



Staff photo E.J. Harris

Hunter Cure of Holliday, Texas, leaps from his horse on his way to a 3.9-second time in steer wrestling on Wednesday at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston.

RODEO: Events pick back up Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

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was there all the way around and I didn't expose as much to let him find a rhythm and I think it helped out. It just felt pretty good."

In bull riding there were only four qualified rides out of the nine that strapped in on the first night, but the four each gave the crowd something to cheer for. Marsing, Idaho cowboy Chase Robbins set the bar with an 80 point ride on Korkow Rodeo's Double Action, but it was Stephenville, Texas' Toby Collins that stole the show. The second to last ride of the night, Collins matched up with Kessler's Goosebumps and mastered it for 87 points to shoot to the top of the leaderboard, giving a forceful fist pump after and letting out a cheer after hearing his score get announced.

"It felt really good," Collins said, smiling. "I've been struggling the last few weeks and to get an 87 was the icing on the cake."

Brady Portnier of Caldwell, Idaho recorded an 80 on Korkow's Hannibal and Jesse Flores of La Puente, California rode Korkow's Red Out for 79.5 points to round out the night and set a decent bar for the final three performances.

Saddle bronc brought the closest competition of the three bucking events, but it was Hillsdale, Wyoming's Brody Cress that came away on top Wednesday as he rode Calgary Stampede's Sergeant Whitney for 83.5 points to take home the \$100 bonus and set himself up for some go-round money.

He held off Australian cowboy Jake Finlay (79.5), and the trio of Nat Stratton of Goodwell, Oklahoma, Tucker Hill of Klamath Falls, and Nick LaDuke of Livermore, California who all three recorded 78.5 scores. LaDuke's score was perhaps the most impressive of the night as



Staff photo E.J. Harris

Casey Colletti of Pueblo, Colo., rides Flashcard Champ for 82 points in bareback riding on Wednesday at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston.

his horse, Peigan Warrior from Calgary, nearly bucked him off right out of the gates, but LaDuke kept his balance and stayed on to finish out the ride.

The roping events saw the stock get the better of the competitors for the most part, as just five of 12 entries in team roping and four of six recorded times in tie-down roping. Terrebone, Oregon's Russell Cardoza, currently fifth in the world standings for all-around, won the night with an 8.2-second run and just barely beat out Childress, Texas' Stetson Vest who had an 8.3. Heppner's Ryan Bothum would have had a 10.3, but he ended up with a no time as his calf busted out of the ties.

In team roping there was a two-way tie for the top spot as teams of Erich Rogers (Round Rock, Arizona) and Corey Petska

(Marana, Arizona) as well as Garrett Tonozzi (Fruita, Colorado) and Wyatt Cox (Arroyo Grande, California) each roped their steer in 4.5 seconds to each take home a \$100 bonus.

Later in the evening, the ladies took center stage with barrel racing and Samantha Lane of Arlington, Oregon impressed her Eastern Oregon fans with a 17.55 time first out of the gates. However Kellie Collier of Hereford, Texas followed Lane and edged her out with a 17.24 time to take the top spot.

The closest competition of the timed events came with the bulldoggers, as four cowboys recorded times of 4.4 seconds or faster. Benton, Arkansas' Jason Thomas was the first one to set the bar with a 4.4 and then Walla Walla's Chance Gartner lowered

it with a 4.1. After Ryan Bothum recorded a 4.3, it was two-time world champion and Holliday, Texas cowboy Hunter Cure that took the top spot with a dazzling 3.9-second run.

"That was a really good steer, you couldn't ask for anything more," Cure said afterward. "My guide did well, because I didn't ride well out of the gate, and knocked the steer right to me and I got him."

The Farm-City Pro Rodeo picks back up for the second performance on Thursday night with Bullfighter's Only bout starting at 6:30 p.m., Mutton Bustin' at 7:25 p.m. and then the main event at 7:45 p.m.

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ARENA: 'We knew it would happen no matter what'

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it would be impossible to have this ready to go, and they did it. They got down, rolled their sleeves up and said 'we're going to have it' and they did have it."

Construction and excavation of the arena got underway in October, but work was slowed by the abnormally cold and snowy winter for the Hermiston area. It led to a lot of overtime and tireless work for the past few months by the rodeo board and numerous volunteers that helped put the finishing touches on the arena, which opened its doors for business Wednesday evening.

