2021 PBR Australia Back to the Heartland Series
Monster Energy Tour
PBR Rockhampton Invitational
Great Western Hotel – Rockhampton, Queensland
Saturday, October 2 at 7:00 p.m. AEST

ROCKING OUT TO ROCKHAMPTON – This weekend, for the sixth time in 2021, and 29th time in league history, PBR Australia will travel to Rockhampton, Queensland. Marking the sixth iteration of the Monster Energy Tour's PBR Rockhampton Invitational, action at Great Western Hotel for the Back to the Heartland Series event will get underway Saturday, October 2 at 7:00 p.m. AEST.

THIS WEEKEND'S FORMAT – The PBR Australia Monster Energy Tour's Rockhampton Invitational at Great Western Hotel will feature two rounds of bull riding. After each of the 17 competing riders attempt one bull each in Round 1 and Round 2, the six bull riders with the top combined ride scores will then advance to the championship round where they will attempt one final bull in an effort to be crowned the event champion.

KLEIER FURTHERS STRONGHOLD ON NO. 1 RANK – After making history in 2020, becoming the first rider in history to win the PBR Australia Championship in three consecutive seasons, Aaron Kleier is attempting to further etch his name in the league record books in 2021. Should he once again be crowned the national champion, Kleier would tie David Kennedy for most Australian national titles won by one rider in league history (4). Kennedy topped the national standings in 2009-2010, 2012 and 2014. At the most recent PBR Australia event, also held in Rockhampton, Kleier may have finished outside of the winner's circle, but his third-place finish allowed him to further his stronghold on the No. 1 ranking in the national standings. Kleier first tied for the Round 1 win after covering Milky Way Man for a commanding 82 points. The stoic contender, however, was unable to punctuate his efforts in his home state with a qualified ride, dispatched by Cattle King Boogers Beach in 3.57 seconds in the final round. The Queensland sensation's seventh Top-5 finish of the year earned him 38.5 national points, allowing Kleier to grow his lead over No. 2 Macaulie Leather to 138.33 points.

Looking further back upon the season, Kleier travelled to the most recent PBR event held in mid-September fresh off a win at the then most-recent Monster Energy Tour event in Rockhampton, and a strong third-place result the weekend prior in Burnett Heads. While Kleier traveled to the late July event in Rockhampton atop the national standings, a flawless 2-for-2 showing earned him his second event win of the year and allowed him to further his lead over No. 2 Leather to 82.33 points. In Round 1 of the fourth tour stop from the Great Western Hotel, Kleier got off to a hot start, becoming the first rider to cover Vertical Limits when he reached the requisite 8 for an 86.5-point score. Drawing King Kong in the championship round, a poised Kleier matched the bull jump-for-jump, logging an event-best, 88-point qualified ride. Adding to the impressive nature of the ride, Kleier became the first rider since November 2019 to cover King Kong. Ending the bull's eight-out buckoff streak, Kleier joined seven-time PBR World Finals qualifier Lachlan Richardson as the only two riders to have ever successfully ridden King Kong. Despite a more than one-month break from competition, Kleier remained red-hot when the league travelled to Burnett Heads, Queensland, going a perfect 2-for-2 to finish third. In Round 1 of the Touring Pro Division event, Kleier was sixth, covering Slink E Malinki for 80 points. Kleier then capped his performance in Burnett Heads with an 83.5-point effort atop Bang Ya Drum in the championship round. The Queensland sensation's sixth Top-5 finish of the season netted him 18.5 national points, allowing him to increase his lead over No. 2 Leather to 99.83 points. Rewinding all the way to the season-launch event, Kleier's campaign has been on overdrive since the moment he attempted his first bovine athlete counterpart. As the year got underway in May in Rockhampton, Kleier won the season-launch event when he went a perfect 2-for-2, notably covering Black Tuxedo for a career-best 90.5 points in Round 1.

