

Announcing Two Repeat National Gas Rodeo & Expo Championship Teams

"Gas Masters", a four-person team from Piedmont Natural Gas, and "Cuttin Time", a two-person team sponsored by Fabick Cat, are the 2024 Rodeo Champions.

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Teams of natural gas professionals recently participated in the National Gas Rodeo & Expo to demonstrate their expertise in job-related skills.

A total of 165 individuals competed as part of 45 teams representing 13 states in the 2024 event, with two teams ultimately defending their 2023 overall championship status.

Barry Hicks, serving as captain, along with team members Brandon Vickery and alternate Miquel Ochoa, represented the team "Cuttin Time" under the sponsorship of Fabick Cat and successfully retained the overall champion status in the two-person team category. In 2023, they competed as "Gang Related" on behalf of Spire.

This achievement marks the sixth championship ring earned by Barry Hicks.

Additionally, Cameron Smith, captain, along with team members Jamie Exum, Peyton Huff, Chase McCroskey, and alternate Cody Adamson, representing the team "Gas Masters" under Piedmont Natural Gas, victoriously defended their title as the overall champions for the four-person team category.



NATIONAL
GAS RODEO
POWERED BY MEA



Cuttin Time, Fabick Cat

The rodeo, a program of the MEA Energy Association (MEA), fosters teamwork and pride within the natural gas industry through the execution of safe and efficient tasks. In this competition, 23 two-person teams and 22 four-person teams are tasked with completing qualifying events that include the safe and swift installation of a service line, manual excavation of a pit, cutting a six-inch metal pipe, and assembling a meter set.

The top 10 teams in both the two-person and four-person categories will advance to the relay event, which consists of multiple sequential tasks, including the precise operation of a utility truck with a trailer and the delicate maneuvering of an egg using a backhoe bucket.

The teams typically prepare for this annual event with several hours of practice and strategizing.

“

We thank Duke and Turfway Park for hosting an exceptional and welcoming event.”

Janel White, National Gas Rodeo Committee Member

Some utilities host internal rodeos before entering the rodeo. 'We're continually inspired by the dedication these teams show, and not just during the rodeo, but every day on the job,' remarked Leigh Larson, president and CEO of MEA. “The level of competition and camaraderie was outstanding, with participants excited to compete and represent their companies at the rebranded National Gas Rodeo & Expo,” Larson continued.

Duke Energy hosted the rodeo at Turfway Park in Florence, Kentucky where the rodeo will return, September 10-12, 2025. Rodeo committee member, Janel White, superintendent, gas training for Ameren Illinois Company said, “We thank Duke and Turfway Park for hosting an exceptional and welcoming event.” For those who couldn't attend, a live stream was available on [Facebook.com/nationalgasrodeo](https://www.facebook.com/nationalgasrodeo).

The National Gas Rodeo Committee provides guidance and overall support for the organization and delivery of the rodeo competition. In addition to defining the events, rules, and schedule, they prepare the site and judge. This year they also oversaw and introduced a newly branded event.

2024 NATIONAL GAS RODEO OVERALL CHAMPIONS:



Gas Masters, Piedmont Natural Gas

Two-Person Field

- 1st Place: "Cuttin Time", Fabick Cat | Captain: Barry Hicks | Brandon Vickery | Alternate: Miguel Ochoa
- 2nd Place: "State Line", Spire | Captain: Jim Lee | David Cramblitt
- 3rd Place: "The Duke Boys", Duke Energy | Captain: Hunter Barrons | Trevor Barrons | Alternate: Ryan Regenstein

Four-Person Field

- 1st Place: "Gas Masters", Piedmont Natural Gas | Captain: Cameron Smith | Jamie Exum | Peyton Huff | Chase McCroskey | Alternate: Cody Adamson
- 2nd Place: "Cutline Cowboys", Piedmont Natural Gas | Captain: Christian Hernandez | Richard Bradley | Franyer Koschnny | Brian Trickett | Alternate: Baley Hunt
- 3rd Place: "Peoria Gas Rats", Ameren Illinois Company | Captain: Jonathan Dorich | Colt Foster | Mike Harenberg | Scott Snedden | Alternate: Brandon Endres

FASTEST TIMES: Qualifying Events and Relay

Two-Person Field

- Meter Set: "State Line", Spire
- Pipe Cut: "State Line", Spire
- Service Installation: "State Line", Spire
- Hand Dig: "Cuttin Time", Fabick Cat
- Relay: "Cuttin Time", Fabick Cat

Four-Person Field

- Meter Set: "Gas Masters", Piedmont Natural Gas
- Pipe Cut: "Cutline Cowboys", Piedmont Natural Gas
- Service Installation: "Gas Masters", Piedmont Natural Gas
- Hand Dig: "Gas Masters", Piedmont Natural Gas
- Relay: "Gas Masters", Piedmont Natural Gas

Edwardo Angulo, captain; Luis Mireles; Kyle Saucedo; Dereck Villasana; and Zachary Romero, alternate for team "Only Fitters" representing Xcel Energy were awarded the Spirit of the Rodeo award for displaying exemplary sportsmanship.

Jerome Giles of Enbridge Gas Utah was the winner of the Caterpillar Mystery Event. Shannon

Kisner and Mike Wright of City Utilities of Springfield won the Milwaukee Tool Cornhole Tournament. David Cramblitt of Spire guessed correctly how far the natural gas pipeline inspection gauge, also known as a PIG, would fly.

“Duck Sausage” from Xcel Energy won the contest for favorite team shirt and the charity of their choice will receive a \$1,000 donation, sponsored by USIC.

The intense competition and camaraderie of the rodeo offer natural gas utilities from across the country an opportunity to showcase their teamwork, skills, and professionalism. Participation in the rodeo plays an important role in developing a mindset of efficiency, proficiency, and safety when working in the natural gas field.

The National Gas Rodeo & Expo is a program of MEA. The rodeo is made possible through the essential support of MRC Global, and the premier level support of Caterpillar Inc., Milwaukee Tool, SGC Surveying, and Vimocity. Qualifying events were sponsored by Blackline Safety, Hilti, Honeywell, JM Test Systems, Miller Pipeline, SafePurge, and Spire.

Learn more about the National Gas Rodeo & Expo at nationalgasrodeo.org.

About MEA Energy Association:

MEA serves the people that deliver electricity and natural gas to homes and businesses. We were founded as a trade association over 115 years ago by distribution utilities whose vision was to improve safety and efficiency. Today, we fulfill the same purpose through education, leadership development, and industry connections. Energy delivery companies, contractors, and suppliers around the country benefit from our 55 summits, roundtables, and webinars, 400+ online technical courses, safety assessments, evaluator training, operator qualification compliance tools, and leadership courses for field personnel.

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