

RODEO

Whoop-Up Days rodeo adds to entertainment package

By GARRY ALLISON
Lethbridge Herald

Last year the Whoop-Up Days Rodeo Committee brought the bucking chutes up close to the grandstand for a great improvement in the viewing the action.

That major change will stay this year, giving fans another close-up look at some of the rodeo world's top cowboys and stock. As well, a few more improvements will be added.

One of the featured competitors will be Cardston's Monica Wilson, sitting second in the barrel racing standings in Canada and recent winner of the Guy Weadick Memorial Award at the Calgary Stampede.

The Weadick Award honored Wilson for her extensive work in finding a sponsor for the women's barrel racing at the Stampede. For the first time, the women competed for the \$50,000 jackpot, the same as the men, mainly due to Wilson's behind the scenes work.

The Whoop-Up Days Pro Rodeo will run Aug. 7-10, with all performances beginning at 7 p.m. under the lights.

One of the big changes sure to please everyone is the fact the rodeo price structure has been changed. Rodeo tickets will be \$5 across the board for adults, students, seniors and children over the age of 10. Those under 10 years of age will be admitted free.

Admission to the grounds this year will be \$6 for adults while youths 11-17 and seniors will be \$5. Children 10 and under are free. Grounds parking is \$3 per vehicle.

Another big change will be a super grandstand show after the rodeo each night, free of charge.

The big show will feature Susan Graham, a country/rock star whose hit Beating of My Heart is heard regularly on CJOC, Wednesday and Thursday nights.

Popular Laura Vinson and Free Spirit will entertain Friday night. Vinson is one of Canada's top entertainers and much of her music, and her dancers' performances, are taken from her Cree-Cherokee background.

Comedian Herb Dixon and Streetnix perform Saturday night. Dixon is a high-energy comedian known for his offbeat impressions of everything from Indy cars and horses to a Harley Davidson.

"The entertainment package is free, right after the rodeo each night, and it is open to anyone on the grounds," says Barb Tale of the Lethbridge and District Exhibition office.

Cowboys will be chasing \$3,000 added

purse in all of the major events, including saddle and bareback bronc riding, bull riding, barrel racing, calf roping and steer wrestling. The rodeo will also feature novice saddle bronc, boys steer riding and team roping.

To help entice some of the best rodeo bareback bronc riders to the Whoop-Up Days, rodeo committee chairman Gregor Carlton met with the Cranbrook Rodeo people.

"Together with Cranbrook, which is on the same time as Lethbridge, we will be offering a \$500 cash award to the bareback bronc rider receiving the highest combined score at Whoop-Up Days and the Cranbrook Rodeo," says Carlton. "They have to enter and compete at both rodeos to qualify."

"We are also going to feature novice saddle bronc riding this year. There are a few younger kids around here, like Jonathan Blackmore of Cardston, who are riding pretty well. The Blackmore kid is defending Canadian novice saddle bronc champion and he's riding really well right now. This gives the fans another exciting rough stock event to enjoy."

Stock for Whoop-Up Days will once again be supplied by Kesler Rodeo Ltd, with Greg and Duane supplying some of the rankest bucking stock in the rodeo world.

The Lethbridge show is also part of the Coors Chute Out Series, Skool Inc. Pro Rodeo Tour, and the Wrangler Canadian Rodeo Circuit Series.

These special bonus series help attract even more top cowboys to the rodeo.

As well, the Alberta Auction Market Association is offering a \$200 bonus to the winner of the boys steer riding.

The Coors Chute Out Series sees the top cowboys awarded points in each major event and at the end of the series those sitting in top spot receive a \$6,000 bonus. Second-place finishers receive a \$2,500 bonus.

There are 28 B.C. and Alberta rodeos in the series.

The Skool Inc. Pro Rodeo Tour also offers points in each event to the winners, first through eighth. Whoop-Up Days is one of 26 rodeos on the tour. The top eight in each major event will be invited to a high-paying Finals Rodeo in Vancouver Aug. 22-25.

The Wrangler Circuit has a dozen rodeos involved and awards points to the top eight at each rodeo. Circuit series winners receive a \$1,000 bonus and the all around champion will receive a \$2,000 bonus.

Bill Kehler, a regular at Whoop-Up Days for a number of years, will be the rodeo announcer while the rodeo clown, with special entertainment acts as well, will be T.C. Evans.

Evans has an acclaimed border collie dog act and will also be working the barrels during the bull riding.

"His main job will be to entertain the crowd and he will have a couple of acts each night," said past rodeo chairman Tom Ivins. "Our rodeo this year will have the best entertainment dollar in the entire city, including rodeo, Evans and the free entertainment at the end. This is a family package. You can come on to the grounds all day and for another \$5 take in the rodeo and the stage show."

Also in attendance will be Miss Rodeo Canada, Erin Moore.

A feature Sunday at 1 p.m. will be a team penning competition in front of the grandstand, free to anyone interested.

