



## It's Pressure Time as Regular CPRA Season Wraps Up

The Cinch Pro Rodeo Canada Series Finals will be front and center this weekend, bringing to a nail-biting conclusion the critical last nine days of the Canadian Pro Rodeo's regular season.

For several rodeo cowboys and cowgirls, it's the most important nine days of the year. Starting with the final two regular season rodeos in Hanna and Brooks over the September 23-25 weekend and culminating with the Cinch Pro Series Final this Friday and Saturday in Calgary, the nine day span means disappointment for some and jubilation for others as the final qualifying berths for the Canadian Finals Rodeo (November 9-13) are determined.

Of course there are those, like bull rider Brock Radford for whom there is no pressure and no worries. The Dewinton cowboy, who had already punched his ticket to both Calgary and Edmonton, kicked off a sensational three hour streak last Friday when he posted an 85 score on a Girletz Rodeo twister called Wonder Lust at Hanna (where Radford and Lonnie West rode to start the rodeo to accommodate their needing to get to Brooks that same day). The duo did just that, heading off to the Brooks event—the Dallas Sunstrum Memorial Rodeo—where Radford added an 85.5 score on the back of Big Stone Rodeo's Kish This. Both scores held up, earning Radford a pair of wins and \$2257.

"I've never had that tight a deadline for two rodeos before," Radford admitted. "Lonnie and I kind of mosied down to Brooks—we thought we had more time and we got there just as the last barrel racer was running. It was okay though; you don't have time to think—you just get your stuff on and ride. "It was great that the Hanna committee did that for us," Radford noted. "I didn't want to turn out either of those bulls. I knew if I did my part I had a chance to win both events. And Hanna and the Dallas Sunstrum Memorial in Brooks are awesome rodeos so I was pretty happy to do what I did."

But for a number of competitors, the nine days are a lot less relaxed. Take steer wrestler, Travis Reay, for example. The 2013 All-Around Champion came up empty at both weekend rodeos which means his season is on the line at Calgary this weekend. The good news for Reay is that, while he sits in 14th place, about \$800 out of the 12th and final CFR qualifying spot, the two people between him and a CFR berth—Brock Butterfield in 12th and Dallas Frank in 13th have not qualified for the Cinch Pro Rodeo Series Finals.

What it means for Butterfield—and tie-down roper Logan Hofer who is similarly 12th in the standings but not qualified for the Calgary-based Cinch Final—is that they face that most frustrating scenario—having to stand helplessly on the sidelines and watch others try to bump them from their CFR spots.

Reay was philosophical heading into the pressure-cooker weekend. "I hate being in this position but at least I have a chance. Dallas is \$90.00 out and there's nothing he can do about it. That's what's cool about the Calgary Finals. I just need to get one down kind of quick this weekend. I've been good in practice this week so I think I'm ready.



“The other nine guys in Calgary are all CFR guys so I’m bulldogging against the best in Canada,” Reay commented. “But I like to think I’m one of the best in Canada too.”

One of the surprising scenes unfolding this weekend is in barrel racing where reigning Canadian Champion, Nancy Csabay is, at the moment, on the outside looking in. Csabay is also in 14th spot in the standings but is in a position to help herself at the Cinch Pro Finals. Csabay who clinched season leader honours at last year’s Calgary event, will take her brilliant mare, Wicked, to Calgary knowing that the 13th place cowgirl Colby Gilbert, has also qualified for the Cinch Pro Series finale but the 12th place barrel racer, Kerilee Noval, has not...meaning there will be a head-to-head battle for that coveted final CFR qualification.

But the stats don’t tell the whole story. The drama, the agony and the elation will be etched on the faces of the cowboys and cowgirls who will ride into Calgary’s Agrium Western Event Centre at Stampede Park this weekend. Some will rise; others will fall and one thing is certain—for several contestants, the two-day Final wraps up the most pivotal nine days of the season.

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The Cinch Pro Rodeo Series Finals takes over the Stampede Park Agrium Western Event Centre in Calgary this weekend with two performances: Friday, September 30 and Saturday, October 1—both getting underway at 7 pm. Tickets are available at Ticketmaster.com and at the door. (\$15/adult; 12 and under free)

Complete results of the Hanna Pro Rodeo and the Dallas Sunstrum Memorial Rodeo as well as information on the Cinch Pro Series Final are available at [rodeocanada.com](http://rodeocanada.com)

### **About the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association**

The Canadian Professional Rodeo Association (CPRA) with headquarters in Airdrie, Alta. is the sanctioning body for professional rodeo in Canada. The CPRA approves over 50 events annually with a total payout exceeding \$5.1 million. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat at @prorodeocanada, like Canadian Professional Rodeo Association on Facebook, or online at [RodeoCanada.com](http://RodeoCanada.com).

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