This weekend in Rockhampton, Kleier will face a new opponent in Round 1, drawing the unridden Little Thunder. Hailing from ST Bucking Bulls, Little Thunder has not been ridden in his 11 outs on record in PBR competition, dispatching the likes of 2017 PBR Australia Champion Troy Wilkinson and World Finals qualifier Kurt Shephard. Shephard has come the closest to covering the bull, but he was ultimately unseated at the 7.1-second mark in 2020 in Beaudesert. Little Thunder last bucked in Burnett Heads in September, dispatching Bailey Woodard in 4.27 seconds to earn a 42.5-point bull score. Following Round 1, Kleier has drawn Amigo in Round 2.

SHEPHARD'S SURGE RIDES ON – PBR World Finals qualifier Kurt Shepard has his sights fixed on one goal in 2021 – the PBR Australia Championship. With an impressive season already beginning to take shape, Shephard has positioned himself within striking distance of the No. 1 ranking. The No. 3 ranked rider in the national title race is 150.83 points removed from the top position. Shephard began the season with a bang, winning his first event of the year at the mid-June event in Rockhampton. As the event got underway, Shephard punched his ticket to the championship round of the PBR Rockhampton Invitational after covering Breaking Bad for 78 points in Round 1. Ninth on the event leaderboard following the opening round, Shephard drew Dittmann Bucking Bulls' standout Reloaded as his final opponent. Making the 8 for a championship round-best 85.5 points, Shephard catapulted to the top of the event standings, capturing his first victory since November 2020. Shephard left the Great Western Hotel having earned 65 national points. After beginning the event unranked, Shephard surged to No. 4 in the national standings. Shephard next returned to the arena as a member of Team Queensland for the PBR Origin tournament. In addition to helping the Maroons to victory in the state vs. state competition, Shephard notched a ninth and second-place finish in the individual standings in Brisbane and Cairns, respectively. When the Monster Energy Tour returned to Rockhampton in late July, Shephard was once again inside the Top 10, concluding the Back to the Heartland Series event eighth. He then competed at the most recent Touring Pro Division event in Burnett Heads, where his momentum continued to build, finishing runner-up. Shepard reached the whistle in both rounds, covering Tezzas Pride for 83 points in Round 1, before outlasting The Pet for 85 points in the championship round. Collecting 28.5 national points, Shephard climbed one position in the national title race, rising from No. 4 to No. 3.

When the Monster Energy Tour was last in action, travelling to Rockhampton for the fifth time in 2021 in mid-September, Shephard tied for third place alongside No. 1 Aaron Kleier. Shephard registered his Round 1-winning, 82-point ride atop Damage Control, but was ultimately denied the PBR Rockhampton Invitational win when he was bucked off in 4.51 seconds by Razor Sharp**.** Maintaining the No. 3 rank, Shephard will look to gain ground on Kleier in Rockhampton this weekend when he attempts Iron Jacket in Round 1 and Bang Ya Drum in Round 2.

WOODALL RETURNS – PBR fans last saw 23-year-old Sam Woodall in competition in early September in Burnett Heads, relegated to the sidelines after sustaining a torn groin. This weekend, however, Woodall will make his return to action for the sixth iteration of the PBR Rockhampton Invitational. To date in 2021, Woodall has gone 4-for-8 (50%) on Australian soil. Among his season highlights, Woodall competed for Team New South Wales during the 2021 PBR Origin tournament, contributing three ride scores in Brisbane and Cairns. The qualified rides secured him 11th and 4th-place finishes, respectively, while also helping his team in the state vs. state competition. In regular-season competition, Woodall was 12th in Burnett Heads before sustaining his groin injury, covering Maximus for 74.5 points. Woodall delivered his high-marked ride of the season during the Origins tournament in Cairns, riding Ariat's Flaunt It for 85.5 points. Awaiting Woodall in Rockhampton for his return is Random Assault in Round 1, and Freckles Brown in Round 2.

