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FARM-CITY PRO RODEO

WRIGHT ENDS DROUGHT AT FCPR

Utah cowboy wins saddle bronc title with a 90-point ride

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Ryder Wright had made six previous trips to the Farm-City Pro Rodeo, but never won the saddle bronc title.

Saturday, Aug. 13, was Lucky No. 7 for the Utah cowboy, who turned in a sterling 90-point ride on Zaria Hills for the title.

“This rodeo is just awesome,” Wright said. “They pack the stands here and have great horses. To have a dog fight like this on the last day is awesome. This is the third time I have been on her, and it’s by far my best ride.”

Wright, 24, has made six trips to the National Finals Rodeo, and has two world titles in the saddle bronc. He’s sitting fifth in the world standing with six weeks left in the regular season. The FCPR paycheck of \$7,191 will help keep him among the top in the event.

“I’ve never even come close to winning here,” he said. “It’s a pretty good day. I hope to keep the ball rolling until the end of the season.”

It was a good night for the Wright family, as Ryder’s younger brother Stetson won the all-around title after earning money in the saddle bronc and the bull riding. It was the first FCPR title for Stetson, who competed Thursday night.

Bareback riding

World leader Jess Pope was among the who’s who Saturday night, and the 2021 NFR champion did not disappoint, winning the FCPR title with a 90-point ride on Yippee Kibitz.

“When you are in the top 15 and draw a good horse, you have to take advantage of it,” said Pope, who earned \$6,662 for his effort. “That’s what I did tonight. When the crowd is really into it, we have to step up. We are entertainers.”

In the midst of some of the top bareback riders in the sport was Pendleton’s Payton Wright.

Wright drew the 2021 bareback horse of the year Xplosive Skies, and turned in an impressive score of 86.5 points and picked up a check for \$2,443 with his fourth-place finish.

“They don’t get much better than that,” Wright said. “He’s the one you want to ride. It’s the best score I’ve ever had. I was pretty happy when I drew him, but you are more nervous with a really good one.”

Team roping

When the reigning world champs and current world standings leaders roll into town, good things are bound to happen.

Kaleb Driggers and Junior Nogueira had the hot run of the night at 4.3 seconds to finish second in the second go-round and second in the average with a time of 9.3 on two head.

“I have a great partner



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian
Ryder Wright of Milford, Utah, rides Zoria Hills for a 90-point saddle bronc ride to win the go-round and the title on Saturday, Aug. 13, 2022, at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian
Barrel racer Katie Pascoe of Morro Bay, California, turns in a 17.19-second run to win the go-round on Saturday, Aug. 13, 2022, at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston.

and we have great horses,” Nogueira said. “This has been a blessing.”

Dustin Egusquiza and Travis Graves won the team roping title and pocketed \$4,077 each.

Earlier this season, Driggers and Nogueira broke the single-season earnings record in team roping with \$150,512, and still have six weeks left in the regular season. They each earned \$3,545 at the FCPR.

“We want to win the world title again, but we just come out and do the best we can,” Nogueira said. “It has been an amazing year. Everything is clicking.”

Bull riding

On a night where only three men completed an 8-second ride, Justin Houston was on top with an 87 on the back of Black Jack. The score put him second overall and put a \$5,330 check in his pocket.

“I was really excited to get on him,” Houston said of his bull. “I’ve had a tough week and this really helps. When not many guys ride, it leaves more money on the table.”

Braden Richardson won the title and \$6,952 with a

score of 88.5 on Thursday night.

Tie-down roping

Rookie John Pereira arrived in the United States from Brazil in March. Since then, he has been learning and making a name for himself.

Saturday night, he had the top run of the night at 8.2 seconds, which put him

third overall in the second go-round and earned him a check worth \$2,283.

“There is no way to explain how I am feeling,” Pereira said with a big smile. “I’ve dreamed of this since I was a little kid. I am thankful to my family and God. I’m living my dream.”

It has taken Pereira a while to adjust to the calves in the United States.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian
Steer wrestler Tyler Waguespack brings down his steer in 4.3 seconds to win the go-round on Saturday, Aug. 13, 2022, at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian
Bull rider Justin Houston of Sandy, Oregon, clings to Black Jack long enough to win the go-round and earn 87 points on Saturday, Aug. 13, 2022, at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston.

“They are a lot different than back home,” he said. “The calves are stronger here.”

The nice payday should vault Pereira into the top 10 of the rookie tie-down standings.

King Pickett won the tie-down title with a time of 17.1 seconds on two head.

Steer wrestling

Tyler Waguespack leads the world standings, and he had the best run of the night at 4.3 seconds to excite the FCPR crowd.

“When they come here and cheer us on, we love it,” Waguespack said. “We have some momentum going right now and we want to keep it.”

Waguespack finished tied for eighth in the average with a time of 8.4 seconds on two.

Tristan Martin won the FCPR title with a time of 7 seconds on two head for a payday of \$4,285.

Barrel racing

Katie Pascoe is about \$15,000 out of the top 15

in the world standings, but a good showing Saturday earned the California cowgirl \$3,814.

Pascoe had the hot run of the night at 17.19 seconds to finish fourth overall.

“This is my third time here, but the first time I’ve had any luck here,” Pascoe said. “My horse (Naughty) is just awesome. He gives 110% every time. He is a blast to run.”

Paige Jones’ time of 16.97 seconds on Wednesday night held up for the win and a payday of \$7,629.

Breakaway roping

The star-studded lineup fell flat Saturday as ropers missed calves and broke barriers. Of the 10 ladies up, only three posted times, with Samantha Fulton posting the top run of 3.1 seconds.

The event is new to the FCPR this year, and Danielle Lowman set the arena record with a time of 1.9 seconds. She also won the title with a time of 4.4 seconds on two head to earn \$3,511.

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