

Augst 4, 2002
Written by Paul Cooley
Rodeo News

GERRY – The weatherman predicted thunderstorms, but he was wrong as more than 2000 fans turned out to watch outstanding professional rodeo action under warm, clear skies for the second performance of the Gerry Fire Department's 77th annual rodeo.

The night's activities began as announcer Greg Simas introduced a special tribute to our military members, first responders, and health care workers by having them stand to a prolonged ovation from the fans. Prayer, the National Anthem, and the grand entry with all the competing cowboys and cowgirls circling the arena on horseback conclude the opening ceremonies.

Bareback bronc riding kicked off the competition with seven of the nine cowboys making successful rides. Kade Sonnier of Carencro, Louisiana, posted the top score for the second straight night with an 82.5 ride. Four other cowboys posted scores in the 70's.

Steer wrestler Olin Ellsworth, Warrensburg, New York, narrowly missed winning the "big man's" event for the second straight night as he threw his steer to the turf in 5.4 seconds, but was narrowly edged out by one-tenth of a second by Zane Kilgus Watsontown, Pennsylvania, whose time was 5.3.

Zane Kilgus then moved over to his second event of the night to team up with Drew Carnes, Hornell, New York, to post he best time in the team roping event with a fast six seconds flat. They were followed by the father and son team from Georgia, Braxton and Brad Culpepper, wo roped their steer's horns and legs in 7.1 seconds.

Only three of the ten cowgirls were able to successfully rope their calves in the breakaway roping event with only two-tenths of a second separating the top two. Danni Cloer traveled from Clifton Hill, Missouri, to take first with a time of 4.2 seconds, while Kelly Jo Stein, Scottsville, New York, was second at 4.4.

Clovis Crane, Lebanon, Pennsylvania, who is the only cowboy ever to win championships in four different events in the same year, posted an outstanding score pf 83 points in the classic saddle bronc competition, only to see Isaac Richard, from Eunice, Louisiana, ride for 85.5, the best score of the week, aboard Painted Pony's bronc George's Bad Cat, who has bucked at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas.

The tie-down roping competition was very close as only eight-tenths of a second separated the top three ropers. JC Fisher, Milton, Pennsylvania, was tops at 13.3, followed by Charlie Goerlach, Greenfield Center, New York at 14.0 and Colby Clement, Pedricktown, New Jersey, at 14.6.

Four cowgirl barrel racers broke the 16 seconds barrier with just seven-one hundredths of a second separating the top three. Kimberly Kolibas, Belvedere, New Jersey, was first at 15.71, while Jodi Lyn Colton from Cullman, Alabama, had a 15.74 ride, followed Ronda Casey, Plymouth, Indiana, at 15.78.

The tide turned a bit in the dangerous bull riding as three cowboys posted successful rides after the bulls had thrown all 12 cowboys on opening night. Mazinho Jeremias, a cowboy who traveled several thousand miles from his home in Brazil, had the crowd on their feet as he not only stayed aboard the bull for the eight seconds, but posted an outstanding score of 83 from the judges. The score is based 50% on the performance of the rider and 50% on the bull's bucking. Cody McCandless, Saltsburg, Pennsylvania, was second with 76 point score.

The rodeo continues tonight and Saturday night at 8:00 with more than 200 professional cowboys and cowgirls trying to win a piece of the more than \$50,000 in prize money. The barbeque beef

dinners are served both evenings for 5:00-8:00 in the air-conditioned dining room. The midway with more than 20 vendors also opens at 5:00.

A free kid's rodeo will be held on Saturday afternoon in the rodeo arena for kids ages 3-8 where they will play rodeo related games supervised by rodeo personnel with a belt buckle awarded for the best dressed little cowboy and cowgirl. Reistraton is at 3:00.

Further information is available at the rodeo website www.gerryrodeo.org or by phone at 716-985-4847 or 1-888-985-4547.

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