Board member David Bothum said prior to the first performance on Wednesday that seeing the arena finished and people in the stands allowed for a short sigh of relief.

"We knew it would happen no matter what," he said. "We all knew we'd do whatever it took one way or another to get it done, but it was a little stressful. It's been a complete whirlwind for about four months so this is good to finally see it finished."

And the cowboys and cowgirls were certainly appreciative of the work put in and the new facilities that they have to work with. A few praised aspects of the facility, including wider runs for the timed events, a larger warm-up area and even the expanded parking area that made it easy to navigate for the competitors. Two-time steer wrestling world champion Hunter Cure was one of those with nothing but positive things to say after his ride Wednesday night.

"There's only one grand opening to anything," he said. "And with all the amount of man hours and all the people working up to the last minute today to get this ready, you couldn't ask for anything better than you have here. Job well done to everybody."

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MLB

Dodgers win 80th game of season, rallying over Diamondbacks

By JOSE M. ROMERO
Associated Press

PHOENIX — Hitless in 23 previous at-bats, the Los Angeles Dodgers' Joc Pederson faced Arizona Diamondbacks ace Zack Greinke with two outs in the seventh inning and a man on second base.

Pederson, who'd struck out in his first two at-bats against Greinke, delivered a game-tying double, then came around to score the go-ahead run on Yasiel Puig's victory on Wednesday night.

"To have it come up big and help the team win a ballgame is a nice feeling," Pederson said. "Just trying to look for a good pitch to hit. He made a mistake and I capitalized on it."

The Dodgers became the sixth team since 1913 to



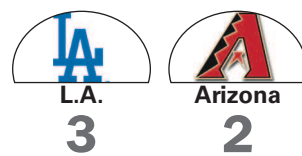
AP Photo/Matt York

Los Angeles Dodgers' Joc Pederson celebrates after scoring on a hit by Yasiel Puig against the Arizona Diamondbacks during the seventh inning of a baseball game, Wednesday in Phoenix.

reach 80 wins in their first 113 games.

"You could see the exhale when he got to first base, and that boyish smile," Dodgers

manager Dave Roberts said of Pederson. "He's a big part of what we need to do. For him to get that big hit was a boost to all of us."



Puig's hit was the third off Greinke in the seventh, after Greinke had allowed only one hit through six innings. Cody Bellinger homered, doubled and scored twice for the Dodgers.

Greinke (13-5) lost for the first time in 13 starts at home this season and is 10-1 at Chase Field. He allowed three runs on four hits in 6 2/3 innings, struck out eight and walked four.

"I threw a terrible pitch to Joc and he hit it good. Threw a pitch where I wanted to with Puig but he hit it all right and found a good spot," Greinke said. "The pitch to Joc was the worse one and he did what he

was supposed to with it."

Dodgers starter Alex Wood (14-1) allowed two runs on six hits with four strikeouts and a walk in six innings, and improved to 6-0 with a 1.72 ERA on the road this season.

Wood made a minor adjustment to his delivery to get the velocity back after it was lacking in his last start.

"I felt really great coming out of New York and that bullpen session, so I'm looking forward to the stretch for sure," Wood said.

J.D. Martinez's two-out single in the sixth off Wood gave the Diamondbacks a 2-1 lead, but it didn't last long. Paul Goldschmidt had homered high off the center field batter's eye in the fourth to tie the game at 1.

Bellinger, a native of nearby Chandler, Arizona, connected for his 33rd home run in the second inning. The

ball sailed well into the right-field seats above the Dodgers bullpen.

The Dodgers are on a 53-game streak with at least two extra-base hits, the most in the majors since 1913.

The Dodgers got strong relief from Josh Fields, who pitched two scoreless innings and got Goldschmidt to ground into an inning-ending double play in the eighth. All-Star closer Kenley Jansen, who hadn't pitched since Sunday in New York, closed out the game for his 29th save.

UP NEXT

Dodgers: Recently acquired RHP Yu Darvish (7-9) makes his second start for the Dodgers on Thursday against Arizona.

Diamondbacks: LHP Anthony Banda (1-1) will face the Dodgers on his 24th birthday, his third career start.