

From humble beginnings, Farm-City changed the sport



HERALD FILE PHOTO

Dave Bothum, left, and Butch Knowles, two former full-time professional cowboys, their spouses, friends and area businesses turned their idea for a professional rodeo in Hermiston into the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in 1988.

Rodeo has evolved from simple beginnings to make a mark on entire sport

By **SAM BARBEE**
Staff Writer

David Bothum didn't think anyone was coming. It was 6:30 p.m. in August of 1988 on the night of the first Farm-City Pro Rodeo, and the stands were empty. There was just an hour before the event began, and Bothum was worried.

"I thought, 'wow,'" he said. "But then about 7:30 I looked up in the stands, and they were pretty full. And it was just the red bleachers at that time."

Since that scare, Farm-City Pro Rodeo has evolved into a game-changing event that is at the center of Hermiston's yearly calendar. Top cowboys and stock from around the sport of rodeo descend on Hermiston for a few days, giving the small, blue-collar community one of the best shows on dirt.

Inception

In the late 1980s, a couple of cowboys from Hermiston thought it would be fun and beneficial to

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*Teams consisting of two FFA members from throughout the county compete in the "calf dressing" competition for bragging rights amongst FFA Chapters.

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