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For the Red Bluff Round-Up

WOMEN ROPERS COMING TO RED BLUFF

Breakaway roping added to the Round-Up

Red Bluff, Calif. (March 19, 2018) – A new event is coming to the Red Bluff Round-Up.

Breakaway roping will be one of the competition events at this year's Round-Up, held April 20-21-22 at the Tehama District Fairgrounds.

For cowgirls only, breakaway is similar to tie-down roping. The cowgirl on horseback in the box at the south end of the arena, nods her head when she and her horse are ready to go. The calf is released from the chute and the cowgirl ropes the calf. The cowgirl stops her horse, and while the calf runs, the end of the rope, which was attached to the saddle horn, breaks away, signaling the end of the run. Good breakaway runs will be two or three seconds in length.

It's a fun addition to the Round-Up, says local breakaway roper Suzanne Williams. Williams, who lived in Gerber and recently moved to Susanville to coach the Lassen College rodeo team with her husband Dan, will compete in Red Bluff.

Fans will enjoy the breakaway roping for two reasons, Williams believes. It's fast paced, and it features women. PRCA rodeos usually involve women in the barrel racing only, and spectators may like to see another women's event. "The fans like to see the cowgirls," Williams said. "In our day and age, when women are empowered, it's nice to see them get to rope."

Williams grew up on a ranch ninety miles from Winnemucca, Nev. and began breakaway roping when she was eight years old. As a kid, her parents allowed her to compete in three junior rodeos a year, but once she got to high school, "I was all in," she said. She has always "made" her own horses, riding horses she trained herself instead of buying them trained. In college, she won the all-around title at the College National Finals Rodeo twice (2001, 2003), and has competed at the Women's Pro Rodeo Association (WPRA) Finals Rodeo three times, finishing as reserve world champion breakaway roper in 2015 and 2016.

The breakaway roping at the Round-Up will be sanctioned by the Women's Pro Rodeo Association (WPRA). The first round of competition will take place during slack on April 19; the 24 fastest breakaway ropers will go on to compete in the performances (eight in each performance.)

The Round-Up will add \$2500 to the purse for the breakaway roping, and Williams thinks that will entice breakaway ropers from all over the nation to come to Red Bluff. "We'll see a lot of California cowgirls. It'll draw cowgirls from all over, because of the added money. It's worth driving out here."

Williams said the little girls in the crowd will appreciate seeing the breakaway ropers. “I think it helps (them), seeing the cowgirls in another event,” she said. “All those little girls out in the stands, waiting to watch.”

The Red Bluff Round-Up will be held April 20-22. Performances begin at 7 pm on April 20, at 2:30 on April 21 and at 1:30 on April 22. Tickets range in price from \$14 to \$30 and can be purchased online at www.RedBluffRoundup.com, at the Round-Up office (530.527.1000) and at the gate. For more information, visit the website.