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Carr Pro Rodeo hires top people for top-caliber rodeos

GUYMON, Okla. – When Pete Carr comes to town, he brings the best in the business with him.

Carr has been hauling stock to the Guymon Pioneer Days Rodeo for several years, but it's just the third year Carr Pro Rodeo has served as the primary stock contractor. This year he will have a who's who of the voices, the acts and the hardest workers in the sport of rodeo.

"The reason Pete is successful is because he's not afraid to hire people who know more than he does," pickup man Paul Peterson said. "A lot of guys want to be the one who knows everything, but Pete not that way. He knows his strengths."

Peterson is an Oklahoma Panhandle State University graduate who has lived in Texas County a good portion of his life. He's also been voted on by the top bareback riders and saddle bronc riders to work the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo three times in his career.

"I think it's good to have good people around you," said Carr, a former rough-stock cowboy who got into the stock-contracting business about eight years ago. "Paul has worked every rodeo we have ever had and is an integral part of our company and any success we have had."

Peterson isn't the only man with a championship pedigree who will be part of the show at the Pioneer Days Rodeo, with performances 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. The other two pickup men are Dan Etbauer of Goodwell, Okla., and Guy Allen of Santa Anna, Texas.

Etbauer is a 10-time Wrangler NFR qualifier who also served as a pickup man at ProRodeo's championship in 2008. Allen is an 18-time steer roping world champion who has qualified for the Clem McSpadden National Finals Steer Roping 32 times in a career that began in 1976.

"It's a pretty easy decision to hire the best," Carr said.

A good pickup man, Peterson said, should be able to read livestock and react to the animals.

"You can tell where a bull or horse is going, and you can figure out where they're going to be before you even get there," he said. "It's just about being a cowboy. Dan and Guy are real cowboys. They've been around cattle long enough, and they know what they're doing."

The same can be said for the funnyman/barrelman/specialty act, Keith Isley. Long considered one of the best in the business, Isley made a clean sweep of 2009 honors by being named the Clown of the Year, the Coors Man in the Can and the Comedy Act of the Year. He will be providing highlights and humor throughout the four-performance weekend.

The bullfighters are Scotty Spencer, a rising star in the business who also works on Carr's ranch in Athens, Texas, and Kelly Jennings, a 2008 Wrangler NFR bullfighter. The two cowboys worked the Guymon rodeo together a year ago and were considered unsung heroes by the bull riders.

"Kelly's a good bullfighter, and there's nothing that Scotty won't do for you," Carr said. "It's so good to have guys like that. I've been pretty fortunate to hire guys who work hard and make opportunities for themselves."

That includes announcer Andy Stewart, who will work alongside Guymon resident Ken Stonecipher in calling the Guymon event. Stewart, who has been the voice of the Championship Bull Riders organization, is calling his fourth straight Pioneer Days Rodeo. He's been around the sport a number of years and had made quite a name for himself.

“Andy’s one of these announcers that brings a lot of energy to every show,” said Stonecipher, who is a longtime member of the volunteer committee that produces the annual rodeo. “He’s a professional, and he makes it a lot of fun.”

The key, Carr said, is having the talent working the event to match the caliber of athletes who will be competing.

“We’re going to have Korkow Rodeo, Powder River Rodeo and D&H Cattle Co. that will be our subcontractors at this event, so I’m pretty confident we’ll have the best livestock of any rodeo this size in the country,” Carr said. “Every large rodeo in the country – from San Antonio to Houston – brings in additional contractor to enhance the overall product for the spectator and contestant. Guymon, being the biggest and richest rodeo in Oklahoma, is no different.

“We have been extremely fortunate over the last three years to work with some of the best stock contractors in the business with breeding programs that go back three generations.”