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2008 Metro Bus Rodeo



Winner's Circle - from left, Arthur Winston Division 5 champion master mechanics Andrew Warren, Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde and North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Juan Navarro claim victory at the 2008 Metro Bus Rodeo. Photos: Gayle Anderson

North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Juan Navarro Scores Top Op Arthur Winston Division 5 Mechanics Claim 5th Championship Trophy

- [The results are in](#) > Stats, Order of Finish, Winners All

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Sept. 23, 2008) North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Juan Navarro and Arthur Winston Division 5 mechanics Andrew Warren Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde emerged as champions in the Operators and Mechanics categories at the 2008 Metro Bus Rodeo, Sept. 20. They'll carry the agency's flag at the 2009 APTA Internationals set for next May in Seattle, Washington.

The Arthur Winston Division mechanics team took the mechanics trophy for an unprecedented fifth victory lap. It was the tenth competition for Operator Juan Navarro, who scored 639 points to beat six-time champion Mark Holland in a close race to the finish.



The competition heats up as 35 operators pound the obstacle course in the giant arena

adjacent to the Santa Anita racetrack.

Rodeo 2008 scored big in attendance, too. Metro Westside/Central General Manager Mark Maloney estimated that more than 1,000 employees, their families and guests came out to Santa Anita Park for the annual event.

The 2008 event was hosted by Metro Westside/Central and included an obstacle course for operators and a mechanic's competition where teams of three raced against the clock to diagnose and repair performance-related bus problems.

Thirty-five operators and 12 maintenance teams competed in this year's event.

"Every year gets better," said Maloney, who took the momentum to new heights with expanded arenas. "It takes an agency-wide army to do this. The reward comes from seeing everyone enjoy the event."



The Sheriff's rescue helicopter's daring landing on the obstacle-course field calls for a group photo with the San Gabriel Division 9 contingent, whose smartly uniformed mechanics team took home the "Best Dressed" trophy.

In the periphery of the main events, there were plenty of activities to keep everyone thrilled, happy and inspired: an expanded "Kid's Fun Zone," complete with snow cones, a home-cooked barbecue feast for more than 1,000 hungry race fans, a row of information booths, a spectacular visit from the Sheriff's Rescue helicopter, the traditional and very competitive car show and motorcycle exhibit and a huge tented picnic area where everyone could enjoy the barbecue and watch the events underway.

Metro Westside Central
GM Mark Maloney, Top
Operator Juan Navarro
and Rodeo
coordinator Frank
Cecere, assistant
manager of Central



Instruction, Operations, take center stage for the most anticipated moment of the day.

First-time champion has competed for 10 years

In Saturday's competition, North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Juan Navarro emerged victorious with a solid top score of 639 points. The new champion edged out San Gabriel Valley Division 9 Operator Mark Holland, in second place with 611 points, and Crossroads Division 2 Operator Jesus Valdez, in third place with 597 points.

It was Navarro's first championship victory lap. Navarro, who's been competing in the obstacle course for 10 years running, beat out second-place runner-up and six-time champion Mark Holland. The two entered the competition from the number one and number two slots in the preliminaries, where both scored over 600 points.



Central Instruction, Maintenance, Sr. Instructor Steve Mullaly, who puts the mechanics events together every year, is here pictured as the events get underway in tented arenas for bus inspection, ABS brake board, power train, T-King a/c module and I.O. multiplex challenges.

Mechanics were neck and neck to the finish

Roadeo 2008 was the fifth Metro championship for the Arthur Winston Division team of Warren, Vargas and Forde, who inched by the close runner-up team from Division 10. The Division 5 champs racked up 1,225 points to beat out the Division 10 team of David Klinkenborg, Angel Fera and Jose Moya by 70 points. Third-place winners - the West Hollywood Division 7 team of Glenn Buakong, Craig Daniel and Mauricio Arias - were hot on the heels with a score of 1,100 points.

The Division 10 team's close second was sweetened with the coveted ABS Brake Board trophy, a replica of a brake pedal atop a walnut trophy base, signifying that the mechanics were the fastest team to correct the electrical portion of the grueling ABS Brake board event.



Flanked on the left by host GM Mark Maloney, Division 5 Maintenance Manager Alex DiNuzzo and South Bay GM Dana Coffey and, on the right, by mechanic event coordinator Steve Mullaly, the champion Division 5 mechanic's team takes a bow.

The Arthur Winston team has represented Metro at the international competitions every year since 2003, with the exception of 2004. Scoring the highest placement yet, the veteran maintenance team and Operator Mark Holland took home the Grand Championship Award in the 2007 APTA International Bus Rodeo held in Nashville, Tennessee.

Metro San Fernando Valley General Manager Richard Hunt acted as emcee (with assistance from his daughter, Jennifer), calling the play-by-play for the bus operator half of the competition as well as the popular transportation manager competition on an abbreviated obstacle course.



Metro Westside/Central Mark Maloney, at right, presents First Place title to Division 10 Transportation Manager Alva Carrasco, who wins the manager's trophy despite strong competition from Lorene Kelley of East Valley Division 15, Curley Little of Arthur Winston Division 5, Jon Hillmer of San Gabriel Valley Division 9 and (not pictured) Diane Frazier of Crossroads Division 2.

Division 10 Transportation Manager Alva Carrasco, who sailed through barrels and orange traffic cones without a bump or scrape, aced out the others to claim the championship for the second year. She was joined on the course by Diane Frazier of Crossroads Division 2, Jon Hillmer of San Gabriel Valley Division 9, Curley Little of Arthur Winston Division 5 and Lorene Kelley of East Valley Division 15.

The managers' maneuvers clearly illustrate the finer points of what it takes to operate a Metro bus and keep it on the road at the same time, quipped

emcee Richard Hunt, who counts upturned barrels and squished cones as badges of honor in a profession that demands top skills and championship valor.

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