

FESTIVAL STATS AND STUDIES · VOLUME VII · SIERRA NEVADA EDITION · AUGUST 2026

A steam train into the Sierra National Forest, to see *the same people* as everywhere else.

Six seasons of the Yosemite Jazz Train at the Sugar Pine Railroad in Fish Camp, California — forty-three concerts, fifty-four artist-slots, twenty-seven acts, one independent promoter based about 2,000 miles from Florida, with no shared venue, nonprofit or festival found in public records linking him to the promoters in the previous six volumes. He books the same roster.

100%

of the contemporary jazz artists booked here have also been booked by other promoters in this study

9

acts are unique to this series — every one of them blues, rockabilly, flamenco, comedy, a soul singer or a sideman

5 / 6

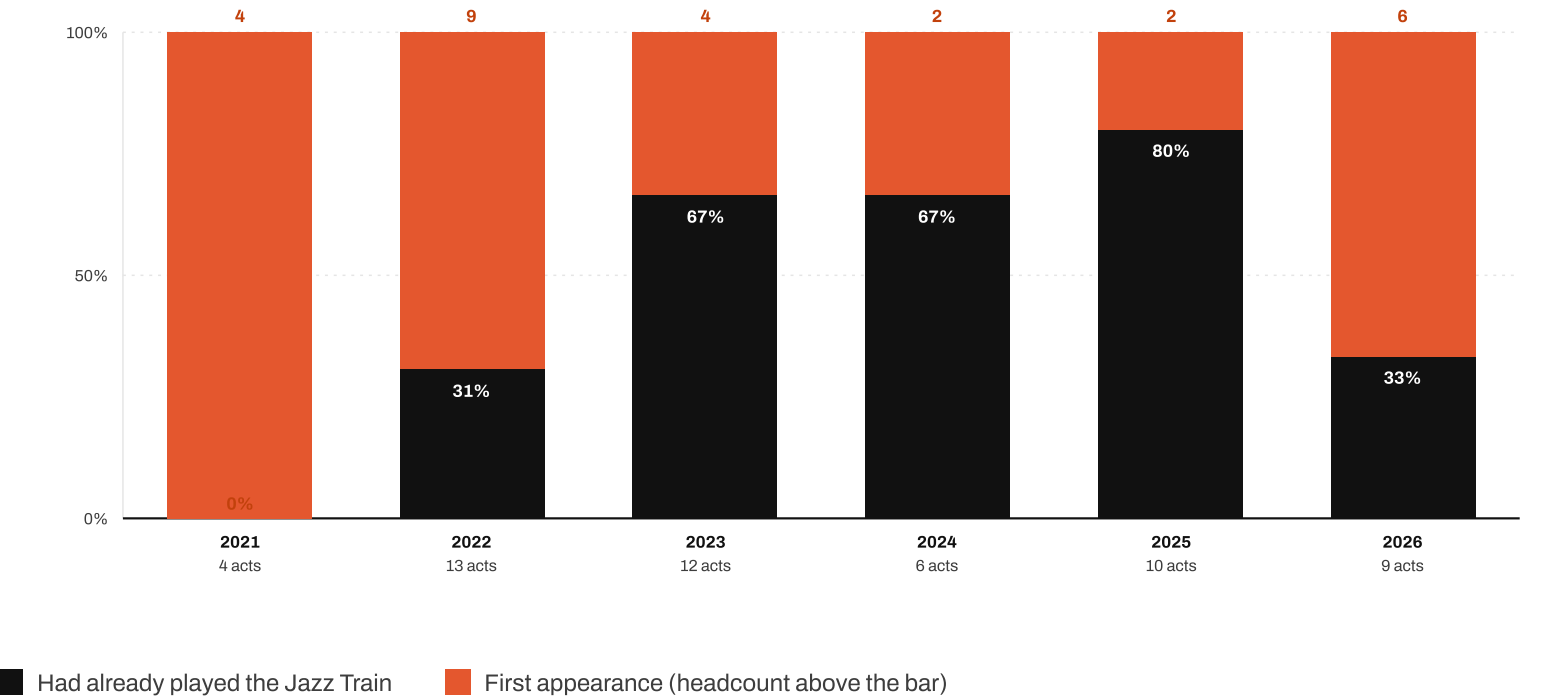
seasons apiece for Peter White, Rick Braun and Steve Oliver

