

# BPIR Rode into Los Angeles with the Soul Country Rodeo Weekend Festivities

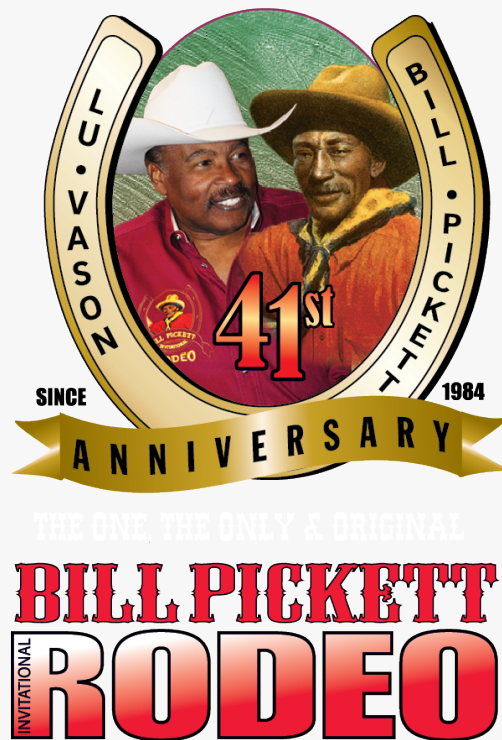
*2025 BPIR Legacy Rodeo Tour with the Soul Country Music Star Showcase Regional Finals Rocks Southern California*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, July 23, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 41st Annual [Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo](#) (BPIR) brought an electrifying celebration of Black cowboy culture, soul-country music, and community to Southern California during its [Soul Country Rodeo Weekend](#), held July 18–20. The Los Angeles stop marked the fourth destination on the 2025 BPIR Legacy Rodeo Tour, which includes Denver, Memphis, Oakland, Los Angeles, Atlanta and DC/ Baltimore. The Legacy tour is in addition to the BPIR Texas Connection series, which includes four stops and eight performances in Fort Worth at the Cowtown Coliseum.

The Soul Country Rodeo weekend kicked off on Friday, July 18, at the Autry Museum of the American West with the Soul Country Music™ Star (SCMS) Los Angeles Regional Finals. The live, concert-style competition, hosted by Randy Savvy of the Compton Cowboys featured a show-stopping performance by Kirk Jay, 2024 SCMS winner and The Voice Season 15 finalist.



BPIR LA Bull Rider



BPIR 41st logo

The evening spotlighted rising Black country music artists Maurice Smith, Thesis, Ghuan Featherstone, and Deidra Hall, who competed for a spot in the SCMS National Finals on October 26. Ghuan Featherstone was crowned the 2025 West Coast Regional winner and is headed for the National Finals scheduled on October 26, 2025 at the Autry Museum of the American West.

On Saturday, July 19 and Sunday, July 20, the BPIR fans filled the stands at Industry Hills Expo Center for two powerful rodeo performances. With a full slate of events including bull riding, ranch bronc riding, barrel racing, steer wrestling, breakaway roping, and junior competitions, BPIR delivered on its promise of top-tier rodeo action, cultural pride, and family-friendly excitement including a celebration of Glynn Turman, and award-winning actor who was recently honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Glynn has been a BPIR Grand Marshal and supporter for the last 39 years.

Here's a look at the standout performances from the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo in Los Angeles:

- Bareback Riding
  - o Round 1: Lamar Hankins showed grit and determination with a strong ride, scoring 65 points.
  - o Round 2: Damon Hopkins turned up the heat, earning 74 points and the top score in the event.
- Ladies Breakaway Roping: Haley Mason delivered a blazing time of 3.64 seconds, roping her calf with impressive speed and precision.
- Junior Breakaway Roping: Young talent Harrel Williams clocked in at 3.21 seconds, proving the next generation is ready to ride.
- Steer Wrestling
  - o Round 1: Tory Johnson muscled his steer down in just 4.96 seconds, taking the early lead.
  - o Round 2: Tony Aska powered through with a solid time of 6.75 seconds to close out the round.



