

Bill Pickett Rodeo and Soul Country Music™ Star Delivered an Unforgettable Soul Country Rodeo Weekend in Fort Worth

Fort Worth Shines with the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo Soul Country Rodeo Weekend

FORT WORTH, TX, UNITED STATES, August 20, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 41st Annual [Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo](#) (BPIR), the nation's only African American touring rodeo association, brought an unforgettable Soul Country Rodeo Weekend to Fort Worth on August 15 and 16, 2025.

The weekend kicked off Friday night, August 15, with the Soul Country Music™ Star (SCMS) Fort Worth Regional Finals at Club Ritz. Guest host Acynthia Villery wowed a full house as five dynamic contestants; Reggie Denireaux, Patrick Rodriguez, Brenda Jean Guy, Micah Jovan, and Redd Faye battled it out in a high-energy, live concert-style competition. In a thrilling full-circle moment, Redd Faye, who competed in Fort Worth during Season One, returned stronger than ever and claimed the coveted Fort Worth regional title, and will now advance to the SCMS National Finals in Los Angeles on October 26, where all five SCMS regional finalist will compete for a \$10,000 cash prize, exclusive gifts, and major career opportunities.

On Saturday, August 16, the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo returned to Cowtown Coliseum for the thrilling finale of its Texas Connection Buckle Series, presented in partnership with [PBR \(Professional Bull Riders\)](#). Two sold-out performances at 1:30 PM and 7:30 PM brought the community together to celebrate heritage, history, and athletic excellence in "The Greatest Show on Dirt."

Audiences were treated to electrifying competitions in bull riding, steer wrestling, ladies' and junior barrel racing, ladies' and junior breakaway roping, team roping, Pee-Wee barrel racing,

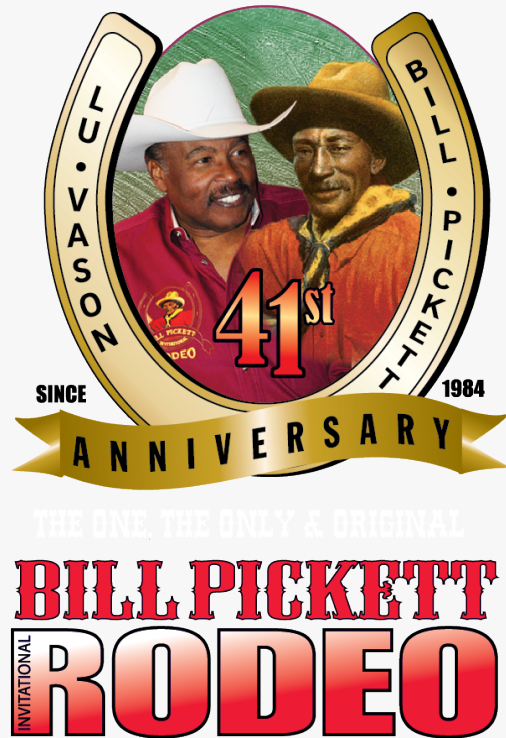


BPIR Fort Worth Calf Roper Kadron Richards ~ Photo Credit TK Farrier

and more. The arena also welcomed special appearances from rising stars and rodeo legends, making for an unforgettable day of sport, culture, and community unity.

The BPIR weekend marked the thrilling conclusion of the Texas Connection Buckle Series, showcasing the best of Black rodeo talent. The winners from the Saturday performances were:

- Ranch Bronc Riding (RB): Lamar Hankins – Hankins delivered a powerful ride with unmatched control and grit, earning top honors in one of rodeo's toughest events.
- Steer Wrestling (SW): Tory Johnson – Johnson showed lightning speed and strength, wrestling his steer to the ground with precision timing.
- Calf Roping (CR): JB Collins IV – Collins' rope work and quick dismount secured a flawless run that set the standard in calf roping.
- Ladies' Steer Undecorating (LSU): Lynike Graves – Graves displayed quick reflexes and steady determination, clinching her win in this fast-paced event.
- Ladies' Barrel Racing (LBR): Paris Wilburd – Wilburd blazed around the barrels with finesse and speed, thrilling the crowd with her championship run.
- Junior Barrels: Kinley Adair – Young Adair impressed the arena with fearless riding and sharp turns, proving the next generation is ready.
- Pee-Wee Barrels: Kendall Henderson – Henderson showed off natural talent and heart, taking home the buckle in the youngest division.
- Ladies' Breakaway (LBAW): Niya Bryant – Bryant's quick loop and clean breakaway sealed her well-deserved victory.



