NEWS RELEASE
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Top 10 Fender Contender Country Music Challengers Announced

-- Fans' Favorite Will Open Country Summer Festival on June 3 --

SANTA ROSA, Calif. -- The Top 10 Fender Contender Challengers have been announced, and the fans' favorite will open Country Summer, Northern California's biggest country music festival June 3 to 5 at Sonoma County Event Center at the Fairgrounds

The public is invited to view each finalist's audition video and Vote For Your Favorite Fender Contender. Voting continues through April 28, 2016. The grand prize winner will be announced on April 29, 2016.

This year, the field of Top 10 finalists represents a cross section of the United States, from Sacramento, California to New York, New York. One of the finalists is from Gold Coast, Australia. In 2015, Jared Porter, an Aussie entertainer, won the championship with more than 400,000 votes, rallying his band to come to Country Summer and open the show.

Top 10 Fender Contender Challengers include:

American Stone from Playa del Rey, California – Dynamic duo Mark Monroe and Tim Hurley came onto the music scene in 2014 with a sound best described as Groove Country.

Coffey Anderson from Bangs, Texas – In 2008, Anderson was awarded third place out of 52,000 contestants on NBC's *Nashville Star.* He has been performing nationwide ever since.

Casey Barnes from Gold Coast Australia – A singer/songwriter, Barnes is one of Australia's premier country music performers dominating the Australian music festival circuit.

Locked-N-Loaded from Sacramento, California – This band performs everything from country gold hits from the AM radio years to today's chart toppers.

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SaraBeth from Garland, Texas – A singer/songwriter making her mark in Nashville, SaraBeth compares her voice to Sara Evans with energy of The Band Perry.

Dustin Saylor & The Growing Seeds from Sebastopol, California – Saylor writes songs based on life experiences using storytelling to capture emotions, making music that matters.

Ryan Scripps from San Jose, California – A cross between Luke Bryan and Brad Paisley, Scripps mixes elements of today's country music with a hint of traditional country.

Soho Rodeo from New York, New York – Just like NYC, Soho Rodeo is a melting pot of five musicians from all walks of life. The band created its own genre it calls "Urban Country."

Erik Smallwood from Muscle Shoals, Alabama – Blessed with an ear for catchy melodies, Smallwood's sound is a little blues, some pop and a sprinkling of Muscle Shoals flavor.

Brodie Stewart from Northern, California – Brodie, who has toured the nation opening for big artists in sold-out arenas, recently released his debut album, *"Born American."*

One of these up-and-coming country music acts will perform on the Country Summer Chevy Silverado Stage, the main stage. In addition to recognition as a Country Summer superstar, the grand prize winner receives $5,000.

The Fender Contender Challenge winner joins a lineup including Lady Antebellum, Craig Morgan, Chris Janson and Chase Bryant on Friday, June 3. Saturday, June 4, artists include The Band Perry, Kip Moore, Chase Rice, Kristian Bush of Sugarland and McKenna Faith. Sunday, June 5, artists include Billy Currington, Josh Turner, Frankie Ballard and Old Dominion.

Gates open at noon, and music begins at 1:30 p.m. each day of the Country Summer festival.

General admission tickets are $79 per day. Three-day general admission passes are $209. Single-day reserved seats start from $99. Three-day reserved seats start from $279.

Country Summer tickets are on sale now. Visit www.countrysummer.com or call 800-514-3849 to order by phone.

Event sponsors include Fender, Bay Area Chevy Dealers, Bud Light, Friedman's Home Improvement, Les Schwab Tire Centers, Kendall-Jackson, River Rock Casino, Jack Daniel's, Mary's Pizza Shack, American AgCredit, Liftmaster, Montgomery Village, Tito's Handmade Vodka, Harris Ranch, Cattlemens, Creams, Papé Material Handling, Xfinity, Visit Santa Rosa, the City of Santa Rosa, and
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