39

bookings for Peter White across just the five events measured in this volume — 100 across the ten events selected for this study

The rotation rate, six seasons

This is not a festival. It is a concert series: one Sunday, one headline act or double bill, a seventy-five-minute set in a forest amphitheatre reached by a twenty-five-minute narrow-gauge steam train. There is no bill to fill, no stage schedule to balance, no all-star jam to staff. Each date is a separate decision made months apart, and any act in America could take it. That makes the rotation rate here the cleanest measurement in the entire study.



Six seasons, 54 artist-slots, 27 distinct acts – 2.00 bookings per act. The 2026 season is counted as announced; its last two dates fall after this document was compiled. Excluding the three-concert first season, 54.0% of every slot went to someone who had already ridden the train. In 2025 it was 80%. The 2026 season looks open at 33% repeat until you check where the six new names have been (Exhibit C).

EXHIBIT B

Who rides the train more than once

Twelve of the twenty-seven acts have been booked more than once. Steve Oliver, Rick Braun and Peter White have each played five of the six seasons – and Peter White only missed the first one, which had three concerts in it.

		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Peter White	5/6	☐	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Rick Braun	5/6	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒
Steve Oliver	5/6	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒
Brian Simpson	4/6	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☐
Hiroshima	4/6	☐	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐
David Benoit	3/6	☒	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐
Keiko Matsui	3/6	☐	☒	☐	☒	☒	☐
Acoustic Alchemy	2/6	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐
Arthur Thompson	2/6	☐	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mindi Abair	2/6	☐	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐
Tommy Castro	2/6	☐	☐	☐	☒	☒	☐
Vincent Ingala	2/6	☐	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐

ACT	SEASONS	RATE	NOTE
Peter White	5 / 6	83.3%	missed only the three-concert first season
Rick Braun	5 / 6	83.3%	the 2022 booking was postponed from July to October and still happened
Steve Oliver	5 / 6	83.3%	never booked by the Florida foundation, but on five of six trains
Brian Simpson	4 / 6	66.7%	all four appearances were double bills with Steve Oliver
Hiroshima	4 / 6	66.7%	billed as the trio, not the full band
David Benoit	3 / 6	50.0%	billed with a Steinway hauled into the forest, 2022 and 2024
Keiko Matsui	3 / 6	50.0%	also 7 of 7 at the Daytona Jazz Weekend
Acoustic Alchemy	2 / 6	33.3%	
Arthur Thompson	2 / 6	33.3%	also in the Daytona house band, 2024 and 2025
Mindi Abair	2 / 6	33.3%	the 2023 booking was a wine tasting with a set attached
Tommy Castro	2 / 6	33.3%	a blues act
Vincent Ingala	2 / 6	33.3%	both times with Arthur Thompson

Fifteen acts have been booked exactly once – 55.6% of the roster. The top five take 42.6% of all fifty-four slots; the top ten take 64.8%.

EXHIBIT C

The finding this volume exists for

Twenty-seven acts have played the Yosemite Jazz Train. Eighteen of them – 66.7% – have also been billed by at least one of the other promoters measured in this study: the Florida Smooth Jazz Foundation, Omega Events at Newport Beach, or Rainbow Promotions in San Diego. Nine have never appeared on any of those bills. Here are the nine.

Tommy Castro and the Painkillers · <i>blues</i>
Elvin Bishop · <i>blues</i>
Rick Estrin & The Nightcats · <i>blues</i>
Laurie Morvan · <i>blues</i>
Lee Rocker · <i>rockabilly, of the Stray Cats</i>
Jesse Cook · <i>flamenco guitar</i>
Alonzo Bodden · <i>a stand-up comedian</i>
Dylan Chambers · <i>pop and soul singer, billed as a special guest</i>
Arthur Thompson · <i>a drummer – not billed elsewhere; listed in the Daytona rhythm section in the promoter's 2024 and 2025 copy</i>

Every single contemporary jazz artist this series has ever booked is already inside the loop. The only names it found on its own are the ones

that are not smooth jazz.