BPIR 41st logo



SCMS Fort Worth 2025 Regional Winner, Redd Faye, SCMS 2024 National Winner Kirk Jay, SCMS Fort Worth 2024 Regional Winner Dacia Kings ~ Photo Credit: Michelle R Johnson

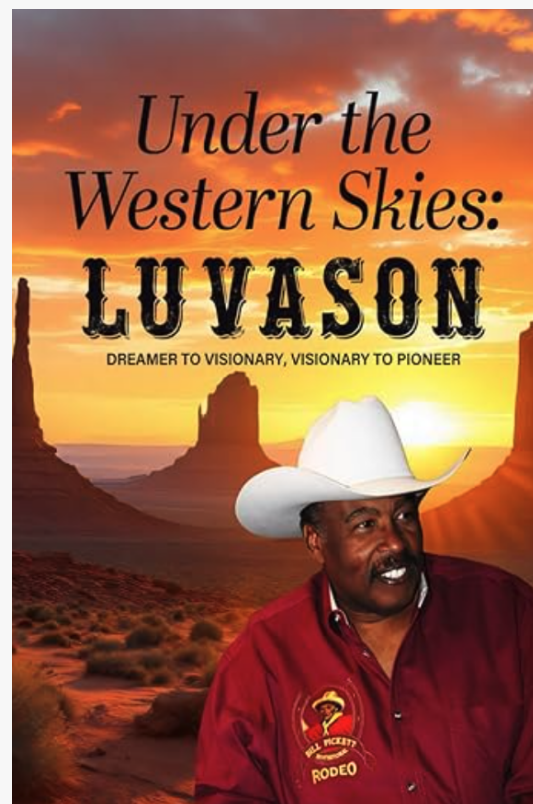
- Bull Riding (BR): Ao'Vion Horton – Horton conquered a fierce bull with grit and balance, riding his way to the top spot.
- Team Roping Header: Jeremy Johnson – Johnson's fast and accurate catch set his team up for a winning run.
- Team Roping Heeler: Justin Lofton – Lofton followed through with a perfectly timed heel shot, securing the team's championship title.
- Junior Breakaway (Jr BAW): Harrel Williams Jr. – Williams showed poise beyond his years, roping clean and fast to capture the buckle.
- Junior Tie Down (Jr TD): Trayson Graves – Graves displayed determination and skill, tying his calf with precision for the win.

After the fierce competition and everyone trying for a final chance to win the Texas Connection Buckle Champion title, the results were finalized, and the Texas Connection Buckle Champions were crowned as follows:

- Ranch Bronc Riding (RB): Lamar Hankins – Once again, Hankins showed why he's a force in the saddle, sweeping both the Legacy and Texas Connection titles.
- Steer Wrestling (SW): Tony Aska – Aska muscled through with power and speed, making his run one of the highlights of the weekend.
- Calf Roping (CR): Kadrion Richards – Richards' sharp roping and smooth ground work earned him the champion's buckle.
- Ladies' Steer Undecorating (LSU): Paris Wilburd – Wilburd's agility and determination secured



Valeria Howard Cunningham, President & CEO of the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo



Powerful new biography: Lu Vason: From Dreamer to Visionary to Pioneer

yet another buckle, proving her dominance in the arena.

