



Pro Rodeo Canada

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Mezei Wins Besplug Invitational

The night didn't start the way Devon Mezei had hoped.

The Big Valley bull rider was first man out in the long go-round of the second annual Chad Besplug Invitational Bull Riding and his bull went down just as the gate opened, necessitating a re-ride.

But when the dust settled at the Claresholm Agriplex a couple of hours later, Mezei's night turned out just fine as the six time Canadian Finals Rodeo qualifier turned in a spectacular 90 point ride on the 2014 Bull of the CFR, Vold Rodeo's Proper Ripped, to emerge as the CBI 2015 champion.

That short go performance coupled with the 83 score Mezei posted on his long go re-ride bull (173 points on two) provided a one and a half point cushion for Mezei in the 2015 CPRA rodeo season's inaugural event. Warburg's Jesse Torkelson, who won the long go round with an 88 score was 171.5 on his two rides. Garret Green of Meeting Creek caught third spot with a 170.5 point total.

"I couldn't have had a better start to the season," the veteran bull rider noted just minutes after his winning ride. "You think about what Dakota Buttar did after winning here last year and you feel pretty good about a win like this."

Mezei was alluding to the fact that Buttar, last year's Besplug Invitational champion, used the quick start to his 2014 season to take a lead he seldom relinquished en route to winning his first Canadian title.

"I was actually thinking about hanging it up after last year," Mezei admitted, "but I kind of re-discovered my love for bull riding over the winter and decided to go all out this year and see what happens. Not being at the Calgary Stampede or at the CFR last year—that wasn't a lot of fun."

Mezei hadn't seen a lot of Proper Ripped prior to their Claresholm meeting. "I knew he was Bull of the Finals and I know what that meant," Mezei acknowledged. "And he was really tough. I was worried pretty well through the whole ride but usually with bulls like that, your body just takes over and does what it's supposed to do. At least that's what you hope for and that's the way it worked out tonight."

"Devon made a fantastic ride—one of the best I've seen in a long time," Besplug, the event producer and two-time Canadian title-holder commented as another massive, and very satisfied crowd made its way from the building. "And a 90 score is always something really special."

Mezei and his wife Kayla are expecting their first child in July and trips to Calgary and Edmonton would add to what will already be a special year for the Mezeis.

The win put a total of \$3634.40 in Mezei's Wranglers but he was very clear that winning an event as important as the CBI was as big a deal as the money.

"This is one of the best organized and produced events of the year and Chad's a really good friend so that makes this extra special," Mezei concluded.

And it makes his game plan for 2015 just a little easier to accomplish. That game plan is "to go as hard as I can until I've got the CFR made, then to ease off a little at that point." Winning the first event of the season is the perfect first step and momentum builder for a rider who has made consistency his trademark throughout his very successful career.

For complete results of the Chad Besplug Invitational Bull Riding, go the CPRA website at rodeocanada.com

Next stop on the Pro Rodeo Canada 2015 calendar is the Broncs and Honky Tonks Spring Indoor Rodeo in Medicine Hat, Alberta April 10-12.

About the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association: The Canadian Professional Rodeo Association (CPRA) with its 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 42nd edition of the Canadian Finals Rodeo (CFR) November 11 - 15, 2015 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.