



Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo

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FOUNDED 1984

PRESS RELEASE

“Bull Doggin’, Bull Ridin’ & Barrel Racin’ the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo is Back!

**ADAMS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS – DENVER, CO will host the
2005 Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo**

Grab your cowboy hats, dust of those boots and saddle up, the 21st Annual Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo (**The Nations Only Touring Black Rodeo**) is back at the Adams County Fairgrounds, Denver, CO. Start the weekend off Friday, August 19th 7:00 p.m. with a “Cookout Under the Stars” at the Adams County Fairgrounds. Saturday, August 20th join us at the Black American West Museum at 10:00 a.m. located at 3091 California Street, Denver, Colorado for the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo Induction Ceremonies to the “BPIR Black Cowboy Walk of Fame”. Saturday 6:30 p.m. the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo commences, and continues Sunday, August 21st at 3:00 p.m. for the “Pre-gospel Show” and 3:30 p.m. for the rodeo. For an in depth overview of the drama and the excitement, visit the web site at www.billpickettrodeo.com.

The founder of the **Black American West Museum**, Mr. Paul W. Stewart used to tell the stories of the Old Black West to Mr. Lu Vason the founder of the **Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo**. Mr. Vason, who was inspired by these old tales especially after attending the Cheyenne Frontier Days (the Granddaddy of rodeos in Wyoming). Mr. Vason, states, “My experience was exciting, but it lacked one thing, **Black Cowboys**”. Thus began Mr. Vason lifelong quest to educate the country about the Black Western Experience and the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo.

Heralding the legacy of the Black Cowboys and Cowgirls, president and event producer, Mr. Vason has been unrelenting with his vision to keep history alive. Armed with the knowledge that one out of every three cowboys were a person of color, Mr. Vason is a true champion of the cause. “The rodeo was named after the legendary creator of Bull Doggin, William “Bill” Pickett. This rodeo serves as a tribute to the original ‘Bull Dogger’ and is dedicated to all the Black Cowboys and Cowgirls of the past who helped shape the West, and those today who help to keep the spirit of the West alive, ‘cites Vason.

Celebrating the 21st season of the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo and hundreds of performances later, Lu Vason, President and Producer of the Rodeo, continues to challenge the false perception of the invisible presence of Black’s in the development of the West.

The Black Rodeo and the Black American West Museum has been a powerful tool in educating people on the Black West experiences and the cultural pride associated with all the contributions made by Black Americans.

“People know the name Will Rogers,” said Vason, “but who they hadn’t heard of was Bill Pickett, and if they had, they didn’t know he was black”. Bill Pickett born in 1870 in Tyler, Texas created “Bull Dogging”, a move in which he rode along side a steer, jumped onto its shoulders and brought the steer down by digging his feet into the ground, and biting the steers lip. The modern day version of the move called “steer wrestling” and remains the most intriguing exhibition throughout rodeo history

Bareback riding, calf roping, steer undecorating, bull riding and cowgirl barrel racing are only a smidgen of the excitement that awaits the rodeo spectator. Better than any old Western movie, more exciting than a day at the horse track, and hotter than a Fourth of July celebration, the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo is the most fun you will have this year. We guarantee it.

Touring from February through November each year, the rodeo can be seen in cities, arenas and fairgrounds across the country including, Atlanta, Austin and Beaumont, TX, Los Angeles, Oakland and San Diego, CA, Memphis, Washington DC, and St. Louis, MO.

This years’ impressive list of sponsors for the Denver Area include: Wells Fargo Bank - Title Sponsors; Budweiser - Presenting Sponsors; Dodge Rodeo, Lancaster Western Wear, and Glory Foods - Events Sponsors; Upscale Magazine - National Media Sponsor; Fox 31 News, American Legacy and the Urban Spectrum as Local Media Sponsors.

The Black American West Museum and the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo is hosting a COOKOUT UNDER THE STARS, at the Adams County Regional Parks located at 9755 Henderson Road, Henderson, CO, 80601, Friday, August 19, 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. to celebrate the Great Black Western Migration.

Start the weekend off with a night filled with songs, laughter and games. Dust off your cowboy boots and hats and bring your families, friends, and colleagues to meet Mr. Paul W. Stewart, founder of the Black American West Museum and listen to campfire stories of the Old Black West. Encounter Black Cowboys and Cowgirls, who are competing in the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo and learn what hoolihanding, dog fall, piggin’ string and scratching mean. Dance in the star filled air to the soulful tunes of Rudy Grant and dine on tender juicy barbeque. Western games, hayrides, campfires, horseshoes, three-legged races, balloon tosses, western musical chairs, stick horse races and many other old fashion fun and games will be scheduled throughout the night.

Saturday morning, August 20 at 10:00a.m., the festivities resume at the Black American West Museum, 3091 California Street, Denver, CO 80205, with the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo’s induction of two prominent community leaders who have contributed and enlightened the public on the historical significance of the Black Western Migration.

Saturday evening, August 20 at 6:30 p.m. join us at the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo at Adams County Fairgrounds, located at E.124 Ave. & Henderson Rd, Henderson, CO, where a group of Cowboys and Cowgirls leave their day jobs to compete in the sport they love. The excitement returns with the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo, Sunday afternoon, August 21 at 3:30 p.m. with more Rodeo fun.

Tickets can be obtained at all Ticket Master Outlets including selected Rite-Aids, Foley’s, Mail Box Express, The Word Bookstore, Winning Coiffeurs 2, Salon Willingham, Miracle 8 Cleaners and Mr. G’s Hair Design Studio and Howard’s Bar-B-Que in Colorado Springs.

Adams County Fairgrounds is located at East 124 Avenue & Henderson Road, in Henderson. For ticket information contact: (303) 373-1246 or 1-(866)-LETS RODEO.

LETS RODEO!