events.

Two of the sponsors of the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo, Bank of Eastern Oregon and Les Schwab Tire Center of Heppner, are each putting a \$250 bounty up to the cowboy who draws and rides the chosen bounty animal. The Bank of Eastern Oregon is putting a \$250 bounty up to the cowboy who draws and rides the bounty horse at each performance. Les Schwab is putting a \$250 bounty up to the cowboy who draws and rides the bounty bull in each performance.

The Columbia Circuit has some of the best barrel racers in the nation and Blue Eagle Travel is donating \$150 in bonus money in each performance to the fastest time. So don't miss these beautiful and talented ladies of the Women's Professional Rodeo Association.

The announcer this year is Steve Kenyon, from Adams, OR. Steve tours the Pacific Northwest as a professional rodeo announcer.

The bullfighters for the 1999 rodeo will be Danny Newman and Tim Vredenburg. These two will risk their lives to help free

the contestants and save them from the massive horns of these huge animals.

Entertaining the fans this year will be the hilarious clown/barrelman Mark Swingler of Austin, Texas. His acts will leave fans rolling in the stands. Mark's comedy has won many awards, including Texas Circuit Contract Act of the year.

In conjunction with the Pro Rodeo, the town's county fair will also be in full swing August 17-22. The Morrow County Fair/Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo Queen Bobbie Rankin, and Princesses Tracey Rankin, Brooke Boyer and Nonnee Walters will be on hand to assist and greet our guests.

The attractions for the fair include the famous 14-year-old Nashville recording artist from eastern Oregon, Zac Grooms. He is performing Aug. 19 from 3-9:30 p.m.

Aug. 18 will feature the classic car show, kids' tractor pulls and wine and beer tasting. "Robo Bull Bucking Machine" will be here on Friday, August 20. You can try out your talents on a mechanical bull and watch the pros take to the real horns that night.

Heppner is a changing, productive community. Members work hard each year with improvements and accommodations for people traveling from out of town. The Heppner Main Street will be full of booths and a variety of food.

The parade begins on August 20 at 10 a.m. and will travel right through the newly-renovated down town. It is sure to give you the feeling of the old west.

Live music Friday will start at 4 at the fairgrounds as well as Gospel music and karaoke Saturday evening. Breakfast will be available both Saturday and Sunday morning along with a walking tour. The fabulous Morrow County Museum will be open for your viewing pleasure and tours of the historic court house will be available.

If the weather is hot, bring your swimming suit and experience the water park or play a round of golf at the golf course.

For information regarding the parade, call 676-5536. For information about the fair, call 676-9474.

The Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo committee works hard to improve the facilities for the audience's comfort. New attractions this year are a new warm up facility for competitors and added comforts for audience members.

A variety of food will be served around the rodeo grounds

and pop will be available in the stands without even leaving your seats. Local students will be bringing this around to you, so you don't have to miss any of the rodeo action. Ushers will also be available to help individual groups find their seats in the VIP seating.

The rodeo office is on the north east side of the arena and the covered handicap access is on the west side of the grandstands. Wheelchair access will be accessible by simply

driving up to the ramp by the roping boxes and unloading directly onto the ramp.

The Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo takes place on Friday Aug. 20, at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, Aug. 21, at 1:15 p.m., with slack being held Friday night following the performance. Mutton bustin' will be held 1/2 hour before the PRCA Rodeo.

The Morrow County Jackpot rodeo will also be held on Sunday, Aug. 22, at 1:15 p.m. for all fans to watch local Morrow County cowboys and alumni compete for awards, money and the famous Morrow County Amateur Calf Roping Saddle. This is sponsored by Frontier Resources, L.L.C., of Heppner and hand crafted by Bill McCoin of Severe Bros.

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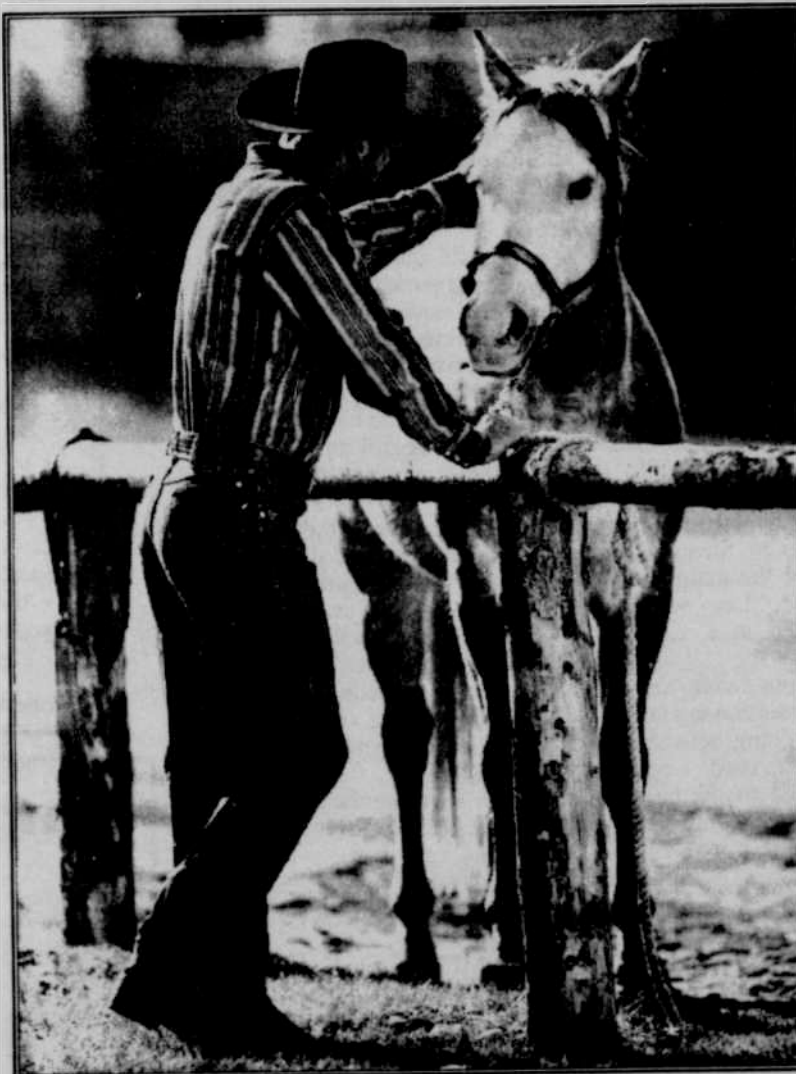
General admission for Sunday is \$6 with children six and under admitted free.

The tickets for the PRCA shows are \$8 for adults and \$5 for children seven-12 years old; children six years and under are admitted free.

VIP seating can be purchased in smaller units this year. Individuals who purchase VIP seats will have first option to buy them back next year and will have ushers to secure their seats during the performances. For VIP seating or to purchase tickets contact Nicole Mahoney at (541)676-5157; for further information about above events, contact Marlene Currin at (541) 676-9711 (eves); for lodging and RV information, call (541) 676-5157 evenings.

We hope to see you for our fabulous 77th celebration!

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