

FAST DRIVING TO RODEO

Hurried drive ends in successful bronc ride at St. Paul Rodeo



St. Paul, Ore. (July 1, 2017) – A fast drive from Molalla, Ore. and a bad ankle didn't stop Joe Harper from taking the lead in the saddle bronc riding after the second night of competition at the St. Paul (Ore.) Rodeo.

The Paradise Valley, Nev. cowboy scored 82.5 points on the Bridwell Pro Rodeo horse Blue Back Splash to move into first place at the rodeo.

Harper and his traveling partners, fellow saddle bronc riders Wyatt Hurst and Josh Davison, had to hustle to get from Molalla, where they rode tonight, to St. Paul, in time for their event.

The two Oregon rodeos, who are less than 30 miles apart, work together to make it possible for cowboys to compete at both on the same evening, staggering their events so cowboys can ride at one and then head to the other.

But tonight Harper and his buddies were running late, arriving just as their event started, and driving fast to get there. How fast? Harper wouldn't say. "I can't say that on record. I don't want to incriminate myself," he laughed.

He was delighted with his ride on Blue Back Splash. "I'd heard a little about that horse. I know she's a young horse that's been really good for Tim (Bridwell.) I was sure tickled about how she bucked, and everything just felt good. It's been a good day."

Harper is riding with a bad left ankle, after tearing ligaments in it last week while riding a young colt. But it's going to have to wait to be fixed. He credited the Justin SportsMedicine team with helping keep it working. "The Justin SportsMedicine team has really taken care of it," he said. "They understand we're not going to slow down or quit, so they give us good treatment."

The 25 year old cowboy has had a good couple weeks, winning checks at rodeos in Thermopolis, Wyo., Meridian, Idaho, and Prineville, Ore., and rodeo life is good. "I was fighting equipment and injuries, but everything's starting to come together. I've always had fun (riding broncs) but everything's starting to click, and I'm on top of the world right now."

He knows his score probably won't win the rodeo. "I'm not super-confident it will hold for the win, but I'm fairly confident it will hold for a check which is exactly what I like. If I do win, that's great. God's blessed me a lot these last couple weeks, and I think it'll continue."

Other high scores and fast times from today's competition at the St. Paul Rodeo are bareback rider Tilden Hooper, Carthage, Texas (84 points), steer wrestler Gary Gilbert, St. Cloud, Fla. (4.1 seconds in the second round), tie-down roper Blair Burk, Durant, Okla. (8.1 seconds in the second round), team ropers Rhen Richard, Roosevelt, Utah and Rich Skelton, Llano, Texas (4.2 seconds in the second round), and barrel racer Morgan Breaux, Tomball, Texas (17.59 seconds.). No bull rider made a qualified ride.

Tomorrow's rodeo is at 7:30 pm, with performances following on July 3-4, at 7:30 pm each night and a 1:30 pm matinee on July 4. Tickets are still available and range in price from \$18 to \$30 and are available online at StPaulRodeo.com and at the ticket office at the rodeo grounds. For more information, visit the rodeo's website or call the rodeo office at 800-237-5920.

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Results from the slack and evening performance, St. Paul Rodeo, July 1, 2017

Bareback Riding

1. Tilden Hooper, Carthage, Texas 84 points on Bridwell Pro Rodeo's Mary; 2. Kaycee Feild, Spanish Fork, Utah 83; 3. Steven Dent, Mullen, Neb. 77.5; no other qualified rides.

Steer wrestling

1st round leaders:

1. Tanner Millan, Chochrane, Alb. 4.0 seconds; 2. John Green, La Grande, Ore. 4.2; 3. (tie) Harley Joseph Cole, Calgary, Alb. and Cole Edge, Durant, Okla. 4.4 each.

2nd round leaders;

1. Gary Gilbert, St. Cloud, Fla. 4.1 seconds; 2. Jon Ragatz, Beetown, Wis. 4.9; 3. Tanner Milan, Cochrane, Alb. 5.2; 4. Travis Taruscio, Stanfield, Ore. 5.5.

Average leaders (on two head)

1. Kyle Irwin, Robertsedale, Ala. 8.6 seconds on 2 head; 2. Tanner Milan, Cochrane, Alb. 9.2; 3. Ringo Robinson, Caldwell, Ida. 11.2; 4. Gary Gilbert, St. Cloud, Fla. 11.3.

Bull riding

No qualified rides.

Tie-down roping

1st round

1. Marty Yates, Stephenville, Texas 9.0 seconds; 2. Trevor Brazile, Decatur, Texas 9.8; 3. Rhen Richard, Roosevelt, Utah 10.0; 4. Sterling Smith, Stephenville, Texas 10.2.

2nd round

1. Blair Burk, Durant, Okla. 8.1 seconds; 2. Shane Hanchey, Sulphur, La. 8.9; 3. Cory Solomon, Prairie View, Texas 9.4; 4. Brad Goodrich, Hermiston, Ore. 9.6.

Average leaders on two head

1. Blair Burk, Durant, Okla. 19.4 seconds on 2 head; 2. Clint Nyegaard, Cuero, Texas 19.7; 3. Shane Hanchey, Sulphur, La. 20.4; 4. Kirk Robinson, Innisfail, 21.7.

Saddle bronc riding

1. Joe Harper, Paradise Valley, Nev. 82.5 points on Bridwell Pro Rodeo's Blue Back Splash; 2. Jake Wright, Milford, Utah 78.5; 3. (tie) Jacobs Crawley, Boerne, Texas and CoBurn Bradshaw, Beaver, Utah 76 each.

Team roping

1st round

1. Trevor Brazile, Decatur, Texas/Patrick Smith, Lipan, Texas 5.8 seconds; 2. Jack Fischer, Ellensburg, Wash./ Ryan Stewart, Royal City, Wash. 5.9; 3. Dale Benevides, Naalehu, Hawaii, Buck McCay, Eugene, Ore 6.1; 4. McKennan Buckner, Powell Butte, Ore./Bill Justus, Haines, Ore. 6.2.

2nd round

1. Rhen Richard, Roosevelt, Utah/Rich Skelton, Llano, Texas 4.2 seconds; 2. Clay Ullery, Two Hills, Alb./Riley Wilson, Cardston, Alb. 4.6; 3. Shay Carroll, Prineville, Ore./Nano Garza, Las Cruces, N.M. 7.1; 4. Marty Yates, Stephenville, Texas/Jason Duby, Klamath Falls, Ore. 9.7.

Average leaders on two head

1. Jeff Flenniken, Caldwell, Ida./Taylor Duby, Homedale, Ida. 11.1 seconds on 2 head; 2. Ryan Opie, Crane, / Dayton Stafford, Prineville, Ore. 11.6; 3. Levi Simpson, Ponoka, Alb./Jeremy Buhler, Arrowwood, Alb. and Jake Cooper, Monument, N.M./Dakota Kirchenschlager, Morgan Mill, Texas 11.8 each.

Barrel racing

1. Morgan Breaux, Tomball, Texas 17.59 seconds; 2. Berna Haberman, Ellensburg, Wash. 18.05; 3. Mary Shae Hays, Hermiston, Ore. 18.18; 4. Kim Smith, Touchet, Wash. 18.20.

Cutline: Joe Harper rides the Bridwell Pro Rodeo horse Blue Back Splash for 82.5 points and the lead in the saddle bronc riding at the 82nd annual St. Paul Rodeo. The rodeo continues July 2-4. Photo by Hoot Creek.

** All results are unofficial. For more information, visit www.StPaulRodeo.com.

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