

## Western Performance Horse Showdown

### 2024 Recap

The thrill of camaraderie and competitiveness set the arena ablaze on opening day of the 2024 National Western Stock Show. Five teams from three esteemed western performance disciplines vied for an impressive prize pool exceeding \$17,000 in the inaugural Western Performance Horse Showdown.



Taking the spotlight as the first to enter the arena was the Red Team. Reining teammate Gabe Garrison of Eaton, Colo. riding Wimpys Crystal Ball, flew into the arena to kickoff the event and thrill a large crowd. Gabe marked a 140 under legendary judges Sandy Jirkovsky and Allen Mitchels before JD Yates of Pueblo, Colo. and Pepto Hickory Cat laid down a picture-perfect steer stopping run to score a remarkable 148. Their final

teammate and one of only two females invited, Naomi Bancroft of Stratton, Colo. on Glamour Reality combined her rein work score of 145 with a 149, the highest fence work score of the day, to surge to an early team lead with an untouchable 582.

Four additional teams representing six states squared off in each discipline, unable to top the Red Team. White team member Shane Brown of Sanger, Tex. on Shez Pretty Trashy scored a total of 144½, earning the discipline-specific high score award along with JD and Naomi.



The Showdown proved to entertain an engaged crowd and highlight the diversity and athleticism of these working athletes. The collective and mutual support of each other was evident in the cheers during every run and high-fives shared in the in-gate among every shirt color. The instantaneous popularity of this creative event confirms this is a must-see in future years.