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For the Red Bluff Round-Up

### **DANCE PARTNERS AT THE RED BLUFF ROUND-UP**

*Bucking horses, bulls are silent partners with personalities in bronc riding, bull riding*

Red Bluff, Calif. (April 3, 2017) – Sometimes at the Red Bluff Round-Up, the glory goes to the cowboys.

But their silent dance partners –the bucking horses and bulls that they ride, to score big points and win big checks, deserve their share of the accolades as well.

Since half of a bareback rider's, saddle bronc rider's, or bull rider's score goes to how well his "draw" - the animal that has been randomly chosen for him to ride – they deserve a bit of the spotlight.

The Round-Up hires five different stock contractors: the men and women who own the bucking horses and bulls, to be sure that there are plenty of high-quality animals available for the cowboys.

Those stock contractors: Growney Bros. and Bridwell Pro Rodeo, Red Bluff; Four Star Rodeo Co., Cottonwood, Calif.; Flying U/Rosser Rodeo Co., Marysville, Calif.; Calgary Stampede, Calgary, Alberta, and Flying Diamond/Corey and Lange Rodeo, Moses Lake, Wash., bring their best animals to Red Bluff.

Here is a snapshot of a few of them.

Tim Bridwell has partnered with longtime stock contractor John Growney, and one of his favorite horses will be in Red Bluff. Wild and Blue, a gray mare that has been selected to buck at the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo (WNFR) the past five years, is a "hometown girl," Bridwell said. The mare was purchased from someone in the Red Bluff area, when she was a four-year-old. The thirteen-year-old bareback horse carried Winn Ratliff to a win in Redding, Calif. last year, and Steven Peebles scored 89 points with her at the Calgary Stampede in 2016.

Another one of Bridwell's favorites is a little mare named Gypsy Soul. The fourteen-year-old was purchased from Canada, and even though she's only been to the WNFR a few times, she's special to Bridwell. "She's kind of a cute unassuming little horse," he said. "She's not very big and not very athletic-looking, but if you were putting together a football team, she'd be like Rudy, the kid from Notre Dame. She doesn't know she's not the best one, but she tries really, really hard." Seth Hardwick, Tim O'Connell and Wes Stevenson tied for sixth place on Gypsy Soul in Red Bluff in 2015 with 79 points each.

Reno Rosser is the second generation of the Rosser family to be involved in the rodeo company, following in the footsteps of his dad Cotton. One of the horses the Rossers will bring to Red Bluff is Little Red Hawk, a bareback horse that carried Clayton Biglow to a second place finish

at last year's Round-Up. Little Red Hawk was raised by the Rosser family and is the daughter of an eight-time WNFR horse, Lady Red Hawk. Little Red Hawk is smaller than the average horse, at about 1,200 lbs., but gentle. "She's very kind," Rosser said, "like a horse in the backyard. You could walk up to her and pet her. I just wouldn't recommend getting on her."

Cottonwood, California's Jeff Davis is the owner of Four Star Rodeo Co., just fifteen miles north of Red Bluff, and he will bring a six-year-old bull named Yellow Fever to the Round-Up. Yellow Fever was named as the top bull of the WNFR last year, was the high marked bull at the Ft. Worth (Texas) Stock Show and Rodeo, and threw three-time world champion bull rider Sage Kimzey off at the San Antonio, Texas Rodeo earlier this spring. He knows his job, Davis said, standing calmly in the chute till the cowboy is ready to ride, then he "explodes out of there, leaps three or four feet in the air, then either fakes to the right or spins to the left. He has no set pattern." Yellow Fever, a yellow bull, was raised in central California.

The stock contractor coming the farthest is Calgary Stampede, from Calgary, Alberta. Tiger Warrior, a ten-year-old bay stud, is one of the bucking horses the Stampede will bring, said manager Keith Marrington. Tiger Warrior was sired by Grated Coconut and is out of Fearless Warrior, two horses who have both bucked at the WNFR and the Canadian Finals Rodeo. Tiger Warrior was selected to buck at last year's WNFR and was voted the Saddle Bronc Horse of the Canadian Finals in 2015. When Tiger Warrior was done at the WNFR last December, he came to John Growney's ranch, where he has been breeding mares. After the horse works the Round-Up, he will be taken back to Calgary. This is the first year the Calgary Stampede has brought animals to Red Bluff.

Tom Lange and Mike Corey, owners of Flying Diamond and Corey and Lange Rodeo, have provided their livestock for the Round-Up for the past three years. One of the horses they will bring to Red Bluff is the bareback horse Trip Wire. The paint horse, who is a bit smaller than average, is a tough horse to ride, Corey said. "Most all the top cowboys have had a chance to ride him, and he's a difficult horse to ride. They say he's really strong, he doesn't weaken any time during the ride, and he gets stronger as the ride goes on." Not many cowboys have won checks riding Trip Wire. "They have a real deep appreciation" for the horse, Corey said. "They don't win on him very often because they don't ride him very often. There's just not many like him in the world that buck so hard, and he consistently bucks very hard."

Rodeo livestock are often considered like family among their owners, said Reno Rosser, and stock contractors pride themselves on bringing their best to the Round-Up. "When we come to Red Bluff, we bring the best that we have. We take a lot of pride in their performance, and if they don't perform well, we won't be successful." He likens his animals to children: "Watching your horses perform is like watching your kids play baseball. You get that same feeling."

The 96<sup>th</sup> annual Red Bluff Round-Up is April 21-23 at the Tehama District Fairgrounds in Red Bluff, Calif. The performances begin at 7 pm on April 21, at 2:30 pm on April 22 and at 1:30 pm on April 23. Tickets can be purchased online at [RedBluffRoundup.com](http://RedBluffRoundup.com), or at the gate. For more information, visit the website or call 530.527.1000.

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Cutline:

Tiger Warrior, owned by Calgary Stampede, will compete in the saddle bronc riding at the Red Bluff Round-Up. The ten-year-old bay stud has spent the winter in Red Bluff at the Growney Ranch.

Brett Stall rides Yellow Fever, owned by Four Star Rodeo of Cottonwood, Calif., at the 2016 Red Bluff Round-Up. The six-year-old bull knows his job, said owner Jeff Davis. Photo by Hubbell Photography.

Clayton Biglow rides Little Red Hawk of the Rosser Rodeo string, to a second place finish at the 2016 Red Bluff Round-Up. The horse is gentle, said Reno Rosser, but not so in the rodeo arena. Photo by Hubbell Photography.