



Popescul Double-Dips at Drayton Valley

Every rodeo season begins with new partnerships forming in the team roping event. Some work better than others.

If the recently completed Drayton Valley Pro Rodeo is any indication, one of those partnerships that might prove to be a handful for the rest of the team ropers is the newly minted duo of Jesse Popescul and Wyatt Eirikson.

Popescul, a 2017 CFR heading qualifier, and Eirikson, a second generation heeler, blistered the field with a 3.7 second run for a tidy \$1243 first-place cheque for each man.

"I honestly didn't think we were going to be that fast," Popescul admitted. "But I knew things were happening really rapidly and it really worked out for us." Popescul also noted that the run was easily the fastest of his competitive career to date.

But the Wood Mountain, Saskatchewan rancher/roper wasn't done yet. He also posted a 9.0 in the tie down roping to win that event as well and, no surprise, was crowned the Drayton Valley High Point Champion.

"This was a real confidence booster for me because I didn't have the best calf and I still managed to win," Popescul commented. "He'd stuck a leg on a couple of guys and he tried to do that with me, but I got a wrap on him and I guess I got lucky."

The Drayton Valley win added another \$1794 to the Popescul bank account for a total weekend haul of \$3037 and a solid move up the standings in both roping events for the six year pro. With both his horses - a nine year-old mare owned by Rocky Houff and Tom Flanigan and a grey gelding he's been heading off for three years - working well and a Saskatchewan/Alberta duo clicking early in the season, it's no wonder Jesse Popescul is excited about the 2018 rodeo campaign.

"We'll try to get to everything up here and maybe venture south to Montana and down that way a little as well."

Bull rider Zane Lambert kept his hot start to the season rolling with another win at Drayton Valley. The Ponoka talent put together an 85 point ride on Duffy Rodeo's Skid Mark for \$1307 to increase his lead atop the season standings.

Other Drayton Valley winners included steer wrestler Stephen Culling with a blazing 3.0 for the win and \$1751; Nanton's Clay Elliott in the bronc riding (87.5 points on Duffy Rodeo's Tool Time, \$1322), Rylee Shields in the barrel race (13.034 seconds, \$1470), Ty Taypotat in the bareback riding, (86 points on C+ Rodeo's The Graduate, \$1188) while novice bareback rider, Chett Dentz, captured a win

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with 70.5 points and \$256.

For complete Drayton Valley results go to rodeocanada.com

Next up for CPRA rodeo fans are stops at the long-standing Stavely Indoor Pro Rodeo May 10 to 12 and the new-this-year Innisfail Night at the Ranch Bull Riding May 12.

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 September 27-28 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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