- Ladies' Barrel Racing (LBR): Paris Wilburd – Wilburd doubled down with another stellar run, sealing her spot as one of the weekend's standout champions.
- Junior Barrels: Kinley Adair – Adair repeated her winning performance, showing consistency and talent well beyond her years.
- Pee-Wee Barrels: Kali Poole – Poole brought the crowd to their feet with a speedy, confident ride that secured her victory.
- Ladies' Breakaway (LBAW): Haley Mason – Mason's precise roping earned her a celebrated win in the highly competitive breakaway division.
- Bull Riding (BR): Marcel Autman – Autman held strong against a tough bull, delivering a gutsy ride that brought the arena roaring.
- Team Roping Header: Davon Johnson – Johnson's sharp header catch made him a standout in team roping.
- Team Roping Heeler: Montrel Gilder – Gilder sealed the team's success with an expertly timed heel shot.
- Junior Breakaway (Jr BAW): KJ Akins – Akins showed skill and confidence, roping clean for the championship.
- Junior Tie Down (Jr TD): Cayden Johnson – Johnson closed the competition with a fast and flawless tie, taking home the buckle in his division.

Each champion embodied the grit, determination, and excellence of the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo, leaving their mark on Fort Worth's legacy of celebrating Black rodeo talent. "The August Fort Worth Rodeo marked the final stop in our four-part Texas series, and what a journey it has been," said Valeria Cunningham, BPIR CEO & President. "The community showed up for us every time, embracing the history, culture, and unmatched talent of our Black cowboys and cowgirls. Fort Worth has truly become a place where our legacy and our skills are celebrated."

The Fort Worth stop concluded the 2025 BPIR regular season, leading into the BPIR National Rodeo Finals, September 19–20 at the Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro, MD. There, the nation's top 10 Black cowboys and cowgirls will compete for the 2025 BPIR World championship titles and a place in rodeo history.

Get your rodeo tickets now at www.billpickettrodeo.com. For Soul Country Music Star tickets and information, go to www.soulcountrymusic.com.

Fans were also reminded of BPIR's enduring legacy with the newly released biography, *Under the Western Skies: Lu Vason – From Dreamer to Visionary to Pioneer*. The powerful tribute chronicles the journey of BPIR founder Lu Vason and the creation of the iconic Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo. The book is available now in hardcover, softcover, and digital formats via Amazon, Kindle, the BPIR Swag Hub, and at all BPIR events.

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. 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 PBR (Professional Bull Riders): PBR is the world's premier bull riding organization. More than 1,000 bull riders compete in more than 200 events annually across the televised PBR Unleash The Beast tour (UTB), which features the top bull riders in the world; the PBR Pendleton Whisky Velocity Tour (PWVT); the PBR Touring Pro Division (TPD); and the PBR's international circuits in Australia, Brazil, and Canada. In 2022, the organization launched PBR Teams—10 teams of the world's best bull riders competing for a new championship—as well as the PBR Challenger Series with more than 60 annual events nationwide. PBR events are broadcast on CBS Television Network, The CW Network, Fox Nation, and Paramount+. PBR is a subsidiary of TKO Group Holdings, Inc. (NYSE: TKO), a premium sports and entertainment company. For more information, visit [PBR.com](https://www.pbr.com), or follow on Facebook at [Facebook.com/PBR](https://www.facebook.com/PBR), X at [X.com/PBR](https://twitter.com/PBR), Instagram at [Instagram.com/PBR](https://www.instagram.com/PBR) and YouTube at [YouTube.com/PBR](https://www.youtube.com/PBR).

About Soul Country Music™ Star (SCMS): The Soul Country Music™ Star talent competition, executive produced by Margo Wade LaDrew president of Wade & Associates Group, 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 competition celebrates the rich tapestry of soul in country music, honoring the contributions of Black Country Music artists, and providing a platform for talent to break into the country music industry. Regional winners receive an all-expense paid trip to the SCMS National Finals in Hollywood, where contestants compete for a \$10,000 cash prize, exclusive gifts, and the chance to become the next Soul Country Music™ Star.

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