BPIR Scholarship London Gladney



L-R SCMS Judges Tony Grant, Adai Lamar, LA Finalist Ghuan Featherstone, Howard Johnson and Acynthia Villery



- Ladies Barrel Racing: Paris Wilburn lit up the arena with a time of 16.006 seconds, showcasing tight turns and fast footwork.
- Junior Barrel Racing: Kinley Adair dashed through the pattern with style and speed, clocking a strong 16.522 seconds.
- PeeWee Barrel Racing: Little cowgirl Kendell Henderson stole the crowd's heart with a time of 19.416 seconds—one to watch in the years ahead!
- Calf Roping: Anthony Jordan's rope landed true in 9.30 seconds, securing the win with finesse and control.
- Ladies Steer Undecorating: Jazmine Bennett posted a lightning-fast 1.89 seconds, taking the top spot in this thrilling event.
- Team Roping: The dynamic duo of Dweldon Watson and Justin Lofton stopped the clock at 6.84 seconds, displaying flawless coordination.
- Bull Riding
  - o Round 1: Au'Vion Horton held on for 8 seconds and earned a high-marked ride of 76 points.
  - o Round 2: No qualified rides were recorded, underscoring the toughness of the bulls and the unpredictability of the sport.
- Ranch Relay: Team California Heat brought the crowd to their feet with a fast-paced time of 47.203 seconds, winning the high-energy relay.



Valeria Howard Cunningham and Glynn Turman at SCMS LA Regional 2025

This year's BPIR Los Angeles stop also featured the "Boots in the Dirt" city competition, where each tour stop battles for the loudest, liveliest crowd to the anthem "Boots on the Ground."

At Saturday's performance, BPIR presented the Crown Royal Rider Buckle Award to Sonya Young Adams, President & CEO of the California Black Women's Health Project, in recognition of her many years of outstanding community service.

BPIR also celebrated the launch of Lu Vason: From Dreamer to Visionary to Pioneer, the new biography of BPIR's founder. The book is now available on Amazon, Kindle, the BPIR Swag Hub, and on-site at BPIR events in hardcover, softcover, and e-book formats.

"This past weekend in LA was nothing short of extraordinary. The energy, the love, and the celebration of our culture reminded me why we do this work. I'm proud, grateful, and more inspired than ever to keep pushing the legacy forward." — Valeria Cunningham

In a show of solidarity and community support, BPIR and the BPIR Foundation hosted more than 100 guests from the Altadena/Pasadena area affected by the Eaton fire. In partnership with the International Black Women's Public Policy Institute, these guests were honored with a special rodeo experience and family fun day.

On Sunday, July 20, BPIR Foundation also hosted a youth empowerment workshop for more than 60 local young adults, in partnership with the [Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo Foundation](#), Anti-Violence Ventures (AVV) and USDA. The session centered on anti-violence awareness, agricultural education, and emotional intelligence, building the next generation of leaders grounded in self-awareness, purpose, and pride.

In addition, the Foundation awarded its \$1,500 regional scholarship to London Gladney, who is a high school graduate with a 3.4 GPA attending Prairie View A&M University in the fall.

Next up, the BPIR and SCMS tour travels to the South with another Soul Country Rodeo Weekend experience in Atlanta, Ga. Get ready for three unforgettable days of thrilling rodeo action, powerful music, and a celebration of Black cowboy and cowgirl excellence.

- SCMS competition: Friday, August 1 at the Pink Lion Jazz Club, 8109 Mall Pkwy, Stonecrest, GA
- Rodeo performances: Saturday, August 2 (12:00 PM & 7:30 PM) and Sunday, August 3 (3:30 PM) at the Georgia International Horse Park, Conyers, GA.

For media, tickets, and full tour details, visit: [www.billpickettrodeo.com](http://www.billpickettrodeo.com) | [www.soulcountrymusic.com](http://www.soulcountrymusic.com)

About the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo (BPIR):

Founded in 1984 by Lu Vason, the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo is the nation's longest-running African American touring rodeo association in the world. Created to honor the legacy of legendary cowboy Bill Pickett, BPIR showcases the history, culture, and contributions of Black cowboys and cowgirls, while providing a national platform for today's top Black rodeo athletes.

About the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo Foundation (BPIRF):

The Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo Foundation is the nonprofit arm of the BPIR, dedicated to preserving the legacy of African American cowboys and cowgirls while empowering future generations. Through educational programming, scholarships, youth engagement, and community partnerships, the Foundation promotes cultural pride, leadership development, and opportunities both in and beyond the rodeo arena.

About Soul Country Music™ Star (SCMS):

The Soul Country Music™ Star talent competition, produced by in association with the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo, is now in its second season, expanding to five regional cities. With country roots and diverse beats, the SCMS competition celebrates the rich tapestry of soul in country music, honoring the contributions of Black Country Music artists as it looks for its 2025 Soul Country music Star winner.



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