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Strong work ethic a great commodity for Carr Pro Rodeo

GUYMON, Okla. – Pete Carr has a simple philosophy, but its foundation works wonders.

So does Carr, who established Carr Pro Rodeo five years ago and has turned it into one of the elite livestock producers in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. He puts together a strong work ethic with quality animal athletes.

“The luckiest people I know are the hardest-working people I know,” said Carr, who founded the company on a love for livestock and a deep passion for the sport of rodeo. And we have some of the hardest working people that work with us throughout the year. “If you keep working at it, and surround yourself with a great core group of people, things should work out for our company.”

In a relatively short time, Carr Pro Rodeo has put together a lineup of outstanding bucking horses and bulls. River Boat Annie was the PRCA’s reserve world champion bareback horse in 2007 and has carried cowboys to championships inside the Henry C. Hitch Pioneer Arena, home of the annual Guymon Pioneer Days Rodeo – performances are set for 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 30; 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 1; and 2 p.m. Sunday, May 2.

“River Boat Annie and Real Deal, the 2005 world champion bareback horse, are just kind of the staples of our program,” Carr said. “River Boat Annie set an arena record in Guymon a few years ago and Real Deal has won the buckle. They’re still going strong and haven’t missed an NFR. We’ve got a lot of young horses coming on that we’ve been raising and you hopefully will be writing about them soon.”

Carr has been around the sport all his life. It’s only been in the last few years that he’s taken his roll to a much stronger level.

“I started riding bareback horses in high school and went to mostly amateur rodeos with a few ProRodeos mixed in,” he said. “I grew up watching every Wrangler National Finals Rodeo at 2 in the morning and every ESPN Wrangler World of Rodeo telecast, along with reading the ProRodeo Sports News magazine two and three times. I was just in awe with the PRCA ... so I feel extremely blessed to be a part of something as special as the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association and to be able to produce rodeos at this level.”

To raise champion livestock, Carr has called on world champion cowboys. Over recent years, top rodeo hands have put their experience and expertise to work on the ranch. In fact, the foreman of the Athens, Texas, ranch is Jeff Collins, the 2000 bareback riding world champion.

“I knew Jeff for 15 years, and the timing for both of us just worked out,” Carr said. “He does everything from feed, spray pastures to making our hay, worming and doctoring all the livestock to cutting grass or building fence. There is nothing, I have found, that he can’t do.”

He also enlists the services of one of the unsung bullfighters in the sport, Scotty Spencer, who works alongside Collins on the ranch. When he’s not working in the arena, he’s got his hands involved in much of the ranch work.

“With the ranch and all the livestock, various houses, equipment, machinery and vehicles that we have, that’s a huge investment to have down in Athens with our main office is in Dallas,” Carr said. “But it’s been a real blessing for my wife, Sherrill, and I to have someone as consciences as Jeff and Scotty down there taking care of everything like it was their own.

“I just try to surround myself with good people that know more than I do and try to learn all I can from them.”

The success of any good organization is planted deep, and Carr’s is no different. Besides working the Richest Rodeo in Oklahoma in Guymon, the firm also provides stock at some of the biggest rodeos in the country, from Fort Worth to San Antonio to Houston to the All-American Series finale to the Wrangler NFR. But the company is the primary stock contractor for Guymon and some growing events, like Lovington, N.M., Pecos and Eagle, Colo.

“To be the best in the business, you have to have a great team that works hard and have a lot of luck along the way,” Carr said. “You’ve got to try and be the best stock contractor everyday at every event, bringing the best timed event cattle, bucking horses and bulls and continue to improve your herd. Basically, you’ve got to keep pushing every aspect of the operation.”

And with a developing and growing pen of great bucking beasts, there’s a lot to be proud of for Pete Carr. But he won’t rest on his laurels.

“We’ve really focused on our bulls lately,” he said, noting that Air Up There was named the Texas Circuit’s bull of the year in 2008. “We’ve bought quite a few bulls this winter, and we’ve seen some success. We all know it takes constantly working at it to be the best, and that’s our goal at every rodeo.”

It goes back to work. It’s a theme, a philosophy, a way of life.

“Pete has some of the best bucking horses in the business, and he works really hard at putting on the best rodeos,” said Ken Stonecipher, a longtime member of the Pioneer Days Rodeo committee and one of the announcers of the annual event. “He’s a perfectionist, and that’s a good thing when you’re in this business. He doesn’t want to settle for being second best. He wants to be the best.”