



Bounce Back Night for Canadian Cowboys

December 11, 2017

After a couple of sub-par nights, Team Canada bounced back with a strong performance in the fifth go-round of the 2017 Wrangler National Finals Rodeo. Five members of the nine-man Canadian contingent cashed cheques, making this easily their best night to date.

It was a case of saving the best for the last as two-time Canadian Steer Wrestling Champion, Tanner Milan, was 3.8 seconds on the last steer in the round to pick up his second go-round win and the \$26,320 first place cheque. The win moved the Cochrane, Alberta man to 4th place in both the average and the world standings.

“I just have to keep running at it every night,” Milan noted. “I can’t back off. The horse I’m riding, Maverick who belongs to Tom Lewis, has been getting my feet on the ground really fast and I just have to stay aggressive.”

Ty Erickson, the Montana cowboy, continues to lead the world standings but Milan has moved to within \$63,000 of the leader with five rounds and the all-important average still to be decided. Provost, Alberta bulldogger, Scott Guenther checked in with a 6.6 second run and was out of the money. Guenther sits in 10th place on the world leaderboard.

You know the pen of bareback horses is pretty sweet when 87.5 is good for only a 5/6 split. That was the case in go-round number five of the 2017 WNFR. Canadian cowboy Orin Larsen was that guy on this night as he matched up with Wilson Sanchez from the Hi Lo ProRodeo Company. The horse, born and raised near Rocky Mountain House, actually came from the Hollingsworth family of Eckville and to add to the intrigue, Larsen’s sister is married to a Hollingsworth. You know Central Alberta was cheering for the Manitoba man who is at his third WNFR. Larsen has placed in four of five rounds for over \$56,000 won and sits in fifth place in both the average and the world standings.

Santaquin, Utah cowboy, Mason Clements, won the round with an 89 point ride while Tim O’Connell maintained his big lead at the top of the standings. Jake Vold whose 85 score wasn’t quite enough to get into the money, has dropped back to fourth place in the world standings behind the seemingly unstoppable Tim O’Connell, Richmond Champion and Tanner Aus.

You knew it was just a matter of time for Jeremy Buhler. And tonight was the time. The defending world champion and his WNFR partner, Arizona header, Tom Richards. posted a 4.0 to catch a 3/4 split in the round and a pair of \$13,326 cheques. It was the first qualified time and the first payday for the duo that was thrown together when Buhler’s longtime partner Levi Simpson just missed qualifying for this year’s WNFR. Erich Rogers and Cory Petska split the round with Clay Tryan and Jade Corkill. The 3.9 second result took Rogers and Petska, the Arizona superstars, to a narrow lead in the world standings.

Things finally went the way Canadian saddle bronc riding fans thought they’d go right from the start as the reigning world champion, Zeke Thurston and 2017 Canadian Champion, Layton Green were part of a fifth go-round 2/3/4 split. Both cowboys cashed cheques for \$15,794 and for Thurston it meant he was able to gain a little ground on the season leader, Jacobs Crawley.

The Big valley, Alberta 23 year-old’s ride on Wound Up, the 2017 Saddle Bronc of the Year, enabled him to climb back into second place in the world standings ahead of CoBurn Bradshaw, the third place man who leads

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the all-important average. For Green, the Meeting Creek, Alberta man, it was his first cheque of this - his first WNFR. The third Canadian, 2016 Canadian Champion, Clay Elliott finished out of the money in the go round with an 80 point ride. C5 Rodeo's Double D won the Rank Horse of the Night award as he parted company with Jake Wright before the eight second horn.

Tie Down Roper, Marty Yates, turned in the fastest run of this WNFR at 7.0 seconds flat for the go-round win with season leader Tuf Cooper just one tick back at 7.1. It was a critical run for Cooper as he was able to put some space between him and second place man, Marcos Costa, and Trevor Brazile who had been closing fast on the leader and now sits third. Costa, the Brazilian roper, leads the average with Trevor Brazile second and Cooper right behind. Cooper's run tonight also tightened the race for the All-Around title where he and brother-in-law, Brazile, are duking it out as well with Brazile holding a \$47,000 lead over Cooper.

And in the barrel race, Colorado cowgirl, Ivy Conrado and four time Canadian Champion, Lisa Lockhart of Oelrichs, South Dakota split the round, both with 13.59 runs. Season leader, Tiany Schuster, had her fastest run of the Finals with a 13.90 but for the fifth night in a row, was out of the money. Schuster who sits 6th in the average has to be feeling the heat just a little as three or four cowgirls are all mounting a charge at the Krum, Texas cowgirl who was so dominant throughout the regular season.

2016 Canadian Bull Riding Champion, Jordan Hansen, of Calgary bucked off a tough outlaw called Crime Boss from Universal Rodeo. The result leaves Hansen at 1 for 5 at the midway point of the rodeo. Meanwhile Sage Steele Kimzey is starting to distance himself from the field as he pursues a fourth consecutive title. Kimzey, who hails from Strong City, Texas, rode Beutler and Son's Shootin' Stars to 89 points and the round win. He sits second in the average to fellow-Texan, Trey Benton III who bucked off for the first time on Monday night.

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 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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