RICHARDSON FIGHTS FORWARD – After beginning his 2021 campaign in electric fashion, finishing second at the first event of the year in Rockhampton, seven-time PBR World Finals qualifier Lachlan Richardson struggled to find success as the season continued. In his next six events, including two installments of the PBR Origin tournament where he represented Team New South Wales, Richardson went a dismal 1-for-10. However, at the September in Burnett Heads, Richardson was back to his winning ways. Delivering a flawless 2-for-2 performance, Richardson captured his first event win of the year, victorious at the PBR Bull Mania at Burnett Heads Field. As one of 10 riders to deliver a qualified ride in the opening round, Richardson punched his ticket to the championship round when he delivered the third-best score, marked 83.5 points atop Bad Moon. Matched up against Flyin Hippie in the final round, Richardson surged to the top of the event leaderboard when he delivered the high-marked ride of the event. Making the requisite 8, Richardson was score 87.5 points. Richardson earned a crucial 39 national points for his efforts, cracking the Top 5 in the race for the 2021 PBR

Australia Championship. Following the event in Burnett Heads, Richardson rode his way to a Top-10 finish at the fifth Monster Energy Tour event of the year in Rockhampton, concluding the tour stop seventh. Going 1-for-2, Richardson rode Gangster's Retreat for 75.5 points. This weekend for the PBR Rockhampton Invitational, the Gresford contender will attempt Tezzas Pride in Round 1 and Breaking Bad in Round 2.

FAMILIAR WATERS – Round 1 of the PBR Rockhampton Invitational will feature three rematches, with just one rider having experienced past success aboard their draw. First going head-to-head in 2018 in Rockhampton, Kurt Shephard covered Iron Jacket for 85 points in Round 1 of the Queensland event. For both Dan Ruhland and Ty Thomson they will be looking to make the 8 for the first time aboard a draw they have already attempted once prior in 2021. Squaring off in late July in Rockhampton, Rockslide dispatched Ruhland in 3.71 seconds en route to a 41.5-point bull score. Meeting at the season-launch event in Rockhampton in early May, Catfish Billy brought Thomson down in 5.11 seconds to earn a 40-point bull score.

As the PBR Rockhampton Invitational continues with Round 2, two riders will face familiar opponents, including Thomson drawing his second rematch of the event. Eager to avenge a buckoff from this year's PBR Origin I – Brisbane, Russian Roulette got the better of Thomson in 1.48 seconds to earn a 42.5-point bull score. Reigning PBR Australia Grand Finals event winner Brady Fielder will also climb aboard a past opponent in Ariat's Ol' Son. Fielder first drew the bovine athlete in 2020 in the opening iteration of the Airlie Beach double-header, bucked off in 4.31 seconds as Ariat's Ol' Son earned a 42.5-point score.

PAST ROCKHAMPTON EVENT WINNERS – One of the longest tenured events in PBR Australia history, since the Queensland city welcomed the league for the first time in 2006, PBR has held a total of 28 events in Rockhampton, including five tour stops already held in 2021. The complete list of past winners is as follows:

Bailey Woodard (2021)	Roy Dunn (2015)
Aaron Kleier (2021)	David Kennedy (2009)
Kurt Shephard (2021)	Kevin "Jock" Connolly (2009)
Macaulie Leather (2021)	Cody Heffernan (2008)
Aaron Kleier (2021)	Ben Seeds (2008)
Sam Woodall (2020)	Ben Jones (2007)
Aaron Kleier (2020)	Budd Williamson (2007)
Lawson Nobbs (2020)	Ben Keliher (2007)
Lawson Nobbs (2019)	Denny Farley (2006)
Ryan Storey (2018)	Ben Jones (2006)
Jason Mara (2018)	Steven Clark (2006)
Bailey Woodard (2017)	Ryan Storey (2006)
Lachlan Richardson (2016)	Wayne Brokenbrough (2006)
Fraser Babbington (2015)	Heath Shrimp (2006)

