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## SAM KELTS CLIMBING THE LADDER ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER

FALKLAND, B.C. – The rain might have been pouring down this May Long Weekend as the Falkland Stampede took place, but Saddle Bronc Rider Sam Kelts found the sunny side of the weekend’s weather forecast. Heavy rains left the Falkland Stampede wet and muddy but Kelts says the sun peaked through the clouds during his 82.5 point ride aboard Northcott Rodeo’s Black Mamba, earning him \$1,284.00 unofficially.



*Sam Kelts’ winning 87.75 point ride in round two of the 2015 Canadian Finals Rodeo.  
Photo Credit: Mike Copeman Photo*

“It was muddy as can be, the arena was pretty wet and sippy but it wasn’t too bad the day I was there,” said Kelts who says the competitors up Monday may have actually been blessed with the best weather of the weekend, “I lucked out, by the bronc riding on Monday the sun was shining and it really wasn’t too bad at all.”

“You’re trying to perform a fairly athletic feat so if your muscles are cold and your hands are cold and you’re trying to hang on to a bronc rein or bareback rigging, it definitely doesn’t help,” said Kelts of poor weather rodeos.

It’s proving that even the mud and the muck can’t keep this cowboy from the pay window as Kelts starts one of the most consistent rodeo seasons of his career. Kelts has placed with four out of five rides this CPRA rodeo season, and has had an equally impressive showing south of the border.

**Canadian Professional Rodeo Association**

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“I've been placing very consistently down there too, it's been a good year for me so far. I think I've probably been to 20 rodeos now after this weekend and have placed at all but six or seven,” said Kelts.

While Kelts says it's still early in the rodeo season to start thinking about the standings, the familiar tingle of National Finals Rodeo dreams is there as Kelts perches in spot number 11 in the world.

“When a guy is winning he is always thinking about that. I've been trying to make it for years now, I've been really close a couple of times, I think I could have done it a couple of times without some injuries that made me stop going for a couple years but I definitely feel like this is the year I definitely have a good shot at making it if I can keep my roll going,” said Kelts.

Consistency is on this Bronc Rider's side so far this year as Kelts plans a full season of rodeos both in Canada and the U.S., “As long as I can keep it up, that's what really matters. Every cheque counts whether it's \$200 or \$5,000.”

While Kelts has consistent wins under his belt, there seems to be a trend of first-time professional rodeo winners early in the rodeo season. Tie Down Roper Clayton Smith posted his first CPRA win in Falkland with a time of 8.5 seconds.

The past Canadian Cowboys Association Finalist and Oklahoma State College student from Eckville, Alberta no doubt plans to make waves now that he's got the boost he needs to kick his season in to high gear.

“I had a pretty good calf, I saw my start, reached at him off the right. My horse is working pretty good so I just stuck two wraps on him as fast as I could. It's a pretty good confidence builder going in to the season,” said Smith, “I got in to Ponoka now, that's a pretty big win.”

The \$1622.00 he won may not be the biggest check he'll hope to earn in his career, but with the Ponoka Stampede's requirement for previously unranked competitors for win at least \$1,000 this season to have a chance to qualify, that money may take a lot of weight off this 19-year-old's shoulders.

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Another young-gun that claimed the “W” for the first time was Bull Rider Cooper Zur, winning \$1,479.00 for his 86.5 point ride. Falkland marked only the third professional rodeo the 18-year-old has competed in and Zur says he’s happy to break the ice on the pro scene.

It appears young blood was working together as he rode a bull that has recently been added to the Northcott Rodeo’s herd. “I road a young bull of Northcott’s called ‘Chicken Out’. I’d never heard of him before and didn’t really know what to expect but we both did what we were supposed to do and it all worked out in the end.”

Other champions of the weekend include Sunnybrook, Alberta’s Michael Solberg who scored 85.5 points in the Bareback Riding on Northcott’s “A.K.A.” for \$1,246.00. The Steer Wrestling was split between Rode Vold and Scott Guenther who both clocked in a time of 4.1 seconds for \$1,536.00 each.

Also splitting first place in their event were Team Roper’s Clay Ullery and Ryon Tittel and the Oregon boys Garrett Rogers and Jacob Minor. The two teams stopped the clock in 4.5 seconds to win \$1,182.00/man.

Millarville’s Toni Dixon will head back over the mountains \$1,426.00 richer after winning the Ladies Barrel Racing with her time of 16.748. Novice and Junior event winners include Novice Saddle Bronc Rider Kole Ashbacher who scored 80 points for \$303.00, Novice Bareback Rider Danny Vandenameele scoring 78 points for \$240 and Steer Rider Luke Ferber who earned \$330.00 for his 78 point steer ride.

Find complete rodeo results at [www.rodeocanada.com](http://www.rodeocanada.com)

Next up on the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association schedule is the Grande Prairie Stompede May 26 to May 29. Grande Prairie is the first of eight stops on the Wrangler Canadian Pro Rodeo Tour.

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### **About the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association**

The Canadian Professional Rodeo Association (CPRA) with headquarters in Airdrie, Alta., is the sanctioning body for professional rodeo in Canada. The CPRA sanctions over 50 events annually with a total payout exceeding \$5.1 million. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat at @prorodeocanada, like Canadian Professional Rodeo Association on Facebook, or online at RodeoCanada.com.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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