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Horse event to be richest ever in U.S.

Majestic Valley Arena hosts championship showdown in October

By HEIDI GAISER/The Daily Inter Lake

The World Class Bucking Horse Association finals held last fall at Majestic Valley Arena this year will be called the Cinch Bucking Horse Championships and claim the status of being the richest bucking horse event ever held in the United States.

Sponsored by Cinch Jeans and Shirts, the event scheduled Oct. 19 at Majestic Valley will include some of the nation's best cowboys and roughest 4- and 5-year-old saddle broncs. The Kalispell Convention and Visitor Bureau is working with Cinch to help promote the event.

"We recruited it to come in last year and started the foundation," Rob Brisendine of the Kalispell Convention and Visitor Bureau said. "This year it's exciting that we have a national sponsor in Cinch Jeans — they're one of the largest rodeo apparel companies.

"It's a great way to showcase rodeo in our area. This will definitely bring national attention to Kalispell."

The Cinch Bucking Horse Championships will offer \$70,000 in added money over last year's event, with \$50,000 going to the horses and \$20,000 to the cowboys, with 45 saddle broncs and 22 cowboys competing.

The world's best bucking horses provided by the country's top contractors will be part of the event.

"These are about the bucking-horse breeders," Bob Pecora, president of the World Class Bucking Horse Association, said. "The idea is to showcase their breeding programs to see who has the best."

Part of the event on Oct. 19 involves a stallion stakes in which the world-class stallion of the year will be named at the finals based on which one produces the colts with the highest point totals.

"The Cinch Bucking Horse Championships fills a key niche in rodeo and we are proud to sponsor this event," said David Dean, chief executive officer of Miller International, parent company of Cinch. "This event has an innovative platform that is fun for the fans and we look forward to seeing this event, and others like it, grow quickly."

Qualifying events for the championships in Kalispell include the recent Montana Cowboy Association Bronc Futurity in Choteau, Ryan Mapston Bucking Horse Futurity Ranch Rodeo/Stallion Stakes on Aug. 25 in Belt and the Mussellshell Valley Fall Festival on Sept. 14 in Roundup.

Pecora said Kalispell is a good central location in drawing the bucking-horse community, with many breeders coming from Canada, Washington and Wyoming. The city also has plenty of hotels and Glacier Park International Airport is nearby.

Majestic Valley also proved to be well-suited for the event last year, Pecora said.

"The Majestic Valley Arena is one of the strongest assets in our valley for public assembly and special events," Brisendine said. "Finding ways to program that facility is a mission of the KCVB. It's a world-class facility and we want to find ways to use that venue to provide economic stimulus. October is a great time to continue that visitor trend."

Brisendine said around 3,000 people are expected as either spectators or participants as a mix of visitors and residents. The visitor bureau is marketing to the regional drive markets — Spokane, Missoula, Alberta, Bozeman and more.

Admission cost \$15 for adults, \$8 for children ages 6 to 12 or free for children 5 and under. VIP Admission also is available for \$40. Tickets can be purchased at www.majesticvalleyarena.com or CHS County Store at 150 First Ave. W.N. in Kalispell.

Visit www.worldclassbuckinghorseassociation.com for more information.

http://www.dailyinterlake.com/news/local_montana/article_a5f9ea50-06ee-11e3-a6a2-0019bb2963f4.html