BULL PEN – Thus far in 2021, one bull has been dominant – Cattle King Boogers Beach. Hailing from the deep roster from Dittmann Bucking Bulls, Cattle King Boogers Beach has bucked at eight of the nine PBR Australia events held to date, earning the top bull score in each of his outs. As a result, he currently leads the 2021 PBR Australia Bull of the Year race with a 45-point average on his Top 5 outs, 0.7 points ahead of No. 2 Razor Sharp (44.3 points), 1 point ahead of No. 3 Reloaded (44 points), 1.2 points ahead of No. 4 Black Tuxedo (43.8 points) and 1.5 points ahead of No. 5 Roid Rage (43.5 points). However, with Boogers Beach not slated to buck, and Reloaded and Roid Rage also not making the trip to Rockhampton, the door will be open for Razor Sharp and Black Tuxedo to gain ground in the title race. Both bovine athletes are slated to buck in the championship round.

Apart from Cattle King Boogers Beach, Razor Sharp is the only other bull to earn the top score at multiple tour stops. A three-time recipient of the honor to date in 2021, after tying with Boogers Beach for the top score at the third event of the year in Rockhampton, and the Origins event in Cairns, Razor Sharp earned the honor exclusively at the event held in Burnett Heads, Queensland. Razor Sharp was marked 44.5 points for his 2.1-second buckoff of Sam Payne. Razor Sharp

most recently bucked at the latest PBR Australia event held in mid-September in Rockhampton. Going head-to-head with Kurt Shephard, the Peter Wallace bovine earned a 43-point score for his 4.51 seconds worth of work.

For Black Tuxedo, he earned his first Bull of the Event honor at the latest PBR Australia event, also held in Rockhampton. Finishing in a five-way tie for the top score with Boogers Beach, Rambo, Reloaded and Roid Rage, each animal athlete posted an event-best, 43.5-poitn effort. For Black Tuxedo, he earned the score for his 2.91-second buckoff of Daniel Rogan. Also hailing from Peter Wallace, Black Tuxedo has been marked in excess of 44 points three times to date in 2021, posting his season-best outing in Rockhampton in early May. Black Tuxedo earned a 44.5-point score for his 2.7-second buckoff of Caiden Sandilands. The bull earned matching 44-point scores in Rockhampton for the season-launch event, ridden by Kleier for a 90.5-point score, and at PBR Origin II – Cairns, covered by Kleier again, this time for an 88.5-point result. In his seven outs on Australian soil in 2021, Kleier is the lone contender to have reached the 8.

PROVIDING PROTECTION – This weekend's protection athletes are Jared Borghero of Gracemere, Queensland; Jayden Hakaraia of Rockhampton, Queensland; and Gus Roberts of Yeppoon, Queensland.

NEXT UP – The 2021 PBR Australia season will continue Saturday, October 9 in Mackay, Queensland at BB Print Stadium. Action for the Monster Energy Tour's Mackay Invitational, presented by Kent Hire, will get underway at 7:00 p.m. AEST.

ROCKHAMPTON COMPETITORS BY COUNTRY

Australia (17) – Qynn Andersen, Taran Chirgwin, Brady Fielder, Zane Hall, Lane Howlett, Aaron Kleier, Macaulie Leather, Wyatt Milgate, Lawson Nobbs, Mitchel Paton, Lachlan Richardson, Dan Ruhland, Caiden Sandilands, Kurt Shephard, Ty Thomson, Troy Wilkinson, Sam Woodall

BREAKDOWN BY STATE –

New South Wales – Lachlan Richardson, Troy Wilkinson; Queensland – Qynn Andersen, Taran Chirgwin, Brady Fielder, Zane Hall, Lane Howlett, Aaron Kleier, Macaulie Leather, Wyatt Milgate, Lawson Nobbs, Mitchel Paton, Dan Ruhland, Caiden Sandilands, Kurt Shephard, Ty Thomson; Victoria – Sam Woodall.

