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Metro's team of, from left, mechanics Andrew Warren Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde, along with Operator Sam Morales, will carry the agency's flag at bus rodeos in Irvine, Dallas and Anaheim.



Photos by Bill Heard

## Morales, Warren, Vargas, Forde are Metro's 2005 Bus Rodeo Team

- Division 1 operator, Division 5 mechanics will represent Metro in Irvine, Dallas and Anaheim competitions

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 2, 2005) Operator Sam Morales and mechanics Andrew Warren Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde hit a triple when they won the 2005 Metro Bus Rodeo, July 30. They'll carry the agency's flag at not one, but three bus competitions over the next eight months.

First up for the team is the Southern California Regional Bus Rodeo, Sept. 10, hosted by OCTA in Irvine. Then, there's the APTA International Finals, Sept. 24, in Dallas. Finally, due to a change in APTA scheduling, the team will compete in April, 2006 at the APTA International Finals in Anaheim.

The next Metro Bus Rodeo, sponsored by the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector, will be held in the fall, 2006 to determine competitors for the 2007 APTA Internationals. This year's event was hosted by the San Fernando Valley Service Sector.



Enjoying their win for the "home team" are, from left Division 1 Transportation Manager Sonja Owens, Gateway Cities General Manager Alex Clifford, Operator Sam Morales and Deputy CEO John Catoe.

In Saturday's competition, Morales, a Central City Division 1 operator, squeaked past San Gabriel Valley Division 9 Operator Luduvico Castro by only the narrowest of margins – one point, 620 to 619.

PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON



Runner-up: San Gabriel Valley Division 9 Operator Luduvico Castro.

It was the third time Morales has won the annual event. Castro was the 2004 winner. Taking the number three slot was North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Joe Acosta with 602 points.

#### Run-away score

Warren, Vargas and Forde – the Arthur Winston Division 5 team – posted a run-away score of 1,120 in the maintenance event. They bested by 200 points the Carson Division 18 team of Javier Soria, Mina Ros and Luke Logan.

Maintenance Division 18's score of 920, however, was only five points up on the 915 turned in by the third-place Division 1 team of Fred Hines, Gus Sanchez and Sergio Barron.

PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON



Mechanics Andrew Warren Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde of Division 5 captured the Rodeo's maintenance competition with a score of 1,120 out of a possible 1,550 points – 200 points ahead of the runner-up team.

Between 350 – 400 employees, their families and guests came out to Santa Anita Park for the annual event. The warm weather kept most in the shade of the large, white tents, but there were activities for the kids and plenty of barbecued beef, chicken, hot dogs and burgers.

Among the spectators were Metro's most senior employee, 99-year-old Arthur Winston, looking dapper in dark shirt, tie and snap-brim hat, along with all five service sector general managers and Deputy CEO John Catoe.

"Employees have worked hard through a lot of adversity this year," said Catoe. "The competition is serious, but this is a fun time and we need it."

The lone female bus operator competing this year, Mimi Pereira of East Valley Division 15, brought her son, Nicholas, and mother, Miriam Cristofalo. Pereira, who had placed 13th in the preliminaries scored 449 points for 24th place in the finals.



Division 2 Operator Ramiro Mota blasts through the barrels heading for an emergency stop, the final obstacle of the Bus Rodeo course. Mota placed 25th with a score of 438.

### **Bus operator results**

Final results in the bus operator's competition showed Richard Lopez,



Division 9, in fourth place with 579 points; Juan Navarro, Division 3, in fifth with 576 points; and Mark Holland, Division 9, who has won the event five times, placed sixth with 574 points.

Also, Francisco Escareno, Division 10, 565 points; Ruben Flores, Division 1, 553; Jesus Valdes, Division 10, 530; Juan Serrano, Division 8, 530; Jesse Cervantes, Division 9, 521; Mario Madrid, Division 9, 507; Marcus Portillo, Division 1, 506; and Juan Medrano, Division 9, 505.

Also, David Hemion, Division 15, 504; Leyverth Rodriguez, Division 15, 482; Alberto Hinojos, Division 9, 482; Ricardo Martinez, Division 9, 474; Jose Sanchez, Division 2, 469; Maximiliano de Angelis, Division 1, 459; Francisco Gomez, Division 10, 456; and Felipe Patlan-Gutierrez, Division 1, 455.

Also, Hugo Mercado, Division 1, 452; Miriam Pereira, Division 15, 449; Ramiro Mota, Division 2, 438; Juan Romo, Division 7, 436; Joe Barbosa, Division 9, 394; Carlos Araneta, Division 9, 378; and Rene Caldera, Division 10, 349.



Division 10 mechanics, from left, Doug Creveling, David Klinkenborg and Saul Sanchez, work to start a bus engine during the Rodeo's maintenance competition. The team placed fourth with a score of 875.

### **Maintenance results**

Taking fourth place in the maintenance competition with 875 points was the Division 10 team of Doug Creveling, David Klinkenborg and Saul Sanchez; Division 15's Kirk Langmayer, Brad Pardo and Ray Hilton, scored 815 points; Anthony Simiele, Dave Sweany and Yoon Oak, Division 8, 760 points.

Also, Naren Desai, Jesus Guerra and Jose Ramirez of Division 6, 695 points; Tim Wong, Francisco Sepulveda and Cristobal Hurtado, Division 3, 645 points; Omar Nomuro, Armando Martinez and Darrell Bishop, Division 9, 545 points; Baldemar Gonzalez, Christopher Valenzuela and Eric Benjamins, Division 7, 485 points.