



High Point Battle Heats Up

Edmonton, ALTA – November 9, 2017

After an opening night that saw several rookies and sophomores take centre stage, night number two of #CFR44 was about the veterans making their statements.

Among those seasoned pros was 12 time Canadian champion Curtis Cassidy who was 3.8 in the steer wrestling to pocket the first place cheque of \$11,212.50. Cassidy is in the thick of two battles at this Canadian Finals Rodeo. In addition to steer wrestling, the 9 time High Point champion of Canada is locked in a heated race for a 10th high point buckle with two time titlist Morgan Grant, two event CFR qualifier Riley Warren and defending team roping heeling champion Russell Cardoza.

When he looked back on his second round steer wrestling run Cassidy admitted, "I was a little worried; that steer is a little tricky. He really leaves and runs, and has really big horns - like baseball bats - to be honest. He's a good steer; I've seen guys do really well with him. But I've also seen guys have trouble with him.

"When I nodded, he hung a horn a little bit, and I thought 'oh man, I've just run through the barrier' but I heard the guys yelling 'Yah, Yah' behind me and I knew I was okay."

The second-round win for the Donalda cowboy came on the heels of a fifth place first-round cheque that vaulted him to within a couple of thousand dollars of that high point championship. All three of the other high point contenders enjoyed big performances on Thursday night. Grant and Warren split the round in the tie down roping while Cardoza - roping with two time heading champion Dustin Bird - have collected first and second place cheques - totalling \$19,550 through the first two days of the Finals.

Cassidy credited his horse Tyson with being a big part of his success, and recalled the sage advice of Hall of Fame Oklahoma roper Barry Burk as he looked ahead to the remaining CFR rounds, "You have to win as much money as you can on the next steer because that's the most important one, and you don't know what will happen after that."

Airdrie, Alberta cowboy Jake Vold - seeking a fourth consecutive bareback title - was another of the veterans in the spotlight on Thursday night. Vold was 87.75 on the Calgary Stampede superstar Special Delivery for the go-round win while in the bull riding, 2006 Canadian champion Tanner Girletz (Didsbury, AB), who has already announced that this will be his last Canadian Finals Rodeo, matched up with Outlaw Buckers' Bendera for a sensational 86.5 ride that earned him the victory lap in round two. Other winners included Holden, Alberta's Rene Leclercq who blazed the pattern in 14.56 for her first ever barrel racing round-win; 2008 saddle bronc riding champion, Dusty Hausauer, from Dickinson, North Dakota, who topped the field with an 83.5 on Calgary's Zaka Kibitz and tie-down roper and defending high point champion Morgan Grant (Didsbury, AB) and Riley Warren (Stettler, AB) who shared the win with 7.9 second runs. The Ellensburg, WA team roping brothers, Riley and Brady Minor, enjoyed a 4.2 second run for top honours - the first year equal money has been offered to both headers and heelers at the CFR in this event.

The second performance of the Canadian Finals Rodeo also saw Bruce Flewelling named 2017 Douglas Lake Ranch Cowboy of the Year. The personable pick-up man, stock contractor and wild cow milking champion

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spent his lifetime in and around rodeo. He and his wife, Iloe, raised several stand-out bucking horses through the years - among them - American Trip, British Block, Mr. Burke, Red Sky and Cheadle. Flewelling worked as a pick-up man for several contractors including Cockx and Hook Rodeo, Northcott Rodeo, Big Country Rodeo, Vold Rodeo and Big Stone Rodeo. He also handled pick-up man duties at the Calgary Stampede for 15 years and at the CFR four times. Bruce passed away in the spring of this year. His stock continues to buck under the Outlaw Buckers' flag.

As well, Canadian Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame inductees and legends were recognized: In the contestant category, 4 time Canadian barrel racing champion, Rayel Little; 3 time saddle bronc riding champion, Denny Hay; 1991 bareback champion Billy Laye and the late Glen Keeley (1989 Canadian champion bull rider). Long time president and chairman of the North Peace Stampede, the late Bill Pimm, was inducted as a builder and Wayne Vold Rodeo's 1977 bull of the year, Little Six, went into the Hall in the livestock category. CFR saddle bronc riding qualifier and rodeo official (as well as former Canadian Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame president) Lester Gurnett was inducted as a Legend.

The third performance of the 2017 Canadian Finals Rodeo kicks off Friday, November 10 at 7:30 pm. Look for complete results at rodeocanada.com

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 over 50 events annually with a total payout exceeding \$5.1 million. The organization holds the Grass Roots Final (at the Agrium Western Event Centre, Stampede Park in Calgary, Alberta) each September and their premiere event - the Canadian Finals Rodeo (CFR) - in Edmonton in November. Follow the CPRA on Twitter and Instagram @prorodeocanada, 'Like' Canadian Professional Rodeo Association on Facebook or online at RodeoCanada.com.

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