



Luck and Strategy Pay Off For Graham Brothers

Number 7 is lucky. Three sevens is even better.

With steer #777 as their team roping stock draw, Wainwright, Alberta ropers, Dawson (header) and Dillon Graham made the most of performance number one at their first ever Canadian Finals Rodeo. The youngest set of four brother combinations competing in the team roping event this year, the 2019 season leaders clocked a smoking 3.9 second run to win the round and pocket \$10,500 each - which helps the duo maintain their hold on top spot with \$21,891 overall.

“We were just hoping to get one caught,” 20 year old Dawson explained, “but we had some good luck. Our game plan coming in was just to make a good solid run, but as the team roping went on and there was four flat, 4.3, 4.2, we knew we had to go out there and be as fast as we could.”

The strategy paid off for the last ropers in the round, helped along by steer #777.

“We knew we had the one everyone had their eye on,” added 18 year old Dillon. “Our best friends, the Bonnetts won a rodeo on him, Levi (Simpson) ran him at Hand Hills and we ran him the other day. We’re excited about day one and we’re hoping to catch the rest of our steers as the week goes on.”

Other athletes who earned first place cheques in round one included bronc rider, Zeke Thurston. The 2016 world champion - one of only four men to ride - scored 87 points aboard the Calgary Stampede’s Y-24 Yoyo Marbles. For Thurston, there’s really only one missing piece on an otherwise sterling resume, a Canadian championship. And tonight, the season leader took a big step toward rectifying that.

“I was excited to get on him,” the Big Valley, Alberta bronc rider said. “I’d seen him and kinda wondered why he bucks so many guys off. I figured that out tonight. He’s a big strong horse and he had me hustling for a while but it worked out.”

Calgary bareback rider, Spur Lacasse, rode Vold Rodeo’s 838 Mucho Dinero to 87.25 points. Season leader (and 2019 Rookie and Permit winner) Edgar Durazo (Montezuma, Sonora, MX) topped the bull riding field with 87.25 points on Vold’s 42 Baja Midnight; Consort, AB’s Brendan Laye enjoyed a 3.4 second run to win the steer wrestling while CFR tie-down first timer, Haven Maged (Miles City, MT) took top money with an 8.2 second run. Season leader, Justine Elliott from Lacombe, AB made the most of top spot on the ground as she recorded a 14.510 second run aboard her mare Blondy (the 2019 Barrel Horse With the Most Heart). Drayton Valley novice bareback rider, Jake Plotts won his event with a 73 point ride; Condor, AB novice bronc rider Hayden Cole marked 75.5 to earn top spot and Weyburn, SK steer rider, Kegan Kmita, scored 76 to win his first CFR cheque.

For complete results, see rodeocanada.com

CFR performance number two (of six rounds) kicks off at 7 pm tomorrow evening (Oct 30) at Westerner Park in Red Deer, Alberta.

About the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association

The Canadian Professional Rodeo Association (CPRA) with headquarters in Airdrie, Alberta is the sanctioning body for professional rodeo in Canada. The CPRA approves 55 events annually with a total

payout exceeding \$5.7 million. The organization holds their premiere event - the Canadian Finals Rodeo (CFR) - at Westerner Park in Red Deer, AB, October 29 - November 3, 2019 and will oversee the Finning Pro Tour Finals September 1 in Armstrong, BC and their inaugural Maple Leaf Circuit Finals November 27-30, 2019 at the Canadian Western Agribition in Regina, SK. Follow the CPRA on Twitter and Instagram @prorodeocanada, 'Like' Canadian Professional Rodeo Association on Facebook or online at Rodeo-Canada.com.

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