



PHOTO BY RICHARD GREEN/THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN

# Cant miss with 'wordsmiths,' 'bullsmiths'

*Brooks, Rasmussen work the microphone, fighters, barrelmen clowns work the arena*

**WAYNE BROOKS** is the friendly voice behind the mic at the California Rodeo Salinas. His insight into the rodeo world comes from his time spent in the arena as a competitor. Brooks has announced several key pro rodeo events across America, such as the National Finals Steer Roping, Dodge National Finals Rodeo and the Pace Picante ProRodeo Chute-Out. He has also worked the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo, the Calgary Stampede and several rodeos in California each year. Brooks' biggest accomplishment is being named 2005 PRCA Announcer of the Year. In his spare time, he spends time with his wife and three children at his home in Lampasas, Texas.



Wayne Brooks, left, and Will Rasmussen.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY RICHARD WILSON

## Rodeo announcers

**WILL RASMUSSEN** is one of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association's most popular rodeo announcers. He has more than a decade of experience in the industry. His work across the nation has included dozens of appearances at rodeo and rodeo-related events, including twice at the Dodge National Circuit Finals in Pocatello, Idaho; Montana PRCA Pro Rodeo Finals for 10 consecutive years and Sheridan, Wyo., Rodeo. The 46-year old Choteau, Mont., man's love of rodeo stems from his experience as the oldest child of the "Rodeoing Rasmussens," a family in which just about everyone is involved in the sport of rodeo. His mother is a timer and his father an experienced announcer. One brother is a competitor and his youngest brother, Flint, is a seven-time PRCA Clown of the Year. Will has been announcing the action on the track in Salinas for several years.

## freestyle bullfighting barrelman

**HOLLYWOOD DON YATES**, known as "Wolf" on the NBC television show "American Gladiators," is as tough and wild as they come. Hollywood has been coming to the California Rodeo Salinas for the past several years and he returns this year as the man-in-the-can to protect the freestyle bullfighters. He is a past Salinas freestyle bullfighting champion.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY INTERFACE VISUAL



Hollywood Don Yates



Eric Layton

PHOTO PROVIDED BY RICH RUEF

## Protection bullfighter

This is **ERIC LAYTON's** third appearance as a cowboy protector at the California Rodeo Salinas. A protégé of the famous bullfighter Joe Baumgartner, Eric joined the PRCA in 2006 and has worked several rodeos throughout California, Nevada and Oregon. Eric lives in Red Bluff, where he works for Growney Bros. Rodeo Co. and spends his free time hunting and fishing.

## Protection bullfighter

A member of the Pro Rodeo Cowboys Association since 1993, **MATT LUCKING** is a veteran bullfighter. Lucking won the California Rodeo Salinas Freestyle Bullfighting Title in 2000 and has competed here for the past few years. In protection bullfighting, Lucking's resume includes the Dodge National Circuit Finals in 2001, Wilderness Circuit Finals in 1999-2000 and Turquoise Circuit Finals in 1994-1998. Lucking is a firefighter when he isn't fighting bulls, and he lives in Coolidge, Ariz.

PROVIDED PHOTO



Matt Lucking



Ash Cooper

PHOTO PROVIDED BY CAPEMAN PHOTO

## Barrelmen and clown

**ASH COOPER**, known to the ProRodeo world as "CrAsh Cooper," is one of the world's premier barrelmen. The Canadian native, known for his athleticism and agility in the arena, is a crowd favorite. The former minor league hockey player is no stranger to hard knocks. His ability to turn the dangerous sport of bullfighting into a comedy act is the signature attribute of his show. CrAsh is a two-time winner of the coveted Entertainer of the Year title from the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association.