Diamond Rio Headline Halftime Show

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Diamond Rio To Headline Helen of Troy Halftime Show

EL PASO, Texas (December 2, 2005) - Six-time Vocal Group of the Year Diamond Rio will take center stage at the Helen of Troy Halftime Show at the 72nd Annual Vitalis Sun Bowl on Dec. 30 at Sun Bowl Stadium.

"We are extremely excited to have such an accomplished group like Diamond Rio perform at the Helen of Troy Halftime Show, said Sun Bowl Association President Wayne Thornton. "Adding Diamond Rio to the Helen of Troy Halftime Show only gives added value to the ticket purchaser."

The Vitalis Sun Bowl features the Pac-10 Conference versus the Big Ten Conference. The halftime entertainment will feature a performance by Diamond Rio, who will be accompanied by a troupe of 175 dancers, and then a performance by the marching bands of the two universities participating in the Vitalis Sun Bowl.

"Helen of Troy is proud once again to team with the Sun Bowl Association to make halftime a memorable event," said Helen of Troy CEO Gerald J. Rubin. "Adding Diamond Rio to the halftime lineup is sure to be a crowd pleaser both locally and to our nationally-televised audience."

The addition of Arista Nashville recording artists Diamond Rio to the Helen of Troy Halftime Show marks the second consecutive year that the Sun Bowl has featured a live act at halftime. Last year, the Los Lonely Boys performed before a sellout crowd at halftime of the Vitalis Sun Bowl.

Diamond Rio, which has recorded nine No. 1 singles and sold over 10 million albums, includes Marty Roe (vocals), Jimmy Olander (guitar), Gene Johnson (mandolin), Dan Truman (piano), Dana Williams (bass) and Brian Prout (drums).

The group's rich vocal harmonies and glossy picking helped define the "young country" movement of the early 1990s. Diamond Rio began its climb to stardom as the Tennessee River Boys, playing at the Opryland USA theme park in Nashville in the early 1980s. After numerous personnel changes, it solidified into its present membership in 1989 and took the name Diamond Rio.

The following year, the group signed with the newly-formed Arista Nashville label and reached No. 1 with its first single, "Meet in the Middle." Throughout the decade, the hits continued: "Norma Jean Riley," "In a Week or Two," "Love a Little Stronger," "Walkin' Away" and "How Your Love Makes Me Feel." Their chart successes earned four CMA awards for vocal group.

In 1998, Diamond Rio was inducted into the Grand Ole Opry, the first band in 14 years to receive that honor. Their album from that same year emerged as a creative high, with the hits "You're Gone" and "Unbelievable." The 2001 hit ballad "One More Day" revitalized the group's career, after becoming a song of healing after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

With their first seven albums certified gold or platinum, the band scored a No. 1 hit with "Beautiful Mess" in 2002, followed by the No. 1 hit "I Believe" in 2003.

"This is a group with a sound familiar to people of all ages" said Bernie Olivas, executive director of the Sun Bowl Association. "Their presence really adds to the overall flavor of the Vitalis Sun Bowl experience."

Last year, No. 21 Arizona State held off Purdue, 27-23, in front of record sellout crowd of 51,288 fans at the Sun Bowl Stadium. The Sun Bowl crowd broke the record set in 1994, when a record 50,612 fans witnessed Texas upset North Carolina, 35-31.

"Over the last six years we have averaged over 49,000 fans per game at the Sun Bowl," said Thornton. "The addition of a live act at halftime like Diamond Rio could help secure the game's second consecutive sellout."

Currently, Sun Bowl Stadium seats 50,426 for the Vitalis Sun Bowl. From 1983 to 2000, the stadium seated 51,171. The seating size changed after the Sun Bowl was restructured to allow for soccer matches in 2001.

"Last year's Helen of Troy Halftime Show was a huge success," added Olivas. "I think the addition of Diamond Rio to this year's show could equal if not surpass our expectations for quality family entertainment.

The Vitalis Sun Bowl is scheduled for Friday, Dec. 30 at noon at Sun Bowl Stadium. The game will be broadcast live on CBS for the 38th consecutive year. Tickets for the Vitalis Sun Bowl range in price from $15 to $55 and can be purchased by calling (915) 533-4416 or (800) 915-BOWL.

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