



Orin Larsen - Overcoming the Odds

“You probably shouldn’t be going to the NFR.”

Those were the words of the surgeon who operated on Orin Larsen’s knee just three weeks ago and a week after the Canadian Finals Rodeo. The Manitoba bareback rider had torn his meniscus halfway through his final ride of the CFR. “And to emphasize his concern the surgeon added, “And if you do, there’s a risk of tearing that surgery apart again.”

And while the medical professional’s caution was understandable, so far Larsen has stared down the adversity and tonight put the exclamation point on his improbable comeback. Larsen, who is at the Thomas and Mack Arena for the fourth time, won round seven of the WNFR with a sensational 89 points on a cool Frontier Rodeo buckler named Tip Off.

“I was pretty cautious early in the week but I’m feeling more and more confident with it now,” Larsen noted. “I’ve been seeing the Sport Medicine team every day and they have been amazing. I owe them a lot for keeping me together.

“And that is such a good horse. Clayton Biglow had him earlier in the week and he made a great ride so I knew I had a chance. That horse is really up and down out there. Every time he hit me I just tried to hit him twice as hard.”

Larsen now sits 9th in the aggregate and 5th in the world. He did admit the knee injury has impacted one part of his Las Vegas experience. “I’ve had to cut back on Cowboy Christmas (western lifestyle market/trade show),” he grinned. “I can’t really handle that thirteen miles of walking.”

In the steer wrestling, neither of the Canadian bulldoggers hit the pay window in round seven. On a night when two world champions, Tyler Pearson and Hunter Cure, shared the victory lap in the go-round, newly-crowned Canadian Champion, Scott Guenther, managed a 4.3 to finish 7th in the round, one spot out of the money. The good news is he moved up one notch in the aggregate and now holds the eighth and final payoff place there and is fifth in the world. Meanwhile Curtis Cassidy continues to lead the world despite a 6.1 in round seven. The difficulty facing the two Canadians in their quest for the world title is that Will Lummus sits second in the world just \$15,000 back of Cassidy but Lummus is in the driver’s seat in the all-important aggregate that pays a whopping \$67,000 to win it.

90 point rides were the order of the day in the saddle bronc riding as Wade Sundell and Chase Brooks split the round with identical nineties. Zeke Thurston, the 2016 World Champion from Big Valley, Alberta collected a fifth place cheque (\$6769) for his ride on Frontier Rodeo’s Miss Ellie. Thurston has placed in six of seven rounds including a 1/2 split of round six. The 24 year-old sits third in the aggregate and fifth in the world, but trails world leader, Ryder Wright, by a very makeable \$58,000. Nanton’s Clay Elliott did not make the horn in round seven and remains in 11th place in the world standings.

Round 7 in the team roping saw a tie for the win with 3.9 second runs for Luke Brown/Jake Long and

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Derrick Begay/Cory Petska. While Clay Smith and Paul Eaves remain in top spot in the World Standings, the pair experienced a set-back tonight by virtue of a no time in the round - dropping from second to fifth in the average. Kaleb Driggers and 2016 All-Around champ Junior Nogueira added a fourth place cheque to their WNFR tally and moved one notch up in the average to second spot. 2015 titleist Aaron Tsinigine and heeling partner Trey Yates remain contenders as well - picking up sixth place with a 4.9 to hang onto their number one average/aggregate position.

Fans enjoyed another speedy round of barrel racing with a number of thirteen second runs down on the ground. But it was the Cotulla, Texas cowgirl, Hailey Kinsel, who garnered top money for the third time at this WNFR with a 13.61 time in her bid for a first world title. Kinsel leads the world standings and sits third in the average. Savona, British Columbia's Carman Pozzobon, clocked 14.01 from third position on the ground. While the run didn't earn her a cheque, the 2017 Canadian Champion continued her climb in the lucrative average standings - moving up two notches from fourth to second spot.

2016 World Champion and a three-time Canadian title-holder, Tyson Durfey of Weatherford, Texas won round seven in the tie-down roping. Three-time champion of the world and reigning All Around Champion, Tuf Cooper, continues to lead the very tight tie-down race in an event that will almost certainly go down to the last few throws of the lariat on Saturday night.

Riding three of seven in the bull riding would be considered a solid winning percentage for most cowboys. But when that cowboy is the four-time world champion, Sage Kimzey, that's as close to a slump as you're likely to see for the Strong City, Texas superstar. Kimzey hit the ground prematurely in round seven, a go-round that saw Chase Dougherty taking home the big cheque courtesy of an 87.5 ride. Tennessee bull rider, Jeff Askey, has the hottest hand of all as he made his fifth ride in a row on Wednesday night, this one a fifth place effort with 84 points on the Wayne Vold bull, Mish Mash. C5 Rodeo's Double Vision carried Roscoe Jarboe to 4th place in the round with an 84.5 point ride. Kimzey still holds a more than comfortable lead over the rest of the field with three rounds to go although a few guys, notably Dougherty and Askey are doing all they can to mount a late charge at the leader.

For WNFR detailed results, daily stock draws, stories and highlights, go to <http://www.rodeocanada.com>

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 26-27 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 29 - November 3. Follow the CPRA on Twitter and Instagram @prorodeocanada, 'Like' Canadian Professional Rodeo Association on Facebook or online at RodeoCanada.com.

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