



## How To Spell Relief... W-I-N

For Barrhead's Kolton Schmidt and American partner, Shay Carroll, it took nine rounds to get the monkey off their backs and win their first cheque of this WNFR. But when they did it, they did it right, making that cheque a first place payoff (\$26,239 per man) while recording the fastest time of the rodeo through nine rounds—a sensational 3.6 seconds.

Schmidt, riding the PRCA/AQHA Heading Horse of the Year, Badger, and Carroll had come to the Finals with a legitimate shot at a world title but encountered a series of frustrations though the first eight days of the rodeo.

"It's kind of funny," Schmidt chuckled. "This was the fastest time of the week and the slowest I've gone in my mind. I think I've just been going too fast up until now. I knew with my horse and my heeler if I did my job, it would work out."

Carroll agreed. "I picked this guy for a reason at the start of the year," he said of his heading partner. "I'm not surprised at all. I knew he'd rope like he can and I just wanted to be ready."

Ponoka's Levi Simpson and his Arrowwood, Alberta partner Jeremy Buhler bounced back from their first no time of this Finals in the eighth round to post a 4.6 second run to place 4th on this night and move up a notch in the average race to second spot. The Alberta cowboys are 8 of 9 and just 1.6 seconds out of first place in the average and the \$67,000 first place aggregate cheques.

Leading the world standings heading into the final round are Luke Brown of Stephenville, Texas and Jake Long of Coffeyville, Kansas.

The phenomenal comeback story of this WNFR, bareback rider, Orin Larsen, placed in the round for the 4th night in a row. He's had to battle back from re-injuring the rib-tear he suffered back in September. After being blanked through the first five rounds, he made the statement, "I have no choice - I have to win." Since making that pronouncement, winning is exactly what he's done, including taking his first-ever victory lap at the Thomas and Mack Arena in go round number eight.

Tonight the Manitoba cowboy was 86.5 on Pete Carr Pro Rodeo's former world champion bareback horse, MGM Dirty Jacket, to collect a third place cheque of \$15,653 and give him \$62,190 over the last four rounds.

Three time Canadian champion Jake Vold continued his outstanding WNFR, placing 4th for an \$11,000 pay-day. The Ponoka product has also climbed to 3rd place overall in the average at a finals that has seen him win three rounds and place in six overall.

Tanner Aus was the top gun in the round with an 88.5 score and Tim O'Connell continues to hold a comfortable lead in the world championship race heading to the final day. Wayne Vold Rodeo's outstanding grey, True Grit, carried Ty Breuer to 83.5 and a sixth place cheque of \$4230 to kick off the go round.

The saddle bronc riding wasn't as good to the youthful Canadian trio as it had been in recent rounds that saw all three place on each of the previous three nights. In round nine, Big Valley's Zeke Thurston was out of the

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money with a 77.5 score while both Clay Elliott (Nanton, AB) and Jake Watson (Hudson's Hope, BC) were bucked off. The silver lining in this cloud is that despite bucking off for the first time in nine rounds, Watson will go to the last go round in first place in the average, with 663 points on eight rides, just one point ahead of reigning world champion and overall leader, Jacobs Crawley. Thurston is another point back in third spot in the average.

Eighteen year-old Ryder Wright has ridden five horses at the 2016 WNFR. And he's won all five of those go-rounds. This time around, the youngest of the remarkable Utah family, posted an 88.5 on Cervi Championship Rodeo's Vitalix Alpha Dog for the win.

2012 World Champion (and Ryder's uncle) Jesse Wright rode Calgary Stampede's Tokyo Bubbles to an 85.5 for second place in the round.

A couple of races tightened up in this second last round of what cowboys call 'the Marathon'. In the bull riding, Brennon Eldred posted the third highest score in the history of the WNFR - 94.5 points - to win the round and close to within shooting distance of two time champion Sage Kimzey for this year's title. The Sulphur, Oklahoma man rode D and H Cattle's SweetPro's Bruiser for the \$26,230 cheque and forces a showdown with Kimzey and third place man, Shane Proctor, on Saturday night.

In the barrel race, Mary Burger who brought a sizable lead to the Finals has seen that lead eroded by the amazing performance of Amberleigh Moore. Mary, the 68 year-old former champion hit a barrel in round nine while Moore, the Keizer, Oregon cowgirl, won the round with a 13.49 and like the bull riding, the barrel racing championship will come down to the final runs on the final night to determine the 2016 title holder.

The steer wrestling go round winner was Riley Duvall in 3.6 while Tyler Waguespack of Gonzales, Louisiana leads the average and the world standings heading to the final round. And in the tie down roping it was Marty Yates and former world All-Around champion Ryan Jarrett sharing the victory lap with a pair of 7.4 second runs. Brazilian Marcos Costa leads the world with Yates who started in 15th place now sitting second but neither man is in the average. That gives a bit of an edge to the third place man, Oklahoman Hunter Herrin, who is holding down 4th place in the all-important, and very lucrative, average. This race too will be decided in Saturday night's tenth and final go-round.

### **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. Join us for our premiere event - the Canadian Finals Rodeo (CFR) - in early November each year in Edmonton, Alberta at Northlands Coliseum. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat at @prorodeocanada, like Canadian Professional Rodeo Association on Facebook, or online at RodeoCanada.com.

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