



# Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™

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**TOP ATHLETES LEAVE NRG STADIUM WITH 2017 CHAMPION TITLES AND \$50,000 — MARCH 25, 2017 — HOUSTON — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** — When the dust settled in NRG Stadium Saturday, March 25, eight athletes were named champions and awarded \$50,000 in the RODEOHOUSTON® Super Series Championship.

## **TIE-DOWN ROPING**

With a wave to the crowd and a tip of his hat, Caleb Smidt captured the 2017 Tie-Down Roping Championship title with a 7.4-second run, tying the NRG Stadium record. Smidt said getting a big win so close to home is a special moment for him and his family.

“I have a lot of family here, and my wife’s family is here,” Smidt said. “We are so close to home, so a win like this means a lot with so many special people around me. It’s awesome.”

*Top Four (total 2017 RODEOHOUSTON winnings)*

Caleb Smidt: Belleville, Texas — \$58,500

Sterling Smith: Stephenville, Texas — \$25,375

Tuf Cooper: Decatur, Texas — \$15,250

Hunter Herrin: Apache, Oklahoma — \$11,500

## **BAREBACK RIDING**

Jake Vold of Airdire, Alberta, Canada, won the RODEOHOUSTON Bareback Riding Championship title with a 90-point ride. Vold may have lost his hat during the ride, but he left the arena with the Championship buckle and \$50,000. When Vold checked the scoreboard, he was confident that he could win the title.

“When I saw 90 points, I thought I had a pretty good shot,” Vold said. “I’ve wanted [to win] this rodeo so bad, and to finally win the Championship here makes you feel like the best guy out there.”

*Top Four (total 2017 RODEOHOUSTON winnings)*

Jake Vold: Airdire, Alberta, Canada — \$56,000

RC Landingham: Vina, California — \$23,375

JR Vezain: Cowley, Wyoming — \$14,250

Ty Breuer: Mandan, North Dakota — \$11,500

## **TEAM ROPING**

Team Ropers Zac Small and Levi Lord tied the 4.1-second arena record and are leaving RODEOHOUSTON with \$110,000 and a Championship title. Although they have not roped together very long, Lord said they make a great pair.

“Zack always gets a great lead, and he makes my job easy,” Lord said. “I always know he will do his job and everything will come together. That happened tonight, and it feels pretty amazing.”

*Top Four (total 2017 RODEOHOUSTON winnings)*

Zack Small: Welch, Oklahoma; and Levi Lord: Sturgis, South Dakota — \$110,000

Erich Rogers: Round Rock, Arizona; and Cory Petska: Marana, Arizona — \$38,666

Charly Crawford: Stephenville, Texas; and Walt Woodard: Stephenville, Texas — \$37,166

Adam Rose: Willard, Missouri; and Byron Wilkerson: Deming, New Mexico — \$32,666

## **SADDLE BRONC RIDING**

After a wild 92-point ride, Saddle Bronc Riding Champion Cody Demoss left the arena with \$50,000, a smile and a tip of his hat. He won his first RODEOHOUSTON Championship in 2003, which was the first year the Rodeo was held in NRG Stadium. Demoss said it took dedication to win again, 14 years later.

When Demoss got off his bronc, he said hearing the roar of the crowd was a feeling he would never forget.

“Riding a bronc that is really bucking is the best feeling in the world,” Demoss said, “So, getting off that bronc and hearing the roar of the crowd, it gave me chills.”

*Top Four (total 2017 RODEOHOUSTON winnings)*

Cody Demoss: Heflin, Louisiana — \$56,438

Clay Elliott: Nanton, Alberta, Canada — \$26,375

Isacc Diaz: Desdemona, Texas — \$15,500

Cort Sheer: Elsmere, Nebraska — \$14,500

## **STEER WRESTLING**

As the last athlete to qualify for the shootout in Steer Wrestling, Tyler Waguespack became a first-time RODEOHOUSTON champion with a time of 4.7 seconds. Waguespack said he has always been a big fan of RODEOHOUSTON, and this moment is a dream come true.

“I grew up watching RODEOHOUSTON, and I’ve always dreamed of being here,” Waguespack said. “It’s an amazing rodeo with a big stage. I always enjoy coming to the Rodeo, and this win makes it even more special.”

*Top Four (total 2017 RODEOHOUSTON winnings)*

Tyler Waguespack: Gonzales, Louisiana — \$56,500

Tyler Pearson: Louisville, Mississippi — \$27,000

Kyle Irwin: Robertsedale, Alabama — \$14,250

Trevor Knowles: Mount Vernon, Oregon — \$10,000

## **BARREL RACING**

Kassie Mowry of Dublin, Texas, wiped tears from her eyes as she accepted the RODEOHOUSTON Barrel Racing Championship belt buckle. Mowry said that she could really hear the arena cheering her on as she headed into the home stretch.

Mowry said that RODEOHOUSTON is the most prestigious rodeo she has ever competed at and that she is honored to have the RODEOHOUSTON Barrel Racing Championship title by her name.

“This is the biggest rodeo win I have ever had,” Mowry said. “I will never forget this win.”

*Top Four (total 2017 RODEOHOUSTON winnings)*

Kassie Mowry: Dublin, Texas — \$60,000

Kathy Grimes: Medical Lake, Washington — \$28,000

Carly Richardson: Pampa, Texas — \$14,750

Nellie Williams-Miller: Cottonwood, California — \$11,250

## **BULL RIDING**

A 90-point ride secured Bull Rider Garrett Smith's Championship title at RODEOHOUSTON. Smith said he cannot believe his name will be in the champion category with many other rodeo greats.

"I grew up watching the Rodeo," Smith said. "It's a legendary rodeo. The past champions are incredible, and to be in that category — It hasn't soaked in yet."

*Top Four (total 2017 RODEOHOUSTON winnings)*

Garrett Smith: Rexburg, Idaho — \$53,375

Scottie Knapp: Albuquerque, New Mexico — \$23,875

Trey Benton III: Rock Island, Texas — \$13,750

Cole Melancon: Hull, Texas — \$12,250

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is a Section 501(c)(3) charity that benefits youth, supports education, and facilitates better agricultural practices through exhibitions and presentation. Since its beginning in 1932, the Show has committed more than \$430 million to the youth of Texas. For more information, visit [rodeohouston.com](http://rodeohouston.com) and connect with #RODEOHOUSTON online via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) for all of the latest news. The 2017 Show runs through March 26.