

W I L D H O R S E R E S O R T C A S I N O

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Team ropers to ride at Wildhorse Resort & Casino In chase for Oregon Championship and a tractor

Pendleton, Oregon—One cowboy roper will end up riding a Case IH JX65 tractor when he leaves Wildhorse Resort & Casino next month.

For the third year, Wildhorse Resort & Casino will host the Oregon Finals of the US Team Roping Championships at the resort May 20-22. A full-scale arena and grandstands will appear as the resort prepares for the arrival of more than 600 of the region's top team ropers, competing for a share of nearly \$250,000 in prize money, a new Case JX65 tractor and a berth in the National Finals.

The competition begins at 9 a.m. daily Friday-Sunday. The temporary rodeo arena with bleacher seating will be free to spectators and open to the public.

Winners in each of nine divisions gain qualification points for the USTRC's National Finals of Team Roping in Oklahoma City in October. Like the very successful Professional Bull Riders (PBR) tour, the USTRC travels to sites nationwide, followed by the ropers who hope to capture a berth in the lucrative national finals.

Last year was the first for Case IH as a national sponsor of the USTRC. At the Oklahoma City Finals in October more than 6,000 teams competed for over \$3.8 million in prize money, as well as Case IH tractors. All USTRC members are eligible for Case IH rebates.

Darrel and Joyce Sewell, partners in T&S Cattle Company, Clarkston, Washington, will again produce the Wildhorse Oregon Finals. T&S produces several USTRC championship events, including Idaho's finals and Winnemucca's Northwest Regional Finals, as well as events in Albuquerque, Arizona and others. The company also supplies cattle to major rodeos, including the Pendleton Round-Up, Cheyenne Frontier Days, Logandale, Red Bluff, Clovis, Chief Joseph Days, and St Paul, Oregon.

According to Darrell Sewell, a number of Pendleton-area competitors are expected, including Bill and Chase Taylor, Troy Perkins, Gary Sewell, Clell and Kenny Hasenback, Pat Davis, Adam and son Roger Davis, La Grande. Others expected are Rick Gentner.

Tripper Rice, Katie Thompson, BMCC coach Larry Patterson, Ryan Gallagher and Shane Crossley, Hermiston.

Another anticipated competitor is 12-year-old Garrett Rogers of Pendleton, a previous competitor in the Wildhorse event whom Mrs. Sewell described as “a great new rising star, the best we’ve seen come along in a long time.” Rogers, whose parents, Carla and Paul “Wally” Rogers, also compete, began his career as a roper from the back of a Shetland pony.

World champion roper Mike Beers and his son Brandon, Powell Butte, OR, will again compete at Wildhorse.

The oft asked question at rodeos, “Is there a doctor in the house?” will get a resounding affirmative. Among the competitors will be Wayne Barichello, Oregon City dentist, and several veterinarians, including Dr. Mitch Hutchison, Cheney, Washington and Dr. Doug Funk, Wenatchee.

Wildhorse Resort & Casino is the West's highest paying casino, with a record \$9.3 million slot jackpot. The Resort includes a 24-hour casino, hotel, RV Park, 18-hole golf course and Tribal museum. It is located just minutes off I-84 at Exit 216, four miles east of Pendleton. For more information: 1-800-654-9453 or www.wildhorseresort.com . Wildhorse is owned and operated by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.