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

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Harrison returns to Guymon rodeo

GUYMON, Okla. – It's been two decades since John Harrison got his start as a rodeo entertainer.

Now he is one of the preeminent entertainers in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. He is a four-time winner of the PRCA Comedy Act of the year and is a three-time winner of the Coors Man in the Can, recognizing the top barrelman in the game each year.

Harrison returns to Texas County to showcase that talent at the Guymon Pioneer Days Rodeo, set for 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 4; 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 5; and 2 p.m. Sunday, May 6, at Henry C. Hitch Pioneer Arena.

Raised in Soper, Okla., to a rodeo family, Harrison began his entertaining career as a trick rider. He joined the PRCA in 1999, and within five years, he had transitioned to being a clown and barrelman. It provided greater opportunities and has allowed him the chance to showcase the funny side of his amazing abilities.

"Everything's changed since I first started clowning," said Harrison, 39, the grandson of 1962 world champion bull rider Freckles Brown. "I'm married and have a family and responsibilities. My whole life has changed."

It's been pretty good. When possible, his wife, Carla, and their three children travel the rodeo circuit with him. When it's not possible, Harrison knows his rodeo family will be there in support and spirit.

When it's all combined, that life is why he is one of the top entertainers in the game today. He knows the awards are nice, but it's the story behind them that makes it all better. The awards are based on votes by PRCA members, so it's his peers that make the awards so memorable.

"It's the greatest honor that there is, and it's very humbling because you know the amount of talent that there is in rodeo," he said. "It makes you feel so good."

But they are awards Harrison has earned.

"John is good, clean family fun," said John Gwatney, the production supervisor for Pete Carr's Classic Pro Rodeo, the primary livestock producer for the rodeo. "It's his rodeo background, because he grew up in this sport.

"For us, he helps us with the timing of our production. When you know what needs to be done and have someone that doesn't have a big ego, then he's willing to do work and willing to do that for the production."

That's the key reaching fans with a variety of entertaining items. Whether it's a trick riding display that will leave fans in awe or his parody of rodeo queens, Harrison has a lot of ammunition in his bag.

One of Harrison's greatest attributes is finding the best ways to entertain the audience. Whether it's engaging with fans through his humor or showcasing his incredibly athletic ability, smiles are his greatest reward.

“I like everybody to come to the rodeo and truly get away from the problems in their lives,” he said. “I want them to leave that stuff at home and come have fun. When they have fun, then it throws gas on the fire for me.”