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For the St. Paul Rodeo

RODEO CENTRAL

St. Paul home to the “Nation’s Greatest Fourth of July rodeo”

St. Paul, Ore. (June 26, 2023) – This weekend, the little town of St. Paul, Ore. becomes a major pro rodeo destination.

More than 600 cowboys and cowgirls and 50,000 fans will pour into the village, all a part of an 88-year old tradition.

Among those 600 cowboys and cowgirls are big name contestants. Of the nine reigning PRCA world champions, eight of them will compete in St. Paul: all-around and bull riding champion Stetson Wright, Beaver, Utah; bareback rider Jess Pope, Garnett, Kan.; steer wrestler Tyler Waguespack, Gonzales, La.; tie-down roper Caleb Smidt, Bellville, Texas; team ropers Kaleb Driggers, Stephenville, Texas and Junior Nogueira, Lipan, Texas; and saddle bronc rider Zeke Thurston, Big Valley Alb.

There’s a reason the big-name cowboys and cowgirls come to St. Paul, said Matt Weishoff, St. Paul Rodeo Association board member, livestock director and chute boss.

“It’s the money,” he said. Last year, the rodeo paid out over \$430,000, with champions winning upwards of \$12,000 each.

St. Paul “is the largest rodeo (for the July 4 holiday), and in the top fifteen (in the nation), as far as added money goes,” Weishoff said.

But the incentive for contestants is more than financial. The heritage of the rodeo is a pull, Weishoff said.

“It’s a pretty unique venue,” he said, referring to the wooden bleachers and the arborvitae in the arena. “And for such a small town to be putting on such a big production, people like that. Everybody likes to be part of it.”

Last year’s champions returning to defend their 2022 St. Paul titles include steer wrestler Blake Knowles, Heppner; reigning world champion tie-down roper Caleb Smidt; team ropers Driggers and Nogueira (who are also reigning world champs); saddle bronc rider Sage Newman, Melstone, Mont. and bull rider Hayes Weight, Goshen, Utah.

The rodeo is produced nearly in its entirety by volunteers from the community who take great pride in their big-time rodeo, Weishoff said.

St. Paul folks “aren’t willing to let this tradition go,” he said. “This is a very proud community, and they’re all successful at what they do. They like to be the best and they work at it really hard.”

The rodeo runs June 30-July 4, with performances at 7:30 pm each night and a 1:30 pm matinee on July 4.

Fans are asked to purchase tickets early, as they are selling quickly.

Tickets are available online at StPaulRodeo.com. They range in price from \$20 to \$60. For more information, visit the website or call 800.237.5920.

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Cutlines:

Steer wrestler Blake Knowles, Heppner, Oregon, is one of more than 600 cowboys and cowgirls to compete at the St. Paul Rodeo this year. Photo by Hoot Creek.

Reigning St. Paul Rodeo bull riding champion Hayes Weight returns to St. Paul to defend his title. This year’s rodeo runs June 30-July 4. Photo by Hoot Creek.

