

Top rodeo athletes, stock to compete at new arena

By GARY L. WEST
STAFF WRITER

The Farm-City Pro Rodeo begins Wednesday with 456 contestants entered, including some of the top names in rodeo and a slew of last year's champions.

"All the top cowboys are coming," said David Bothum, co-founder of the Farm-City Pro Rodeo and former professional saddle bronc rider.

"Bucking horse-wise and bucking bulls-wise, it's just outstanding. It should be an outstanding rodeo."

Bothum said the timed-event stock is also high quality, for the timed roping events.

Bothum has been busy in recent weeks as a subcontractor and rodeo board member, getting the arena and rodeo facilities ready for this year's rodeo.

"I think everyone — cowboys, spectators — will be impressed with this facility," Bothum said.

He expressed appreciation to the community for its support in getting to this point.

"The community should be pretty amazed when they come walking through," he said.

Among those scheduled to compete in the new Farm-City Arena at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center are five of the cowboys in the Top 10 for the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association all-around title including current standings leader, Tuf Cooper of Weatherford, Texas, and 13-time All-Around Cowboy World Champion Trevor Brazile.

The man who's owned the Farm-City all-around title for two of the last three years, Rhen Richard, is also expected to compete in defense of his 2016 Hermiston rodeo title.

Russell Cardoza of Ter-



A group of bulls from Korkow Rodeos stock contracting company is among the first group of livestock to offload into the new Farm-City Pro Rodeo arena stock pens at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center on Monday, Aug. 7. The animals will be housed in the on-grounds pens all week during the Hermiston rodeo.

STAFF PHOTO BY GARY L. WEST

rebonne, Oregon, who is leading the all-around race for the Columbia River Circuit, is also slated to compete in three events.

Returning bareback champion Jake Vold is signed up to try to defend his title, as is steer wrestling champ Clayton Hass, who sits seventh in the PRCA all-around world standings. He will also compete in the team roping event.

Tyrell J. Smith, 2016 Farm-City saddle bronc co-champion, is scheduled to ride in defense of his buckle from last year. The Sand Coulee, Montana, cowboy tied for the 2016 saddle bronc title with Sterling Crawley. Crawley is not entered in this year's show.

Tyler Prein of Alvord, Texas, who won the tie-down roping last year in Hermiston will also be back to attempt a repeat win. Timber Moore of Aubrey, Texas, and Matt Shiozawa of Chubbock, Idaho, who won the event in 2015 and



STAFF PHOTO BY GARY L. WEST

David Bothum, right, co-founder of the Farm-City Pro Rodeo, talks to stock contractor T.J. Korkow of Korkow Rodeos, during a tour of the livestock pens Monday, Aug. 7, at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center.

2013 respectively, are also entered in this year's tie-down roping in Hermiston.

The top Farm-City team ropers from 2016 — Garrett Tonozzi and Wyatt Cox — are also expected back in Hermiston this week as last year's barrel racing champion, Kimmie Wall.

The only event in which a 2016 Farm-City champi-

on who isn't entered for the 2017 rodeo is last year's bull riding champion Cole Melancon, who is currently ranked seventh in the world standings.

But there will be no shortage of bull riding talent as five of the cowboys in the Top 10 of the bull riding world standings are entered in Farm-City, including Garret Smith of Rexburg, Idaho (No. 2), and Ty Wallace of Collbran, Colorado. (No. 3).

At least 32 cowboys and cowgirls from Umatilla and Morrow counties are entered in the event, 17 just from Hermiston. Local competition will be particularly prominent in the barrel racing event, with 18 barrel racers from Umatilla and Morrow counties, led by Callahan Crossley of Hermiston, who is currently in seventh place in the Women's Professional Rodeo Association's Columbia River Circuit standings as of July 31. Crossley and the rest of the local barrel

racers will be competing against some of the top talent in the event.

Seven of the top 10 barrel racers in the current WPRA standings are entered in Farm-City including top-ranked Tiany Schuster of Krum, Texas, who has a lead of more than \$76,000 over second-place Stevi Hillman of Weatherford, Texas, who is also entered. The top-ranked Oregon cowgirl is Amberleigh Moore of Salem-Keizer, Oregon, who is also entered in the Farm-City field and leads the Columbia River Circuit standings.

