

Pro Rodeo Canada



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Aug 11, 2014
For immediate release

Sticking to the Plan

Rodeo fans in Dawson Creek, BC, and La Crete, AB, can expect to see Britany Diaz compete in their hometowns in 2015.

“I have not gone to any place that we have not won money at in the last few years,” says Diaz of her strategy mapped out before the start of the 2014 campaign. “It’s worked outstanding. She’s running better and she’s more rested. It’s been a good plan for us.”

The North Dakota barrel racer and her 14 year-old mare, *Rootie*, have stuck to the plan even though it’s meant staying home from big paying rodeos in Cheyenne, WY, Salinas, CA, and Nampa, ID while chasing a Wrangler National Finals berth.

“I might even take her home at the beginning of September and maybe go to Omaha and then just call it quits for the year. I want to make sure she’s rested up and feeling good for the big stuff.”

That ‘big stuff’ will include the Canadian Finals Rodeo in November. It will be her third trip to Rexall Place in Edmonton but this time she has a chance of coming to the Alberta capital in the number one position with her best shot yet at winning a Canadian championship.

“Oh my gosh, that would be outstanding,” laughs Diaz. “I’m excited just to make it to the CFR. I hope it goes good. We’ll just keep doing what we’ve been doing all year long.”

Her two first place cheques from the Wrangler Canadian Pro Rodeo Tour stop in Dawson Creek and from La Crete were worth \$3,744 and will move Diaz into top spot in the new Pro Rodeo Canada standings. Her 2014 earnings on this side of the border, which include over \$16,000 won in the month of June alone, have now surpassed the \$30,000 mark.

Nebraska steer wrestler, Dru Melvin may be mapping out a different strategy for next season when it comes to competing in Canada. The 31 year-old split the Dawson Creek top prize with Curtis Cassidy of Donald, AB, with identical four-second runs for a \$2,416 payday. That’s run the 2006 WNFR qualifier’s earnings to \$25,443, the most of any bulldogger in this country. But Melvin has only competed at eight rodeos on the CPRA schedule leaving him seven short of the required amount needed for CFR qualification with only nine rodeos left in the season.

It won’t be his rodeo count that keeps Josh Harden from qualifying for his first CFR and after a \$3,070 weekend up north, it may not be money that keeps him out of Edmonton either. The Big Valley, AB, cowboy placed 3rd in both Dawson Creek and La Crete to unofficially jump from outside the top 30 in the Canadian standings to very near the top twenty. Harden, who has qualified for a shot at winning the Canadian All-Around title, also won an \$829 cheque in the saddle bronc riding in La Crete.

Barrhead, AB, roper, Kolton Schmidt also won cheques in two events. The 20 year-old paired up with Grady Branden in La Crete to finish 2nd and then partnered back up with his usual 2014 running mate, Rocky Dallyn in Dawson Creek for a 6.6-second run to split first for a \$2,421 weekend. The reigning Canadian team roping heading champion also placed in the tie-down roping in La Crete for another \$740.

Other big winners from the weekend included tie-down ropers, Chad Johnson (\$3,402) and Lee Rombough (\$2,420); saddle bronc riders, Tyler Corrington (\$2,854) and Luke Butterfield (\$2,477); bareback rider, Ky Marshall (\$2,448), bullrider, Tyler Pankewitz (\$2,369); novice bronc rider, Keenan Reinhardt (\$1,009); novice bareback rider, Linden Woods (\$1,021) and steer rider, Coy Robbins (\$747).

Next up on the Pro Rodeo Canada schedule is the Jasper Heritage Rodeo in Jasper, AB (Aug. 13-16), the Cranbrook, BC, Pro Rodeo (Aug. 15-17) and the Pincher Creek, AB, Pro Rodeo (Aug. 15-17).

About the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association: The Canadian Professional Rodeo Association (CPRA) with it's headquarters in Airdrie, Alberta, is the sanctioning body for professional rodeo in Canada. The CPRA sanctions over 50 events annually with a total payout exceeding \$5.1 million. Join us for the 41st edition of the Canadian Finals Rodeo (CFR) November 5th to 9th, 2014 in Edmonton, Alberta at Rexall Place, our association's premiere event. For more information please visit RodeoCanada.com or call (403) 945-0903. Follow us on [Twitter](#), or like our page on [Facebook](#), and watch the action on [YouTube](#) throughout the year.