

Yes, that WAS my first rodeo

SAM BARBEE FROM THE SIDELINES



Last week I was excited and nervous for my first rodeo. The cliché was real.

But now, days after Farm-City Pro Rodeo, I think it would be fun to remember those four days.

A logical place to start would be my clothes. Because I was going to be standing around by the bucking chutes, I was required to wear at least a western shirt and hat (boots optional). Now I wear a hat just about every day, but it's a baseball cap, not a wide-brimmed 10-gallon number.

So after working the Hermiston Herald/East Oregonian booth at the fair on Wednesday, circulation manager Marcy Rosenberg walked me down to a booth selling cowboy hats and helped me pick one out, and gave me tips on how to wear it and store it.

The next step, then, was to get a shirt and some jeans. Now I have jeans, but none that would be acceptable at a rodeo, so I blundered around Wal-Mart until I found enough shirts that fit and was on my way. I made a bit of a mistake, though, waiting until Wednesday to pick up rodeo gear. It was a bit like going to a department store on Halloween night to get a costume (something I did often) and having to settle on what was left. Not much, it turned out, but I made it work.

Right before I went to the fairgrounds, I had to swing by the office to grab a pen and my press credential. Fellow reporter Sean Hart was there and laughed when I walked in the room. He said I (somewhat) looked the part, which was good enough for me as I left constantly adjusting the straw thing on my head.

At the rodeo, it was a chore to keep up. I was doing my best to keep my head above water, though I just managed to do it. I enjoyed it, though. I like learning, and I like doing new things. I learned a lot that first night, about terminology, about structure, about how to avoid horse excrement on the ground. There was a lot of it.

As the week wore on, I gradually became more comfortable. Friday night was windy and threatened to take my hat from me, and it almost did on the walk in. No one ever told me aloud I looked out of place, but I'm sure some people could've figured it out.

But the thing I was most worried about was talking to the cowboys. I know it can get arduous explaining simple concepts that anyone who follows rodeo would know, but everything was fresh to me.

And you know what? The cowboys were always great. They were patient, friendly and always willing to help me understand their passion better. I was an outsider, but I was never treated like an outsider. I was never scoffed at if I asked a question they deemed to be beneath them. They would just nod or smile and explain.

Plus, you've never seen bull riding until you watch it from behind the chute.

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Garrett Smith takes all-around



STAFF PHOTO BY KATHY ANEY

Garrett Smith, of Rexburg, Idaho, won all-around cowboy honors Saturday at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston. In the bull riding event, he stayed aboard for eight seconds for a score of 79.

Stanfield cowboy Travis Taruscio gets hot run in steer wrestling

By SAM BARBEE Staff writer

Garrett Smith didn't know how to describe it. Minutes after winning the all-around title at Farm-City Pro Rodeo, Smith was just about speechless.

In just his first FCPR doing multiple events, Smith managed a 7.9 in Saturday's steer wrestling performance and a 79 on Crazy Bull to join a prestigious group of all-around champs at Farm-City.

"This is awesome," Smith said. "To win the all-around here, there's not really any words that can describe it.

It really hasn't hit me yet, because everything just got over. I'm pretty sure seeing the saddle on the wall — it's going to be pretty awesome."

Currently 14th in the PRCA all-around standings at \$51,591.15 and 15th in bull riding at \$43,170.65, those rankings are sure to go up after his Farm-City all-around title.

"(My summer's) been great," Smith said. "One of the best I've had so far. Hopefully we just keep our hands shut and keep going."

See RODEO, A12

Farm-City a popular, important stop late in the rodeo season

Prize money, livestock, fans and hospitality keep contestants coming back

By SAM BARBEE Staff Writer

The 28th running of the Farm-City Pro Rodeo was bigger and better than ever, with award-winning stock and world champion cowboys putting on a show for local rodeo fans.

But what do the cowboys think of Farm-City? Obviously they like it, or they wouldn't continue to squeeze it into their schedules when most were either going to Omak, Washington, or Cody, Wyoming, immediately following their events.

