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Metro Bus Rodeo Rolls Out Saturday at Santa Anita

- Maintenance competitions begin at 7:30 a.m. Bus Operators start on the Obstacle Course at 8:30 a.m. Trophies take the stage at 1 p.m.
- Families are invited to partake in transportation extravaganza of sport, feast and fun in the California sun.



By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Sept. 18, 2008) Showcasing the skills and expertise of some of the finest operators and mechanics in transportation, Metro will hold the 33rd annual Bus Rodeo, Sept. 20, in search of the next round of champions to represent the excellence of Los Angeles public transit.

Balmy Southern California weather, clear skies and a big turn-out are expected for the popular event, which starts at 7:30 a.m. and ends with the trophy awards at 1 p.m.

Employees, who are invited and encouraged to bring their families to Santa Anita Park this Saturday, can expect a fun-filled day, said Metro Westside/Central General Manager Mark Maloney.

This year's Rodeo will feature a barbecue feast with all the trimmings, the expanding car and motorcycle show, more interactive exhibit booths, and an expanded 'Kids Zone,' he said.

Winners from the local event, this year hosted by Metro Westside/Central, will defend Metro's national title next May at the American Public Transportation Association's competition in Seattle, Wash.



2007 Metro Rodeo Champion Team: Top Operator Julio Flores from West Valley Division is joined in the winner's circle by the maintenance team from Arthur Winston Division, from left, Rommel Vargas, Frank Forde and Andrew Warren Jr. The team competed in the 2008 APTA Internationals held in Austin, Texas, where the maintenance champs placed third in a field of 47 competitors.

Preliminary competitions held last week narrowed the Bus Operator field to 36 finalists from some 183 competitors.

San Gabriel Valley Division 9 Operator Mark Holland enters the field in the number one spot. Holland's unprecedented six wins in previous Metro Rodeos make his standard the mark to beat for this year's competition. The top five eliminators include Holland and operators Juan Navarro, Sam Morales, Jose Villanueva and Maximiliano De Angelis.

The mechanics competition, which tests mechanics' abilities to troubleshoot mechanical problems and fix them quickly, will be held among three-member teams from participating operating divisions.

Mechanics Andrew Warren Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde of Arthur Winston Division 5 have won the Metro Rodeo four years running.

The maintenance champs placed third in a field of 47 competitors last year at the 2008 International Bus Rodeo in Austin, Texas. The veteran maintenance team took home the gold in the 2007 International Bus Rodeo held in Nashville, Tennessee.

This year's event will feature a popular mini-competition between five division transportation managers: Alva Carrasco, Division 10; Diane Frazier, Division 2; Jon Hillmer, Division 9; Curley Little, Division 5, and Lorene Kelley, Division 15 assistant manager.

Returning to the original location in the vast Santa Anita arena, this year's Rodeo will be held on familiar territory at the Santa Anita Race Track parking lot, Gate 6. Directions, along with up-to-the-minute schedule of events, are online on myMetro.net at the [Bus Rodeo](#) pages.

"Those who compete in the



preliminaries will get the official Rodeo hat, the belt buckle, a T-shirt and a lapel pin,” according to Frank Cecere, assistant manager of Central Instruction, who helps coordinate the event every year.

Click on map to go to [Bus Rodeo](#) site at myMetro.net for directions and schedule of events.

Finalists will get these and an added special gift. Winners will be sponsored by Metro to represent the agency in an all-expenses-paid trip to the APTA Internationals come spring.

Previous winners of the local Rodeo have gone to the national competition and placed high in the rankings among the 90 or so transit agencies that compete every year.