

Top Northwest Bronc Riders To Thrill Douglas Co. Fans

Three young bronc riders from the Northwest sharply stepped up the competition for the world's saddle bronc riding championship with winning streaks that may unseat the reigning champ according to the latest championship standings posted by the Rodeo Cowboys' Assn.

Biggest winner on the saddled outlaws since the points were last counted two weeks ago was Jackie Wright, 24, of Dayville, who picked up \$1,368 to jump from seventh to second place among the bronc twisters. Moving from fourth to third place was George Menkenmaier, Burns, who won \$991 on the buckers.

Both Wright and Menkenmaier will be working to climb higher on the national scale when they compete Saturday and Sunday at the Douglas County Rodeo.

Third ranking threat to the title now held by Deb Copenhaver, Post Falls, Idaho, is 21-year-old Alvin Nelson, Sentinel Butte, N.D., whose \$922 winnings over the past fortnight nearly doubled Copenhaver's earnings.

Leader Not Surprised
To the Idaho cowboy, who still holds a 2,348-point edge in the event, the accomplishments of his competitors came as no surprise. Copenhaver conceded as he collected the championship trophies last winter that the competition this season "will be tougher than a whalebone."

"Any one of those boys," he repeated this week, "could win \$20,000 this year." Copenhaver and all around champion Casey Tibbs are the only two in the history of rodeo whose annual earnings on saddle broncs have topped that figure.

Another youngster, Duane Howard, 22, a saddle bronc and bull rider from Minnewauken, N.D., proved his mettle during the period by winning \$1,924, keeping his seat on the wild brahmas. But Howard's biggest obstacle for the bull riding title champion brahma tamer Jim Shoulders, Henryetta, Okla., picked up nearly \$500 to hold his margin at 4,825.

In bareback bronc riding Shoulders continued his winning ways, earning \$1,539 to be rodeo's biggest booty claimer of the fortnight with total winnings of nearly \$2,000. Despite his bareback performance, however, Shoulders slipped farther behind bareback front runner Johnny Hawkins, Manhattan Beach, Cal., who won \$1,630 to widen his point margin to 565.

TEXAS MAN GAINS
Second biggest money winner in the past fortnight, Guy Weeks, the Abilene, Tex., bronc rider who has been collecting the biggest share of the calf roping money this season, won \$1,972 in his two specialties. Weeks now trails Shoulders for the all-around cowboy championship by slightly better than 5,000 points.

Richest steer wrestler of the period was veteran Willard Combs, eldest of the two bulldogging brothers from Checotah, Okla., who moved up from eighth to sixth place in the steer wrestling standings. Willard is 1,103 points behind his younger brother Benny, who edged him out for the championship after a season long battle last season, and 4,165 points off the pace set by leading bulldogger Harley May, Deming, N.M.

The standings, posted twice a month by the Rodeo Cowboys' Assn., Inc., are based on prize money won at association approved rodeos. Every contestant gets one point for every dollar won through the season.

The top ten men in each rodeo event are listed below. Those in black type are scheduled to compete at the Douglas rodeo.

ALL AROUND POINTS
Jim Shoulders 17,311
Henryetta, Okla.
Guy Weeks, 12,279
Abilene, Tex.

BARREL RACING
Harley May, 9,953
Deming, N.M.
Eddy Akridge, 8,799
Hesperia, Calif.
Jackie Wright, 8,451
Dayville, Ore.
J. P. McKenna, 8,077
Sheridan, Wyo.
Bill Hogue, 7,893
Holtville, Calif.
Duane Howard, 7,893
Minnewauken, N.D.
Harry Tompkins, 7,654
Dublin, Tex.
Alvin Nelson, 7,650
Sentinel Butte, N.D.

SADDLE BRONC
Deb Copenhaver, 7,199
Post Falls, Idaho
Jackie Wright, 4,851
Dayville, Ore.
George Menkenmaier, 4,846
Burns, Ore.
Alvin Nelson, 4,717
Sentinel Butte, N.D.
J. D. McKenna, 4,255
Sheridan, Wyo.
Tom Tescher, 3,960
Sentinel Butte, N.D.
George Williams, 3,896
Tulsa, Okla.
Eddy Akridge, 3,605
Hesperia, Cal.
Don Toelle, 3,422
Burns, Ore.
Bill Linderman, 2,961
Walla Walla, Wash.

CALF ROPING
Guy Weeks, 9,610
Abilene, Tex.
Ray Wharton, 9,436
Bandera, Tex.
Jim Bob Altizer, 7,346
Del Rio, Tex.
Buddy Groff, 7,105
Bandera, Tex.
Glen Franklin, 6,900
House, New Mex.
Troy Fort, 5,477
Livingston, N. M.
Byrle Hartsell, 4,195
Bridgeport, Tex.
Dale Smith, 4,148
Central, Ariz.
Byron Wolford, 3,810
Tyler, Tex.
John Powell, 3,747
Eldorado, Tex.
BAREBACK
Johnny Hawkins, 7,166
Manhattan Beach, Calif.

STEER WRESTLING
Harley May, 8,100
Deming, N. Mex.
John W. Jones, 5,388
Fresno, Calif.
Wayne Dunafon, 5,219
Fresno, Calif.

WESTMORELAND, KANS.
Benny Combs, 5,144
Checotah, Okla.
Bill Hogue, 4,844
Holtville, Calif.
Willard Combs, 4,035
Checotah, Okla.
J. D. McKenna, 3,824
Sheridan, Wyo.
Vernon Kerns, 3,191
Hearne, Tex.
Sonny Oliphant, 3,165
Okemah, Okla.
Lex Connelly, 2,944
Fresno, Calif.

GET A HORSE!—These Paul Bunyans of a few years ago got into the rodeo parade with their wooden mount. Some one told them it was Timberjack Days. (Paul Jenkins).

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