Many cowboys said the energy from the fans is a big help. At this point in the rodeo season, things are starting to wind down, and cowboys who are on the National Finals Rodeo bubble have to put

in more events to make more money to move up the standings. It can make the middle of August a grind. So to have a crowd like Farm-City's that can bring some energy for a tired cowboy, it can make all the difference.

"They usually pack the stands, like last time I was here (in 2013)," bull rider from Albuquerque, New Mexico, Scottie Knapp said. "(Wednesday night) it was packed. It hasn't started yet, and (the fans) are already feeling it again. Just the energy, the vibe — it hypes up the cowboys and keeps the energy and momentum going the whole rodeo. It's great. The fans are great. The stock's good. You can't ask for much more."

Others said it's a well-run rodeo. After winning Saturday's go-round in saddle bronc, Jacobs Crawley from Stephenville, Texas, said Farm-City is a rodeo for others to emulate. That's high praise from the



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Ty Erickson of Helena, Montana, marks a 5-second time in steer wrestling Friday at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston.

2014 collegiate All-American and 2011 collegiate national champion.

Steer wrestler Luke Branquinho from Los Alamos, California, who has been coming to Farm-City for 15 years, agreed.

"(The committee) makes it real cowboy-friendly," he said after his hot run of 4.4 seconds on Wednesday. "For a contestant, that means a lot."

Zeke Thurston, a 21-year-old saddle bronc rider from Big Valley, Alberta, Canada, scored 85 points on his first ride at Farm-City on Wednesday, and loved all eight seconds.

"It's a good rodeo, really good production," Thurston said. "Hot though. Holy man!"

Wednesday and Thursday were hot, with temperatures touching triple digits. But things cooled down Friday and Saturday with wind whipping through the arena on Friday and temperatures dropping low enough that the concession counter ran out of sweat-shirts to sell.

Steer wrestler Nik Hamm from Battle Ground, Washington, who recorded the hot run Thursday night, used Farm-City as a springboard for the second half of the rodeo season in addition to liking the quality stock and fans.

"The steers are always good here," he said. "The crowd, it kinda taps off the later summer

run. It was halftime there, and now it's the second half of the game. It's always good to get a good start in Hermiston."

All-around champ and Rexburg, Idaho, native Garrett Smith, in his second Farm-City, remembers the treatment contestants receive. Behind the bucking chutes, trays of ribs, sandwiches, fruit and beverages are available for cowboys.

"We get great hospitality here," Smith said. "They have food behind the buckin' chutes for us. There's not many places that you can get that. And the fans are great here. This is an awesome rodeo to come to."

Second-ranked steer wrestler and average champ Ty Erickson of Helena, Montana, called Farm-City a "big" rodeo.

"It's such a big and prestigious rodeo," he said. "It's one of the best rodeos we go to all fall. Guys can't miss this rodeo. It's just that good. I flew in from Billings, Montana, (Friday) just so I could be here and compete."

What makes it a can't-miss event?

"The added money," Erickson replied. "It's always nice to come to a rodeo like this where people love to watch rodeo and come to support it. Us contestants love it when the stands are full and we get to compete in front of people. That always helps."

SCOREBOARD

Farm-City Pro Rodeo Hermiston, Ore., Aug. 12-15

All-around cowboy

Garrett Smith, \$1,049, bull riding and steer wrestling.

Bareback riding

1. Bobby Mote, 88 points on Calgary Stampede's Special Delivery, \$6,077; 2. (tie) Richmond Champion and Will Lowe, 86, \$4,051 each; 4. (tie) Evan Jayne and Winn Ratliff, 84, \$1,823 each; 6. (tie) Seth Hardwick and Tim O'Connell, 83, \$912 each; 8. (tie) Jake Vold, Teddy Athan and Orin Larsen, 82, \$203 each.