The series is promoted by Scott Pederson of Scotland Concerts, which lists a post office box in La Jolla. No shared venue, nonprofit or festival linking it to Cathy Powers in Daytona Beach, Omega Events in Orange County or Rainbow Promotions was found in public records; shared agents were not checked. Booking his own calendar for one venue, he arrived at the same eighteen names – and when he wanted something that was *not* already on somebody else's poster, he had to leave the genre to find it.

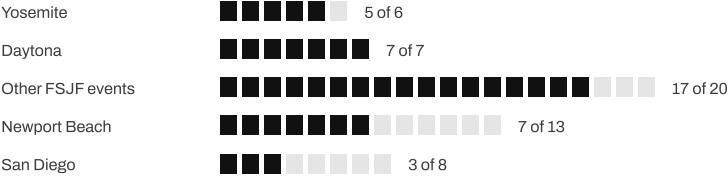
No coordination between promoters is implied. The overlap is consistent with independent buyers drawing on the same pool of artists.

EXHIBIT D

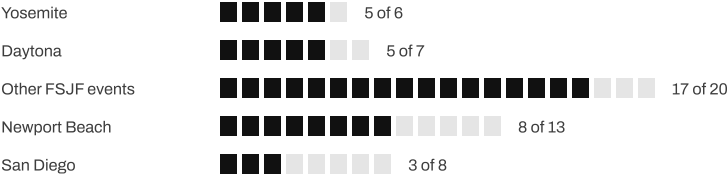
Three careers, five events, one hundred and one bookings

Counting only the events documented in this study – the Jazz Train, the Daytona Jazz Weekend, the Florida Smooth Jazz Foundation's other three events, Newport Beach and San Diego – here is where three men have been. Each square is one edition of one event; filled means they were on it.

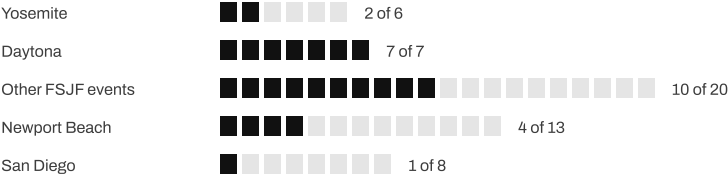
Peter White
39 bookings



Rick Braun
38 bookings



Vincent Ingala
24 bookings



Thirty-nine, thirty-eight and twenty-four. For comparison, the Carousel volume found Dave Koz on 36 bookings across the *ten* largest smooth jazz events in America – and sixteen of those were on the cruise with his own name on it. Peter White passes that total across five events, none of which he owns. Across all ten of the biggest events this project has counted, he is on 100 bills and Rick Braun on 103.

This is not a criticism of Peter White, Rick Braun or Vincent Ingala, who are demonstrably excellent and demonstrably in demand. It is a description of a market in which being in demand and being the only available option have become impossible to tell apart.

EXHIBIT E

The 2026 season, and what “new to the train” means

Six of the nine names on the 2026 schedule had never played the Jazz Train before. Five of those six were already in the loop and had simply never ridden this particular train:

Richard Elliot – Daytona twice, the Florida fall weekend five times, New Year's Eve twice, Clearwater twice, San Diego four times and Newport Beach seven times: twenty-two bookings across the other events in this volume alone. **Jeff Kashiwa** – Daytona, the fall weekend twice, San Diego, and Newport Beach inside the Sax Pack. **Brian Bromberg, Paul Brown** and **Michael Paulo** – all three at San Diego; Paulo also at New Year's Eve.

The sixth, **Rick Estrin**, plays blues harmonica.

The other three 2026 slots are Peter White's fifth season, Rick Braun's fifth, and Steve Oliver's fifth.

