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Pro Rodeo Canada  
June 1, 2015  
For immediate release

### THURSTON TAKES AIM AT TWO FINALS

Success has come early for rookie saddle bronc rider, Zeke Thurston. And if this past weekend is any indication, it may continue for quite some time.

"It's all happening pretty fast," suggested the 20 year-old, Thurston. "It's pretty exciting."

Thurston won cheques at all four Pro Rodeo Canada stops for a \$4,136 payday. That included \$1,227 from the 12th annual Wildwood Bronc Bustin' event in Wildwood, AB for winning the long round with an 82.5 point ride on Franklin Rodeo's, *Crazy Day Job* on Saturday night.

"That's a snappy little black horse that took a lot of rein," said the Big Valley, AB cowboy. "It (Wildwood) had the most money added so you almost put more pressure on yourself to do good because there's an opportunity to win a lot of money. You get pretty jacked up for it."

The 2013 Canadian Novice Saddle Bronc champion also finished second at the Hand Hills Lake Stampede at Craigmyle, AB, then split 2nd/3rd at the Leduc Black Gold Rodeo in Leduc, AB and wound up 8th at the Grande Prairie Stompede in Grande Prairie, AB.

"All four count for the world standings, too," explained Thurston, who was 16th in the PRCA standings heading into the weekend. "That will hopefully bump me up to about 12th there."

The Wildwood Bronc Bustin', which was sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association for the first time this year, was even more beneficial for Ryan McKenzie. The Idaho cowboy won the event with an 86.5-point score in the championship round on Bar C5 Rodeo's, *Rockstar*.

"This is definitely one you want to win," said McKenzie. "I'll take a win anywhere but this is a good one to win. My season's been really slow. Been drawing bad, riding bad and when I do draw well, I fall off. Hopefully this will pick me up."

Steer wrestler, Scott Guenthner is showing no signs of rust after spending nine months on the sidelines recovering from a torn pectoral muscle suffered in Salinas, CA last July. The Consort, AB bulldogger grabbed two cheques from Leduc and Grande Prairie to earn \$4,412.

"You hope you start where you left off but that doesn't always happen," offered Guenthner, who finished 9th in last year's Pro Rodeo Canada standings but couldn't compete at the CFR due to injury. "I wasn't really allowed to do much but sit at home and go to physio so I didn't jump a steer until late April."

The 24 year-old has now placed at three of his first six rodeos of the season with earnings of \$6,273.

"It felt awesome. It didn't feel weak or anything," reveals Guenthner of his first run since the injury in Drayton Valley in early May. "It was kind of nerve-wracking but I just tried not to think about it."

The biggest money winner of the weekend was five-time Canadian champion barrel racer, Deb Guelly. She won first in Grande Prairie, second at Hand Hills and fourth in Leduc to earn \$5,790.

Other big money winners included saddle bronc riders, Cort Scheer (\$4,340), Jim Berry (\$3,842) and Tyrell Larsen (\$3,057); tie-down ropers, Shane Hanchey (\$3,831) and Matt Shiozawa (\$3,232); bareback riders, Ty Taypotat (\$3,057) and Clint Laye (\$2,403), steer wrestlers, Cody Cassidy (\$3,408), Josh Harden (\$3,105) and Tanner Milan (\$2,950); team ropers, Dustin Bird/Chase Tryan (\$3,562 each) and Kolton Schmidt/Rocky Dallyn (\$2,457 each) and barrel racer, Lisa Zachoda (\$4,824).

In the novice events, bareback rider, Dustin Shaver won cheques at all four rodeos to earn \$1,302; Lane Cust won \$900 in the novice saddle bronc while steer rider, Owen Berreth finished first in Wildwood and Hand Hills for \$1,019.

Next on the Pro Rodeo Canada schedule is the Kinsmen Pro Rodeo in Brooks, AB (June 5-6), the Lea Park Rodeo near Marwayne, AB (June 5-7) and the Rocky Pro Rodeo in Rocky Mountain House, AB (June 5-7).

**About Pro Rodeo Canada:** With its headquarters in Airdrie, Alberta, Pro Rodeo Canada is the sanctioning body for professional rodeo in Canada. The organization endorses 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<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in Edmonton, Alberta at Rexall Place, our association's premiere event. For more information please visit [RodeoCanada.com](http://RodeoCanada.com) or call (403) 945-0903. Follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com), or like our page on [Facebook](https://facebook.com), and watch the action on [YouTube](https://youtube.com) throughout the year.