Steer wrestling

First round: 1. Kyle Irwin, 4.1 seconds, \$1,853; 2. Ty Erickson, 4.5, \$1,611; 3. Shawn Downing, 4.7, \$1,370; 4. Dru Melvin, 4.8, \$1,128; 5. Sean Santucci, 5.0, \$886; 6. Blake Knowles, 5.1, \$645; 7. Tyler Waguspacak, 5.3, \$403; 8. Sean Mulligan, 5.4, \$161. Second round: 1. Travis Taruscio, 4.3 seconds, \$1,853; 2. Luke Branquinho, 4.4, \$1,611; 3. Tyler Pearson, 4.6, \$1,370; 4. (tie) Nik Hamm and Ty Erickson, 5.0, \$1,007 each; 6. K.C. Jones, 5.1, \$645; 7. Brad Johnson, 5.2, \$403; 8. Jule Hazen, 5.3, \$161. Average: 1. Ty Erickson, 9.5 seconds on two head, \$2,780; 2. Shawn Downing, 10.3, \$2,417; 3. K.C. Jones, 10.6, \$2,054; 4. (tie) Tyler Waguspacak and Kyle Irwin, 11.0, \$1,511 each; 6. Sean Santucci, 11.6, \$967; 7. Tyler Pearson, 12.1, \$604; 8. (tie) Blaine Jones and Brad Johnson, 13.2, \$121 each.

Team roping

First round: 1. Kaleb Driggers/Martin Lucero, 4.3 seconds, \$1,958 each; 2. Riley Minor/Brady Minor, 4.6, \$1,703; 3. Bubba Buckaloo/Russell Cardoza, 4.8, \$1,447; 4. JoJo LeMond/Dakota Kirchenschlager, 5.0, \$1,192; 5. Chad Masters/Travis Graves, 5.1, \$937; 6. Garrett Rogers/Jake Minor, 5.2, \$681; 7. (tie) Guy Gregg/Shane Crossley, Aaron Tsinigine/Ryan Motes and Erich Rogers/Cory Petska, 5.3, \$199 each. Second round: 1. Tyler Wade/Kimney Harrell, 4.3 seconds, \$1,958 each; 2. (tie) Cody Snow/Dugan Kelly and Tom Richards/Cesar de la Cruz, 4.6, \$1,575 each; 4. Derrick Begay/Clay O'Brien Cooper, 4.7, \$1,192; 5. Ryan Opie/Cully Stafford, 5.3, \$937; 6. (tie) Bryce Palmer/Monty Joe Petska and Luke Brown/Kolin VonAhn, 5.6, \$553 each; 8. Kaleb Driggers/Martin Lucero, 5.8, \$170. Average: 1. Kaleb Driggers/Martin Lucero, 10.1 seconds on two head, \$2,937 each; 2. Luke Brown/Kolin VonAhn, 11.0, \$2,554; 3. Bryce Palmer/Monty Joe Petska, 11.1, \$2,171; 4. Erich Rogers/Cory Petska, 11.5, \$1,788; 5. Blaine Vick/Travis Cain, 12.8, \$1,405; 6. Bryan Reay/Andy Carlson, 13.5, \$1,022; 7. Cody Snow/Dugan Kelly, 14.5, \$639; 8. Derrick Begay/Clay O'Brien Cooper, 15.1, \$255.

Saddle bronc riding

1. (tie) Doug Aldridge on Calgary Stampede's Lynx Mountain and Zeke Thurston on Kesler Rodeo's Navajo Sun, 85 points, \$4,683 each; 3. Jesse Wright, 84, \$3,004; 4. (tie) Jacobs Crawley and Jake Wright, 83, \$1,590 each; 6. Sam Spreadborough, 82, \$884; 7. Cody Wright, 81, \$707; 8. (tie) Isaac Diaz and Ben Londo, 80, \$265 each.

