

And they call the thing rodeo

BY JACOB THOMPSON
SPORTS EDITOR @SPORTSEDTHOMPS

The Professional Bull Riders rolled into town Jan. 19, for the Velocity Tour's Portland Classic. Considered the longest eight seconds in sports, Portlanders packed the Moda Center to watch PBR cowboys take on some of the rankest bulls in the nation.

The rules are simple: stay on the back of a bull for eight seconds, don't touch the bull with your free hand and hope the ride produces a high score, but staying on the back of a 2,000-pound bull that doesn't want you there can be pretty tricky.

"It's a feeling that's hard to put into words," Cody Campbell said about how it feels to be on the back of a bull. "It's amazing how fast it can happen and how slow it can sometimes. It's a pretty good feeling when you step off one and kind of conquer the beast."

Campbell is an Oregon native and was looking forward to riding in his home state, but an injury the week prior held him out from competition in Denver and Portland.

"Last week in Reno I injured my groin and sports med advised me not to get on in Denver and I was planning on getting on here because it was feeling a little bit better, but sports med advised me not to get on tonight again, so I'm going to be sitting out," Campbell said.

The Portland Classic and all PBR events on Jan. 19 were dedicated to Mason Lowe, who lost his life after injuries sustained at the Velocity Tour's Denver event. After being bucked off Hard Times, Lowe was struck in the chest by the bull's left hind hoof, severely damaging his heart. He was rushed to the hospital where he passed away.

Once the event got underway, round one was mostly dominated by the bulls, who bucked off 30 cowboys in round one. Mason Taylor was one of eight cowboys to ride in round one and his 89 point ride was one of the best of the night.

Taylor was unable to repeat his success in round one and Aaron Kleier of Australia ended up taking home first prize with 83.5 and 81.5 rides.

Rodeo has been a big part of American culture since it first got its start.

"Rodeo is the cowboy way," Campbell said. "The Cowboy persona is something a lot of people need and it's been around a long time and it's part of the reason I love about this sport and it instills that in you. You're going to have to be tough and I guarantee you right now I would way rather get on and ride with the pain. I've seen guys ride through a lot of injuries and it speaks miles. I think it's a big thing in this country and something that's important."

Photos by Jonathan Villagomez



Founded in 1992, the Professional Bull Riders have hosted over 1,200 competitors throughout various tours. Held since 2014, the Professional Bull Rider's Velocity Tour has become the sport's fastest-growing tour, visiting Portland on Jan. 19

