

NEWS RELEASE

## Guymon Pioneer Days Rodeo

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### **Bullfighters to show off athleticism at Guymon rodeo**

GUYMON, Okla. – A good bullfighter is seen, yet unseen.

A good bullfighter saves lives, yet fades into the background.

A good bullfighter is best when everybody in the arena walks away from the bull-riding arena out of harm's way.

Enter Scotty Spencer of Athens, Texas, an up-and-coming star in rodeo for his work in and out of the arena.

“Scotty is a pretty good bullfighter,” said Bret Franks, of Goodwell, Okla., the livestock superintendent for Carr Pro Rodeo. “He’s not real well known or famous, but he’s pretty good about us not noticing him out there until he’s needed.”

Spencer has been fighting bulls for a dozen years, five years professionally. He’s in his second year working the Guymon Pioneer Days Rodeo, which this year will take place May 1-3 at Henry C. Hitch Pioneer Arena. Performances will be 7:30 p.m. Friday; 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday.

This year, he will be working alongside Darrel Diefenbach, who has been selected by the bull riders in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association eight times to fight bulls at the National Finals Rodeo.

“I like Guymon, because it’s a good rodeo,” Spencer said. “That rodeo gets the top guys in every event because of the prize money. It’s always a good show.”

Diefenbach has been to the Oklahoma Panhandle for several years, though he’s missed the last couple because of injury. In fact, he suffered a broken leg in the fall that kept him from working the NFR in December. But those who know the Australian recognize his fortitude and expect to see him bounce back time and time again.

“Dief’s been plagued with injury over the past few years, but he’s as tough as anybody you’ve ever seen,” said Franks, a three-time NFR qualifier in saddle bronc riding who, a decade or so ago, coached the rodeo teams at Oklahoma Panhandle State University.

Diefenbach was born 35 years ago in Gympie, Queensland. Since joining the PRCA in 1998, he has worked some of the biggest rodeos in the association, like the National Circuit Finals Rodeo, RodeoHouston, Fort Worth and the Calgary Stampede.

But these guys aren’t clowns. They might very well be the most athletic folks in the arena at every rodeo they work, and the Pioneer Days Rodeo is no exception. They utilize running back-like and point guard-like moves to get in and out of harm’s way without getting themselves or the bull riders hurt.

“I rode bulls starting in the seventh grade and went on to high school,” Spencer said. “I got a scholarship riding bulls, then I started playing around with bullfighting.”

That and time in the arena has been all the training he’s ever received.

“It was more on-the-job training, and I learned from my own mistakes,” he said.

A misnomer that many bull riders make, Spencer said, is that the bullfighters' main job is to take all the hits. The job, he said, is for the bullfighters to grab the bulls' attention and redirect the animal away from the fallen cowboy.

"I don't want to get hooked, just like the next guy," he said. "We're there to take a hookin' if we have to, but I would rather neither one of get hooked."

He paints his style after some of the best bullfighters in the game, guys like Frank Newsome and Joe Baumgartner. It's important, he said, to understand livestock, read them so he has a better knowledge of the animals in an effort to work them better.

"It's funny to say, but the main thing is to be slow," Spencer said. "I'm fast enough to get into the situation in time, but you've got to be slow, because if you're in there too fast, it disrupts the timing of everything. Your job is to make sure the bull sees you before the bull rider."

And make sure everyone gets out of harm's way at the end of the day.