TOP 10 AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL STANDINGS – Here are the current Top 10 in the 2021 Australian national standings:

	Rider	Points	Dollars Won	Behind Leader
1.	Aaron Kleier	350.33	$15,919.12	
2.	Macaulie Leather	212	$7,243.24	-138.33
3.	Kurt Shephard	199.5	$10,714.44	-150.83
4.	Brady Fielder	159.16	$5,119.67	-191.17
5.	Bailey Woodard	149	$6,507.68	-201.33
6.	Lachlan Richardson	146.5	$6,481.68	-203.83
7.	Lawson Nobbs	137.33	$7,893.60	-213
8.	Lachlan Slade	116.5	$8,682.28	-233.83
9.	Lane Mellers	77.5	$4,208.40	-272.83
10.	Kelsey Pavlou	69.5	$2,131.12	-280.83

2021 PBR AUSTRALIA EVENT WINS - Here are the total individual wins for PBR Australia Events in 2021:

2 – Lawson Nobbs (Alice River, #Cairns)
   Aaron Kleier (*Rockhampton #1, *Rockhampton #4)

1 – Macaulie Leather (*Rockhampton #2)
   Kurt Shephard (*Rockhampton #3)

Lachlan Slade (#Brisbane)
Lachlan Richardson (Burnett Heads)
Bailey Woodard (*Rockhampton #5)

Denotes a Monster Energy Tour event.

 # Denotes a PBR Origin Event. For these events, the individual leaderboard was only determined by Round 1 and Round 2. The bonus round did not impact the standings.

EVENT-BY-EVENT RESULTS - Here are the results from 2021 PBR Australia events:

Event	Winner	Ag. Score	Australian Points
*Rockhampton #1	Aaron Kleier	178.5	77
*Rockhampton #2	Macaulie Leather	88.5	65
Alive River	Lawson Nobbs	169.5	39
* Rockhampton #3	Kurt Shephard	163.5	65
#Brisbane	Lachlan Slade	172	72.5
#Cairns	Lawson Nobbs	168.5	68.33
*Rockhampton #4	Aaron Kleier	174.5	77
Burnett Heads	Lachlan Richardson	171	39
*Rockhampton #5	Bailey Woodard	85.5	65

Denotes a Monster Energy Tour event.

 # Denotes a PBR Origin Event. For these events, the individual leaderboard was only determined by Round 1 and Round 2. The bonus round did not impact the standings.

2021 PBR AUSTRALIA 90-POINT RIDES – Here are the 90-point rides from the 2021 PBR Australia season:

	Score	Rider	Bull (Stock Contractor)	Event
1.	90.5	Aaron Kleier	Black Tuxedo (Peter Wallace)	*Rockhampton #1
2.	#90	Lachlan Slade	Cattle King Boogers Beach (Dittmann Bucking Bulls)	Cairns

Denotes a Monster Energy Tour event.

 # Denotes a ride earned during the bonus round of the 2021 PBR Origin which did not impact the national standings.

2021 PBR AUSTRALIA 90-POINT RIDES BY RIDER – Here are the 90-point rides from the 2021 PBR Australia season by rider:

	Austraian Rank	Rider	Number of 90-Point Rides
1.	1	Aaron Kleier	1
	8	Lachlan Slade	1

2021 RIDES BY PBR AUSTRALIA EVENT

City	R1 Rides	R2 Rides	R3 Rides	CR Rides	Total Rides	Total Riding %
*Rockhampton #1	7	N/A	N/A	2	9	22.5% (9/40)
*Rockhampton #2	6	N/A	N/A	0	6	14.63% (6/41)
Alice River	6	N/A	N/A	1	7	26.92% (7/26)

*Rockhampton #3	9	N/A	N/A	2	11	29.72% (11/37)
#Brisbane	7	6	N/A	2	15	31.25% (15/48)
#Cairns	9	8	N/A	2	19	39.58% (19/48)
*Rockhampton #4	10	N/A	N/A	4	14	36.84% (14/38)
Burnett Heads	10	N/A	N/A	7	17	51.51% (17/33)
*Rockhampton #5	5	N/A	N/A	2	7	19.44% (7/36)

Denotes a Monster Energy Tour event.