WHAT IT COSTS, AND WHAT YOU GET

2026: **\$135** per adult including fees, **\$95** per child. For that: a twenty-five-minute steam train ride out, a boxed chef-prepared appetizer, a **seventy-five-minute** set on campfire bench seating, a twenty-five-minute ride back, and a meet-and-greet at the station.

Adult admission has risen 8% since the 2021 season. Child admission has more than doubled since 2024, when the standard child price was \$45, the early-booking price \$35, and under-eights went free.

The travel takes two-thirds as long as the music.

Under a heading reading “**2026 Performance Schedule**”, the live site says: “*Stay Tuned for the 2025 Yosemite Jazz Train Line-Up – TO BE ANNOUNCED MARCH 2025.*” The footer reads “© *JazzConcerts.com / Scotland Concerts 2019.*”

Old seasons were hidden rather than deleted, so 2023, 2025 and 2026 events render on the same page at three different price scales. The roster has barely moved in six years and neither has the copy.

EXHIBIT F

What the promoter does when he wants something different

Track the share of each season that is *not* contemporary jazz at all – the blues bands, the rockabilly, the flamenco guitarist, the soul singer, the comedian. Hiroshima is counted as jazz here, which is the conservative choice and makes the trend smaller than it would otherwise look:

0%

2021 · 4 ACTS

Three concerts, all smooth jazz. Brian Simpson & Steve Oliver, Rick Braun, David Benoit.

8%

2022 · 13 ACTS

Ten concerts. Lee Rocker of the Stray Cats is the only departure.

17%

2023 · 12 ACTS

Jesse Cook and Dylan Chambers arrive. One September date is billed only as “Special Guest” and is never filled.

33%

2024 · 6 ACTS

The season halves in size. A third of it is a stand-up comedian and a blues band.

30%

2025 · 10 ACTS

Three separate blues bookings – Tommy Castro, Laurie Morvan, Elvin Bishop.

11%

2026 · 9 ACTS

Back to smooth jazz, and back to Peter White, Rick Braun and Steve Oliver.

Read one way, this is a promoter sensibly broadening a series in a beautiful venue. Read another, it is a promoter who worked through the available contemporary jazz names in three seasons and went to the blues circuit for the rest – a circuit with a deeper bench because it never stopped adding to it. Both readings are available and the data cannot settle between them. What the data does settle is the count: nine acts unique to this series, none of them contemporary jazz, and not one contemporary jazz act on the roster that some other promoter in this study had not already booked.

METHOD

Where the numbers come from

Schedules were assembled from jazzconcerts.com – the live 2026 page, two orphaned season pages still resolving at /homepages and /homepages-3-2, and Internet Archive captures from October 2021, August 2022, August 2023, June 2024 and August 2025 – plus ymspr.com, a TravMedia release of 1 April 2022 confirming ten 2022 concert dates, ABC30 Fresno of 8 August 2024, and Sierra News Online of 6 October 2021, which names Scott Pederson of Scotland Concerts as promoter and confirms September 2021 as the first Jazz Train concert. All six seasons are accounted for.

One appearance = one act on one season's schedule; an act booked twice in a season counts once. Double bills count as two. Package billings are opened into individuals: BPM is Brian Bromberg, Paul Brown and Michael Paulo. Named bands – Hiroshima, Acoustic Alchemy, The Nightcats – count as one act. The unnamed “Special Guest” slot of 17 September 2023 is excluded from all counts because it was never publicly filled. Lewis Creek Amphitheater capacity is nowhere published and no attendance figure is claimed here.

READ NEXT

A promoter with no documented ties to the others still booked the same names.
The Oxford is the case where that did not happen.

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The Gatekeepers

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Festival Stats and Studies · Volume VII · Sierra Nevada Edition · Compiled August 2026. Companion volumes: The Gatekeepers, What they tell you, Boscov’s Berks Jazz Fest, Rehoboth Beach Jazz Festival, San Diego Smooth Jazz Festival, Newport Beach Jazz Festival, Daytona Jazz Weekend, Catalina Island JazzTrax, Gulf Coast Summer Fest, Jazz at the Oxford, BMG Concerts, The Carousel. The data · Ten Facts · How It Connects · The Festival List · Smooth Jazz Radio.

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