WORLD RODEO CHAMPIONS

Through July 14

BARRILE BRONC RIDING

1. Billy Chesser, New Mexico, S.D., 380.000; 2. Craig Latham, Oklahoma, Texas, 357.000; 3. Mike O'Hall, Calgary, Alberta, 350.000; 4. Don Johnson, Manitoba, Mont., 340.000; 5. Red King, Oklahoma, Alberta, 347.000; 6. Tom Roper, Saskatchewan, Texas, 347.000; 7. Mike Callahan, Illinois, Ariz., 339.000; 8. Don Chesser, Grandview, Okla., 330.000.

BARREL RACING

1. Marvin Gossel, Billy Forsyth, S.D., 382.000; 2. Mark Gossel, Brandon, S.D., 328.000; 3. Wayne Homan, Oklahoma, M.D., 324.000; 4. Lance Cooney, Calgary, Texas, 320.000; 5. Danny McLaughlin, Colorado, Texas, 320.000; 6. Chad Cooney, Kansas, Mont., 324.000; 7. Eric Hester, Washington, Okla., 324.000; 8. Rocky Strang, Calgary, Cal., 324.000.

BULL RIDING

1. Jerome Davis, Archdale, N.C., 383.000; 2. Chris Latta, Georgia, Okla., 348.750; 3. Scott Skelton, Fort Worth, Texas, 343.500; 4. Ted Henderson, Morgan Hill, Texas, 341.000; 5. Byron Davis, Payson, Okla., 338.000; 6. Keith Adams, Ontario, Texas, 338.000; 7. Philby Ebbels, Fort Worth, Texas, 338.000.

CALF ROPING

1. Cody Oll, Orchard, Texas, 384.150; 2. Fred Whitfield, Houston, Texas, 351.000; 3. Scott Skelton, Fort Worth, Texas, 351.111; 4. Mike Johnson, Haysville, Okla., 348.000; 5. Joe Beaver, Marquette, Texas, 344.000; 6. Rudy Smith, Comstock, Texas, 338.000; 7. Shawn McLaughlin, Iron, Texas, 337.250; 8. Bud Ford, Euwahi, Texas, 336.000; 9. Keith Adams, Ontario, Texas, 336.000.

STEER WRESTLING

1. Chad Beitel, Jerome, Utah, 354.500; 2. Marty Nelson, Kellie, Texas, 342.000; 3. Ole Berry, Checotah, Okla., 339.000; 4. Harold Thayer, Poplarville, Miss., 338.000; 5. Mark Wadd, Coalinga, Ariz., 332.750; 6. Brock Andrew, St. George, Utah, 329.000; 7. Tommy Cook, Hockley, Texas, 328.000.

BARRILE RACING

1. Krista Peterson, Elbert, Colo., 382.000; 2. Sherry Carl, Merissa, Ariz., 351.250; 3. Sharon Kibbold, Big Horn, Mont., 342.000; 4. Kay Weyland, Stockdale, Texas, 341.000; 5. Feltor Taylor, Poudre, Texas, 331.000; 6. Yana Reininger, Ozark, Mo., 330.000; 7. Tracy Lynn Johnson, Haysville, Okla., 330.000.

Unique clown act set for rodeo

Tom Ivins of the Lethbridge and District Exhibition doesn't usually get excited about rodeo clowns, but he is this year.

Ivins, a former steer wrestling tough in Canada, can't say enough about the Whoop-Up Days clown, Todd T.C. Evans of Parma, Id., the Canine Clown and the Lil' sweethearts of the Rodeo.

"He's a superb entertainer and is an essential part of the Whoop-Up Days rodeo entertainment package," says Ivins.

Evans began his rodeo career as a bronc rider, but during his sophomore year in high school found himself in the role of bull fighter.

The thrill, and the steady paycheck of a hired act, motivated him into accepting his first paying performance while still in high school.

The local committee also pointed out the need for comedy, and a clown act was born.

For the next 10 years he was a bullfighter and continued to perfect his comedy routines on the amateur and semi-professional level. Then the pro boys called.

By 1993 he had developed a fresh performing dog routine, the Lil' sweethearts of the Rodeo. Since then he's performed throughout the mid-western states and into Canada, including Omak, Wash., Medicine Hat and the Lewiston Roundup.

This will be his first trip to Whoop-Up Days.

Evans and his pups have been written up in Western Horseman magazine as a super funny rodeo act.

He and his dogs of various ages and breeds work the rodeo

from start to finish, not just in a minute or two act. One of the keys to his success is he tries to avoid repetition from night to night.

Evans trains his own dogs, with love, compassion and consistency, not electric shock devices.

Ivins believes Evans and his family of pups will be worth the \$5 across the board ticket for the rodeo, once you are in the grounds. Rodeo prices also include free admission for kids 12 and under.

Evans is sure to work well with veteran rodeo announcer Bill Kehler at Whoop-Up Days, a key to any successful clown performance.

With all the action and excitement of rodeo there's always room for a laugh or three.

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