 # Denotes a PBR Origin Event. For these events, the championship round rides did not count towards the individual standings, nor award points.

2021 PBR AUSTRALIA ROUND WINS – Here is a list of the riders that have the most round wins in 2021:

3 – Lachlan Richardson (Rockhampton #1 Championship Round, Brisbane Round 2, Burnett Heads Championship Round)
Aaron Kleier (Rockhampton #1 Round 1, Rockhampton #4 Championship Round, Rochampton #5 Round 1)
Kurt Shephard (Rockhampton #3 Championship Round, Cairns Round 1, Rockhampton #5 Round 1)
Bailey Woodard (Alice River Round 1, Burnett Heads Round 1, Rockhampton #5 Championship Round)

2 – Lachlan Slade (Brisbane Round 1, Cairns Round 2)
Macaulie Leather (Rockhampton #2 Round 1, Rockhampton #4 Round 1)

1 – Lawson Nobbs (Alice River Championship Round)
Brady Fielder (Rockhampton #3 Round 1)
Cody Heffernan (Brisbane Round 2)

*Note: This list is only inclusive of Round 1 and Round 2 at the three PBR Origin events as the bonus rounds did not award points. Those winners are: Kurt Shephard (Brisbane) and Lachlan Slade (Cairns).

THE BULLS

HIGH-MARKED BULL OF THE EVENT – Here are the bulls that received the highest score at each PBR Australia event in 2021:

8 – Cattle King Boogers Beach (Rockhampton #1, Rockhampton #2, Alice River, Rockhampton #3, Brisbane, Cairns, Rockhampton #4, Rockhampton #5)

3 – Razor Sharp (Rockhampton #3, Cairns, Burnett Heads)

1 – POA Fully Locked & Loaded (Alice River)
Rambo (Rockhampton #5)
Reloaded (Rockhampton #5)
Black Tuxedo (Rockhampton #5)
Roid Rage (Rockhampton #5)

SEASON HIGH-MARKED BULLS – Here are the top bull scores from 2021 at PBR Australia Events:

Event	Bull	Stock Contractor	Score	Rider

*Rockhampton #1	Cattle King Boogers Beach	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	45	Macaulie Leather, 6 seconds
*Rockhampton #2	Cattle King Boogers Beach	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	45.5	Macaulie Leather, 2.49 seconds
Alice River	Cattle King Boogers Beach	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	45	Macaulie Leather, 3.66 seconds
	POA Fully Locked & Loaded	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	45	Bailey Woodard, 3.94 seconds
*Rockhampton #3	Cattle King Boogers Beach	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	44	Brady Fielder, 2.58 seconds
	Razor Sharp	Peter Wallace	44	Cody Heffernan, 2.8 seconds
#Brisbane	Cattle King Boogers Beach	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	44	Lachlan Slade, 3.38 seconds
#Cairns	Cattle King Boogers Beach	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	45	Lachlan Slade, 90 points
	Razor Sharp	Peter Wallace	45	Kurt Shephard, 3.22 seconds
*Rockhampton #4	Cattle King Boogers Beach	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	44.5	Daniel Rogan, 2.69 seconds
Burnett Heads	Razor Sharp	Peter Wallace	44.5	Sam Payne, 2.1 seconds
*Rockhampton #5	Rambo	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	43.5	Lawson Nobbs, 2.72 seconds
	Cattle King Boogers Beach	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	43.5	Aaron Kleier, 3.57 seconds
	Reloaded	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	43.5	Lachlan Richardson, 3.61 seconds
	Black Tuxedo	Peter Wallace	43.5	Daniel Rogan, 2.91 seconds
	Roid Rage	Dittmann Bucking Bulls	43.5	Taran Chirgwin, 2.85 seconds

Denotes a Monster Energy Tour event.

 # Denotes a PBR Origin Event.

MORE INFORMATION – For more information on the world's premier bull riding organization, please visit the official website at https://www.pbraustralia.com.au/.

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