



CANADIAN PROFESSIONAL RODEO ASSOCIATION

May 18, 2022 | Airdrie, AB
For immediate release

SMS Equipment Pro Tour Kicks Off at Grande Prairie

Big payouts, outstanding athletes and historic rodeo arenas are all part of the SMS Equipment Pro Rodeo Tour (Pro Tour) which launches its 2022 season May 26-29 at the Grande Prairie Stompede. And with a new sponsor in place—SMS Equipment—this promises to be one of the biggest and best years in Tour history. Adding to the profile of the Tour is the continued FloRodeo livestream coverage.

Featuring eleven high-profile, lucrative CPRA rodeos that offer contestants collectively almost \$2 million in prize money, the Pro Tour includes (in addition to Grande Prairie) the Wainwright Stampede, Ponoka Stampede, Medicine Hat Stampede, Strathmore Stampede and new to the Tour, Lethbridge Pro Rodeo. To the east, the Tour makes stops in Morris, MB (Manitoba Exhibition and Stampede) and Regina, SK (Pile O' Bones Rodeo) while to the west, the Tour events are B.C.'s Williams Lake Stampede, Dawson Creek Pro Rodeo and Interior Provincial Exhibition and Stampede in Armstrong, also home of the SMS Equipment Pro Rodeo Tour Finals.

2019 Pro Tour and Canadian Bull Riding Champion, Edgar Durazo, is itching to get going. "This is great. Everybody wants to do well at the Tour rodeos; everybody wants to win them. I want to win them," the Mexican-born cowboy grinned.

With a minimum of \$8000 added in each major event (and Ponoka and Strathmore offering two of the largest purses anywhere) Pro Tour rodeos are priorities for athletes from both sides of the 49th parallel. And with money won at Tour rodeos, as with most CPRA events, counting towards qualifications for both the Canadian Finals Rodeo (Nov 2-6 in Red Deer, AB) and the National Finals Rodeo Dec 1-10 in Las Vegas, NV, the Pro Tour stops are pivotal in many competitors' plans.

"The Pro Tour rodeos are great with the amount of money they have up," commented two-time Pro Tour Barrel Racing Champion Justine Elliott. "If you can place at a few of the Tour events, you can pretty well have the (CFR) made." The first stop on the Tour, Grande Prairie, is one of Elliott's favourites. "I love the atmosphere, they have really good ground and put on a great show."

Another former Pro Tour Champion, steer wrestler Stephen Culling, is also looking forward to the season. "After our modified schedule last year, it's exciting to have the Pro Tour and all those really good rodeos back," the BC veteran noted. "It's a lot nicer to have a few good hits at some of those Tour rodeos; it definitely helps the cause."

While fans can enjoy an excellent sport and entertainment package by attending Pro Tour rodeos in person, for those who can't get there, all SMS Equipment Pro Tour events are streamed live at [FloRodeo.com](https://www.florodeo.com) which brings the action right into your living room. (See <https://www.florodeo.com> to sign up for the live stream.)

For a complete CPRA rodeo schedule, check out rodeocanada.com

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2022 Pro Rodeo Tour sponsor, SMS Equipment Inc., is the largest independent Komatsu dealer globally, selling, renting and providing full-service support for the most advanced earthmoving equipment for the mining, construction, road construction, and forestry industries. To learn more, visit www.smsequipment.com

The Canadian Professional Rodeo Association (CPRA) with headquarters in Airdrie, Alberta is the official sanctioning body for Professional Rodeo in Canada. The CPRA approves 55 events annually with a total payout exceeding \$5.7 million. The organization oversees the SMS Equipment Pro Tour Finals each fall in Armstrong, BC, holds their premiere event - the Canadian Finals Rodeo (CFR) - at Westerner Park in Red Deer, AB in early November and endorses the Maple Leaf Circuit Finals as part of Canadian Western Agribition in Regina, SK. Follow the CPRA on Twitter and Instagram @prorodeocanada, 'Like' Canadian Professional Rodeo Association on Facebook or online at RodeoCanada.com.

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