



Dramatic Championship Sunday at First Red Deer CFR

Red Deer, ALTA - November 4, 2018

It came down to one run.

As steer wrestler, Scott Guenthner, backed into the box for his final run of CFR '45, he knew what he had to do. Guenthner had already watched some of his closest competitors and travelling partners have varying degrees of success. The Provost, Alberta cowboy didn't have to win the round but needed to at least place to hold his spot in the aggregate and take home his first Canadian Championship. And that's exactly what he did.

The five time CFR qualifier posted a 3.6 second run to split second and third in the round for \$6480 and held on to fourth place in the average for another \$7695. His total season earnings of \$69,899 left him comfortably ahead of Aggregate Champion, Stephen Culling.

"It was a little nerve-racking," Guenthner admitted. "My steer hadn't come in (to the chute) yet. I could hear the announcers bragging me up and I tried to blank that out but I couldn't really do it."

With the crowd roaring around him, the second generation Canadian Champion made the run he needed to make. Guenthner's week started slowly and he changed things up after the third round.

"I'm riding Tyson, Curtis Cassidy's Horse; he is the Steer Wrestling Horse of the Year. When things weren't going well early in the week, I decided to go to the best horse in Canada... and it worked."

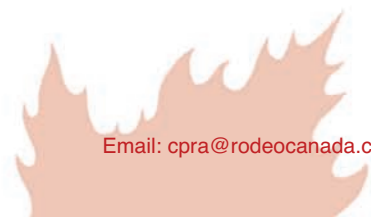
While the win is Guenthner's first, it's not the first for the family. His Dad, Ken, captured the title 37 years earlier in 1981.

One of the tightest races at this year's Finals was in the saddle bronc riding where Nanton, Alberta's Clay Elliott was able to hold off the late charge of 2016 World Champion, Zeke Thurston, for the win. Thurston rode first in the final round and marked a spectacular 87 on Kesler Rodeo's tremendous stallion, Copper Cat. Elliott then rose to the challenge - but had to ride two horses as a problem in the chute with his first mount resulted in a re-ride. The 2016 Canadian Champion climbed aboard C5 Rodeo's High Valley, a horse he was familiar with, having ridden the seven year old bay gelding to 87 points to win Edmonton's K-Days Rodeo back in July. This time, the two combined for 86.25 points, giving Elliott second place in the round as well as second in the aggregate for a \$9000 margin of victory over Thurston.

"It was quite an adventure today as I actually had my saddle on three different horses," Elliott commented. "My first one, Black Hills, got turned around in the chute and was having trouble so the judges offered me a re-ride, a horse called Banshee from Northcott-Macza. He's a bucking son of a gun but the judges didn't see it that way today and gave me another re-ride. This one was High Valley from C5 Rodeo; the horse had bucked me off at Ponoka but I rode him for the win at K-Days Rodeo and was excited to have him today."

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Elliott's second Canadian Championship in three years, including his regular season earnings, netted the 24-year-old \$82,294 in total.

The biggest money earner of this Canadian Finals Rodeo was Callahan Crossley of Hermiston, Oregon. Not only did the three time CFR qualifier cruise to the title with four first place finishes and two seconds, she also established two all time monetary records. Riding her 20 year old gelding, Brownie, Crossley won a record-setting \$73,575 at the CFR and her season total of \$99,190 also goes into the record books.

The 2016 World Champion team ropers, Levi Simpson (on the header side) and heeler, Jeremy Buhler, captured their second Canadian team roping title in a row on Sunday afternoon at the Enmax Centrum in Red Deer. The amazing pair placed in all six rounds, including splitting one-two in rounds two and five and sealing the deal with a third place 5.2 second run in the final round. Simpson, from Ponoka, AB, and Buhler (Arrowwood, AB) captured both the aggregate title and the Canadian Championship.

The bareback riding was no less dramatic as Dublin, TX cowboy, Richmond Champion, took home his first Canadian title. The 25 year old two time Calgary Stampede Champion held off long-time travelling partner, Jake Vold and Manitoba bareback rider, Orin Larsen, in claiming the coveted championship buckle. Champion earned \$77,448 over the season.

Louisiana roper, Shane Hanchey, edged Carstairs, AB talent, Kyle Lucas, to win his third Canadian Championship. Hanchey roped and tied his calf in 7.9 seconds on the last day to finish fourth in the round and first in the aggregate en route to victory. With total season earnings of \$65,338, Hanchey slipped by Lucas by just \$1700 for the win.

Bull rider, Wacey Finkbeiner, survived a final round buck-off to win his first Canadian Bull Riding Championship. The Ponoka, AB hand had gone an impressive five for five prior to Sunday and that run, which included two first place cheques and the aggregate title, gave him the winning season total of \$73,729 - and a \$14,000 cushion over runner-up Cody Coverchuk of Meadow Lake, Sask.

Rounding out the roster of winners at CFR '45 were first time High Point Champion, Riley Warren, who edged hard-luck cowboy, Kyle Lucas, by less than \$1300 and All Around Champion, Jacob Gardner (Dawson Creek, BC) who placed in two rounds to claim the buckle.

The novice champions for 2018 were Mason Helmiczi from Sundre, AB in the bareback riding and Wildwood, Alberta's Cooper Thatcher in the novice saddle bronc riding. The steer riding title went to 14 year old Tristen Manning from Yellowhead County, AB.

CFR stock award winners were C5 Rodeo's amazing bareback horse, F13 Virgil, who had already claimed back-to-back World and Canadian Championships; Northcott-Macza's four time Canadian Champion saddle bronc horse, 242 Get Smart, and Vold Rodeo's bull, 621 Wicked Dreams.

Rodeo athletes and fans bid farewell to the winningest bull rider in Canadian rodeo history as Scott Schiffner made his final ride on Sunday afternoon. The Strathmore cowboy announced in July that this would be his last season before stepping into retirement. He leaves the sport as a two time Canadian Champion, two time Calgary Stampede Champion and 18 time Canadian Finals Rodeo qualifier - a record among bull riders.

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CFR '45 at Westerner Park in Red Deer, Alberta was a huge success with sold out performances, first class production and tremendous community support. 1.65 million was paid out to contestants over the course of the six day event.

For complete results, see 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 in late September at Stampede Park in Calgary, Alberta and their premiere event - the Canadian Finals Rodeo (CFR) - at the ENMAX Centrium, Westerner Park in Red Deer, Alberta, October 30 - November 4. Follow the CPRA on Twitter and Instagram @prorodeocanada, 'Like' Canadian Professional Rodeo Association on Facebook or online at RodeoCanada.com.

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