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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IN ASSOCIATION WITH COMCAST COMMUNICATIONS, SAFEWAY PRESENTS SF BAY AREA BILL PICKETT INVITATIONAL RODEO “A Taste of Passion” Tour

July 10-11, 2010 • Rowell Ranch, Hayward, CA

OAKLAND/HAYWARD, CA – To the delight of thrilled audiences and rodeo fans, some of the nation’s most skilled and entertaining Black cowboys and cowgirls will ride into the San Francisco Bay Area to compete in the exciting Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo (BPIR) presented by Safeway, in association with Comcast Communications. This year’s tour—titled “A Taste of Passion”—celebrates the rodeo’s 26th anniversary. BPIR athletes will ride into the San Francisco Bay Area to perform and compete in Hayward, California’s Rowell Ranch Rodeo Arena on Saturday and Sunday, July 10 and 11, 2010. At 2:30 p.m. each day, dust will start to fly as spectators cheer for their favorite competitors during thrilling Calf Ropin’, exhilarating Bareback Ridin’, Bull Doggin, Ladies Barrel Racin’, Junior Barrel Racin’, Ladies Steer Undercoatin’, and gripping Bull Ridin’.

Providing a special treat, country music songstress Miko Marks, the first and only African American woman to be awarded The Independent Music Awards’ “Country Album of the Year,” will provide rousing vocal entertainment. Rowell Ranch Arena is located at 9711 Dublin Canyon Road—between Castro Valley and Dublin—on the I580 frontage Road. Ticket prices range from \$15 to \$25, and may be purchased online billpickettrodeo.com/tickets.html or airbornetickets.com. Vehicle parking is \$10.00. Call (510) 864-2747 for information and group ticket sales.

This year’s generous presenting and co-sponsors include Safeway, Comcast Communications, Coliseum Lexus, Sheraton Hotels and Resorts, The Coca-Cola Company, Upscale Magazine, and 102.9 KBLX. “Each year, I look forward to returning to the San Francisco/Bay Area for the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo,” said BPIR founder Lu Vason. “The competition is always fierce, exciting and thrilling to all who participate. We are particularly grateful for the loyal support we receive from our Bay Area audience and our local and national sponsors.”

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REMAINING BILL PICKETT INVITATIONAL RODEO TOUR SCHEDULE:

- **Bakersfield, CA: Kern County Fairgrounds** – Thursday., July 15th, 6:00 pm
- **Los Angeles, CA: Industry Hill Expo Center** – Sat., July 17th, 7:00 pm | Sun., July 18, 3:30 pm
- **Washington, DC: Show Place Arena and Prince George's Equestrian Center**
Sat., Sept. 24th, 10:00 am (Rodeo for Kid'z Sake) | Sat., Sept. 25th 1:30 pm & 7:30 pm
- **Atlanta, GA: Georgia International Horse Park** – Sat., Oct. 2nd | Sun., Oct. 3rd
- **BPIR FINALS RODEO- Venue TBD:** Saturday, Nov. 6th | Sunday, Nov. 7th

ABOUT BILL PICKETT:

Known as the "Dusky Demon," Bill Pickett (1870-1932) was the best-known African American rodeo performer of all time. He invented the rodeo sport of bulldogging – now known as steer wrestling – and entertained millions of people around the world, showcasing his bronco- and bull-riding and roping skills in Wild West shows, circuses, and world's fairs. The professional cowboy and rodeo champion was small in stature but he was a larger-than-life Western legend in his own time. His rodeo career spanned more than 40 years. In 1989, he was inducted into the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA), and in 1996, Bill Pickett was the first rodeo athlete inducted into the Black Cowboy Walk of Fame in Denver, Colorado.

Retired since 1916, Pickett died in April 1932 following a roping accident. His funeral was one of the largest ever held in Oklahoma. He was buried high on a hill at White Eagle Monument, where the Cherokee Strip Cowboy Association set up a limestone marker in his memory. According to Frank Billings, Colonel Zack Miller of the 101 Ranch called him "the greatest sweat-and-dirt cowhand that ever lived," and wrote a poem in his honor. For more detailed information about Bill Pickett, please visit billpickettrodeo.com/about.html.

ABOUT BILL PICKETT INVITATIONAL RODEO (BPIR):

Lu Vason founded the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo in 1984. It is an innovative, educational and exciting perspective on the history, challenges, and excitement of Black Americans in the Western United States. BPIR celebrates the life of the legendary Black cowboy Bill Pickett and other Blacks who greatly contributed to the development of the west.

BPIR tours each year from January through November. Its competitions are held across the country, in cities like Atlanta, Bakersfield, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Memphis, [Oakland](#), Phoenix, St. Louis, and Washington DC.

EDITORS: Obtain high resolution rodeo images at photos.billpickettrodeo.com

To schedule interviews with BPIR producers or rodeo competitors, contact:

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"Bill Pickett Memorial Scholarship Fund," a non-profit organization - Tax ID #84-1064797