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Rail Rodeo round-up: Metro Rail gets in gear for the APTA International competition in San Francisco



2008 Metro Rail Rodeo Team: From left, coach Esther Pippins, Operator Robert Rodriguez, Operator Geronimo Young, Equipment Maintenance Specialist Toshi Manaka, and, background, Equipment Maintenance Specialists Ronnie Burt, Eric Czintos and coach Russell Homan. *Photo by Gary Leonard*

(May 15, 2008) Metro's Rail Rodeo dream team are off to the International Rail Rodeo in San Francisco May 29 to defend their maintainer crown, bag an Operator trophy or two and bring home the gold in a competition that crowns the best rail operations in North America. Sponsored by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the Rail operator team competition measures an operator team's professional customer service and operating skills, including knowledge of safety regulations, train equipment, wayside rules, regulations, and procedures. The Rail maintainer team competition is a test of the maintainer's skills and abilities. Some 20 public transportation systems will compete in the 2008 International Rail Rodeo competition. Defending the title will be the champion Metro Rail equipment maintenance specialists team of Eric Czintos, Ronnie Burt, Toshi Manaka, and coach Russell Homan, who won first place at the APTA International competition in Toronto, June 2, 2007. Top operator Robert Rodriguez, a veteran of six international competitions and backed by high-scoring teammate Geronimo Young and coach Esther Pippins, goes for the gold this time, up from a respectable seventh place in Toronto, where Metro achieved third place in the overall combined team score. Winners will be announced June 2.

-- From Gayle Anderson