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Guymon Pioneer Days Rodeo Where Champions Play the First Weekend in May

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Guymon ready to be a cowboy town

GUYMON, Okla. – Over the next 10 days, this community of more than 12,000 in the heart of the Oklahoma Panhandle will become a cowboy town.

It's more than the title of a Brooks & Dunn song, more than a few extra cowboy hats roaming the streets. It's rodeo time in Texas County, from this weekend's Doc Gardner Memorial to next week's Guymon Pioneer Days.

Between the two, more than 1,000 cowboys and cowgirls will test their skills inside Henry C. Hitch Pioneer Arena. The highlight will be Pioneer Days Rodeo, which features four performances set for 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 6; 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 7; and 2 p.m. Sunday, May 8.

"This committee has been working very hard for several months to prepare and plan for our rodeo," said Jim Quimby, chairman of the volunteer group that organizes the annual rodeo. "We have over 800 contestants who have entered our ProRodeo, and that means a lot of things for this community."

Yes, it does. Competition begins Monday with the first two rounds of steer roping, followed by the final two rounds Tuesday. Wednesday and Thursday will feature two rounds of tie-down roping, steer wrestling and team roping, while Friday's morning session will be one full round of barrel racing. The second round will begin directly after and carry over into the weekend performances. That marks seven straight days of ProRodeo and a boon to fuel stops, restaurants and other businesses in town.

"We only have a few more days for people to get their advanced tickets, so we want to make sure they know they get a discount for buying their tickets early," Quimby said, noting that advance tickets are \$15, while it costs \$20 at the gate for ages 12 and older; tickets for children ages 6-11 are \$10, and kids 5 and younger get in for either \$5 or two cans of food, which will be donated to Loaves and Fishes Food Cupboard, a local food pantry.

It all adds up to a bargain for the type of entertainment. From the comedy of rodeo entertainer Cody Sosebee to the world championship bucking stock from Pete Carr Pro Rodeo, Lancaster & Jones Pro Rodeo, D&H Cattle Co., Powder River Rodeo Co. and Korkow Rodeos. Combined those firms will have some of the greatest bucking animals in the sport all in Guymon.

That includes the reigning two-time Bareback Horse of the Year, Carr's Dirty Jacket, which bucked at a ProRodeo for the first time inside Hitch Arena eight seasons ago. Those great animals will be mixed with terrific timed-event horses and a host of the top contestants in the game.

This year's field will feature 119 cowboys and cowgirls that have National Finals qualifications, including 18 world champions making up 46 gold buckles. Many of those have ties to Texas County, from Oklahoma Panhandle State University rodeo alumni: three-time steer roping world champion Rocky Patterson, two-time saddle bronc riding titlist Taos Muncy and 2014 bronc riding winner Spencer Wright.

"We're awfully proud to draw the very best in rodeo to Guymon every year," Quimby said. "That says a lot for Guymon to have that kind of hospitality that these great contestants want to come back every year to our rodeo."