Even before the rodeo started, stock contractor T.J. Korkow praised the new setup.

"I think it's awesome," Korkow said while unloading his bucking horses and bulls in the new stock pens.

"They've all been very impressed," Bothum said of the stock contractor's assessment of the new facility.

The pens are big and animals can relax and not be crowded, Bothum said.

There is another advantage for the animals and contractors in that they can stay on the grounds through the whole run of the rodeo.

"They don't have to haul 'em in (every day) like they have for the last 30 years," when the animals were housed at stock yards away from the rodeo arena. Bothum said that means there is less chance of an incident occurring during transport, possibly resulting in injuries to livestock.

And less transporting also means less work for the contractors moving livestock around every day.

Bothum express appreciation to the community for supporting the rodeo and it's board of directors and efforts to get the facility to this point.

He said they will learn from this week and see if anything still needs to be improved and, if so, "we'll make it better."

Local contestants for 2017

Some of the Umatilla and Morrow counties contestants entered in the Farm-City Pro Rodeo.

Heppner

Allen Boore, calf roping, steer wrestling

Susan Gibbs, barrel racing

Blake Knowles, steer wrestling

Clayton Morrison, steer wrestling

Hermiston

Randy Rae Britt, barrel racing

Shandie Britt, barrel racing

Andy Carlson, team roping

Britni Carlson, barrel racing

Brandon Christensen, steer wrestling

Callahan Crossley, barrel racing

Shane Crossley, team roping

Cody Ford, bull riding

Brad Goodrich, calf roping

Mary Shae Hays, barrel racing

Steve Hoffman, calf roping

Hilary Imhof, barrel racing

Dalton Massey, steer wrestling

Shawn Massey, barrel racing

Jordan Minor, barrel racing

Kelsey Monahan, barrel racing

Michael Pederson, calf roping

Pendleton

Lawanda Bronson, barrel racing

Phoenix Everano, team roping

Wendy Wilson, barrel racing

Echo

Amy Coelho, barrel racing

Jody Hale, barrel racing

Stanfield

Chandra Eng, barrel racing

Jami Erwert, barrel racing

Jodi Goodrich, barrel racing

Seth Hopper, calf roping

Lexington

Mary Ann Munkers, barrel racing

Milton-Freewater

Bryce Palmer, team roping

IN BRIEF

Fall recreation sports start in September

Adult fall sports league in Hermiston includes co-ed competitive and recreational volleyball leagues and UST-FL Adult Flag Football.

Offered by Hermiston Parks & Recreation, captains must register all volleyball players (roster is limited to 12 players). The eight-week season, which starts Sunday, Sept. 17, in the Gold Gym at Hermiston High School, includes a postseason single elimination event. The team fee is \$150 and the registration deadline is Thursday, Aug. 31.

The football league is 8-on-8 non-contact. The eight-week season includes a single elimination tournament. The games are on Saturdays, beginning Sept. 9, at Sunset Elementary School. The team registration fee is \$475. The captain must register the team by Friday, Aug. 25.

To participate in the fall adult leagues, participants must be 18-or-older, not in high school and not playing on a college team.

For more information, visit www.hermistonrecreation.com. To register, call 541-667-5018 or stop by the recreation office, 180 N.E. Second St., Hermiston.

Golf Fore Life seeks participants

Golfers are invited to tee-off to benefit Pregnancy Care Services of Hermiston and Pendleton.

The Golf 'Fore' Life Tournament is Saturday, Aug. 26, at Echo Hills Golf Course. Sign-ins are at 1 p.m., with a shotgun start at 2 p.m. A catered meal is set for 4:30 p.m.

The cost is \$60 per person, which includes green fees. For more information, contact phyllis@pregnancycare.com, 541-567-3393.

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TICKETS

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TICKET OUTLETS

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Rodeo ticket includes Free Admission to the Umatilla County Fair

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(12 & under)

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Bullfighters Only

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