

The Bandera PROPHET

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Stampede rodeos a community success

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The Grand Entry on Friday night, May 28, had just been completed, and bareback riders were ready when Mother Nature decided to put us to the test. She won. Mounted members of True Women Drill Team, their horses and flags spun around and around as the wind and rain whipped the rodeo grounds. The rodeo that night was abated until the lightening and rain moved away from the arena. Once the lightening faded away, the competition continued and was completed for Friday night entries. Word was circulated that a Friday night ticket stub would get you into the rodeo Saturday or Sunday.

Then Saturday was a night to remember, for only good reasons. It was standing room only as the stands were packed with rodeo fans. Sunday night also topped the charts for Sunday attendance. The crowds were dazzled by top rated rodeo cowboys and cowgirls who exhibited their champion skills in all events. A big screen jumbotron kept up with the times and scores of all events, and provided INSTANT REPLAY! Nikki Sandidge, Rayni Sandidge, Randi Thomas and members of True Women Drill Team raced sponsor flags around the arena between events. The ceremony of the dedication of the 2021 rodeos to Mr. John Teich was tearful for some, but the mood quickly changed when Justin Rumford, champion rodeo clown and barrel man, and announcer Garrett Yerigan involved the audience in the Mom Swap event, calf scramble and mutton bustin'. Under the guidance and direction of general manager, Jim Gay, Rafter G Rodeo again produced a crowd-pleasing rodeo. New Added Money sponsor Texas Solar "had a blast" and hopes to provide jobs for our community. Exiting rodeo patrons commented they enjoyed the rodeo, the rodeo was fabulous and they will be back next year.

Steer Wrestler Brad Loesch was one of the champion cowboys and cowgirls who competed here Memorial Day Weekend. Loesch had sold his horse and trailer when COVID hit. This spring he felt ready to get back into competition and had just picked up a new horse, Luther, two days before the Bandera rodeos began. He, his wife and Luther traveled through the rain and lightening on Friday to compete here Friday night. It had been 380 days since he had wrestled a steer. In spite of the weather, he and Luther clocked an incredible 3.4 second run to take the victory in Steer Wrestling. It was the fastest time in the event for the week of May 24-30 and 2 tenths of a second off the fastest run of the season.

Other winners Memorial Day weekend in Bandera included the following:

- Chad Rutherford won Bareback Riding with a score of 86.5
 - Toby Collins won Saddle Bronc Riding with a score of 81.5
 - JB Mauney won Bull Riding with a score of 77.0
 - Trenton Smith won Tie Down Roping with a time of 9.1
 - Brad Loesch won Steer Wrestling with a time of 3.4
 - Chase Wiley and Joel Galvan won team roping with a time of 5.5
 - Alex Lang won Barrel Racing with a time of 17.39
- (Go to Bandera ProRodeo facebook for other placings.)

All of the above went into making the 2021 Memorial Day Weekend Stampede rodeos the very best rodeos presented by Bandera ProRodeo Association.

But it is a misconception to think that the rodeos are the product of one group. The biggest element in the success of these rodeos is the Bandera County Community. Without the local support of labor, time, sponsorships and home town enthusiasm, these rodeos could not continue to be successful. This support, and the energy created by the audience's enjoyment of the show, are what sustain and promote our legacy as the Cowboy Capital of the World.