Tie-down roping

First round: 1. Tuf Cooper, 8.1 seconds, \$1,998; 2. (tie) Matt Shozawa and Timber Moore, 8.5, \$1,607 each; 4. Blaine Cox, 9.1, \$1,216; 5. K.C. Miller, 9.2, \$956; 6. Adam Gray, 9.3, \$695; 7. Robert Mathis, 9.4, \$434; 8. Jason Minor, 9.7, \$174. Second round: 1. Cade Swor, 8.3 seconds, \$1,998; 2. Shane Hanchev, 8.4, \$1,738; 3. (tie) Caleb Smith, Timber Moore, Justin Brinkerhoff and Cimarron Boardman, 8.5, \$1,086 each; 7. (tie) Shane Erickson and Ryle Smith, 8.7, \$304 each. Average: 1. Timber Moore, 17.0 seconds on two head, \$2,997; 2. Shane Hanchev, 18.5, \$2,606; 3. Robert Mathis, 19.1, \$2,216; 4. (tie) Justin Brinkerhoff and Matt Shozawa, 19.5, \$1,629 each; 6. Clint Robinson, 20.2, \$1,043; 7. Jake Pratt, 20.9, \$652; 8. (tie) Dillon Holder and Caleb Smith, 21.5, \$130 each.

Barrel racing

First round: 1. Michele McLeod, 17.32 seconds, \$1,814; 2. Kalli Parker, 17.33, \$1,555; 3. Sherry Cervi, 17.38, \$1,296; 4. Vickie Carter, 17.44, \$1,123; 5. Meghan Johnson, 17.47, \$864; 6. Nancy Hunter, 17.48, \$691; 7. (tie) Sydney Blanchard and Callie DuPerier, 17.52, \$432 each; 9. Alexa Lake, 17.54, \$259; 10. Linzie Lindsey, 17.62, \$173. Second round: 1. Kimmie Wall, 17.05 seconds, \$1,814; 2. Callie DuPerier, 17.09, \$1,555; 3. Jackie Gantler, 17.15, \$1,296; 4. Kalli Parker, 17.27, \$1,123; 5. Pamela Capper, 17.33, \$864; 6. Katelyn McLeod, 17.35, \$691; 7. Brenda Mays, 17.38, \$518; 8. Mary Walker, 17.45, \$346; 9. (tie) Meghan Johnson and Callahan Crossley, 17.46, \$216 each. Average: 1. Kalli Parker, 34.60 seconds on two head, \$1,814; 2. Callie DuPerier, 34.61, \$1,555; 3. Kimmie Wall, 34.73, \$1,296; 4. Jackie Gantler, 34.79, \$1,123; 5. Meghan Johnson, 34.93, \$864; 6. Sherry Cervi, 34.94, \$691; 7. Sydney Blanchard, 34.99, \$518; 8. Vickie Carter, 35.00, \$346; 9. Nancy Hunter, 35.01, \$259; 10. Callahan Crossley, 35.14, \$173.

Bull riding

1. Clayton Foltyn, 86 points on Corey & Lange Rodeo's Mr Buddy, \$5,245; 2. Dustin Bowen, 83, \$4,021; 3. (tie) Scottie Knapp and Ty Wallace, 82, \$2,448 each; 5. (tie) Garrett Smith and Brett Stall, 79, \$1,049 each; 7. (tie) Markus Mariluch and McKennon Wimberly, 78, \$612 each.

Total payoff: \$204,634. Stock contractor: Calgary Stampede. Sub-contractors: Kesler Rodeo, Korkow Rodeo, Corey & Lange Rodeo, Debi Championship Rodeo and Flying Diamond Rodeo. Rodeo secretary: Keshi Davis. Officials: George Gibbs, Mike Jones, Butch Kirby and Bobby Davis. Timers: Margo Kesler and Myrna Weber. Announcer: Randy Corley. Specialty act: John Harrison. Bullfighters: Tim O'Connor and Don Griggs. Clown/barellman: John Harrison. Flankmen: Mike Corey, Greg Kesler, Ken Rehill and T.J. Korkow. Chute bosses: Butch Knowles and Dan Ackley. Pickup men: Gary Rempel, David McMichael and Duane Kesler. Photographers: Bob Click, Kent Soule and Kirt Steinke.

Mutton bustin' winner

Ethan Dyer, 91 points.

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