



FOUNDED 1984

Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo

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PRESS RELEASE

“Behind the dust of the Western Frontier Emerges Black Faces; Creative and forceful men, women, and children that have seldom been portrayed in the movies, on television and even more astonishing, in the textbooks of American history”.

**“Hold onto your hats and dust off your boots Oakland and Bay Area,
as the Bill Pickett Invitation Rodeo returns to the Rowell Ranch in Hayward!”**

The **Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo** (the nations only touring Black Rodeo) celebrating its 22nd anniversary returns to the Bay Area Saturday and Sunday, July 8th and 9th, 2006 at 2:30 pm.

For an in depth overview of the drama and the excitement, visit the web site at www.billpickettrodeo.com.

Motivated by his experience after attending the Cheyenne Frontier Days (the grand daddy of rodeos in Cheyenne, Wyoming), Lu Vason, producer of the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo states, “My experience was exciting, but lacked one thing, **Black Cowboys and Cowgirls**”.

While in Denver, he visited the Black American West Museum of History where he was introduced to the History of Bill Pickett.

Celebrating its 22nd season and hundreds of performances later, Lu Vason, President and Producer of the Rodeo has challenged the false perception of an absentee presence of Black in the development of the West.

The Black Rodeo is a powerful tool in educating people on the Black west experiences and contributions made by African 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 is called “steer wrestling” and remains an intriguing exhibition throughout rodeo history.

“Bull Dogging” is one of the seven displays of strength and talent in the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo. Bareback riding, calf roping, bull dogging, ladies steer undecorating, ladies barrel racing, Jr. barrel racing and the exciting and dangerous bull riding event rounds off the competition.

Touring from March through October each year, the rodeo can be seen in cities, arenas and fairgrounds across the country including Memphis, Atlanta, San Diego, Los Angeles, Bakersfield, Denver, Washington DC, Phoenix and St. Louis.

Don’t miss this fun-filled event as we present various vendors, with good eats, treats and an afternoon and evening of excitement featuring African-American cowboys and cowgirls competing. Why not make this weekend a complete cultural and family experience. Attend the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo, Saturday and Sunday – July 8th and 9th, 2006 at 2:30 pm.

Tickets for children two (2) and under are free, ages 2 to 12 - \$12.00 in advance and \$15.00 the day of the performance; adults - \$15.00 in advance, and \$18.00 the day of the performance; seniors over 62 are same as children. Box seats are \$22.00. Parking is \$5.00 for cars and \$10.00 for large SUV vehicles.

Tickets can be obtained online at TicketAnnex.com, all Ticketmaster Outlets including: Wimpy’s Beauty Salon, Uncle Willie’s Bar-B-Q in downtown Oakland, Reid’s Records, Marcus Book Stores in Oakland and San Francisco and The Cobbler in Hayward, Jones & Harris Records in Richmond, Excellent Security in San Francisco and Rowell Saddlery in Castro Valley.

For additional rodeo and ticket information contact Jeff Douvel - Rodeo Coordinator at 510-430-1744 or Sheri Vason – Assistant to Producer (510) 549-2747. Visit our website at www.billpickettrodeo.com.

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Rodeo pictures can be downloaded by going to <http://photos.billpickettrodeo.com/>

LETS RODEO!