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Western Horse Performance Showdown

2025 Recap



Reining, roping and reined cow horse competitors joined forces on opening day of the National Western Stock Show to participate in the second Western Performance Horse Showdown. These top athletes from three prominent disciplines in the western performance horse world competed in their respective event to vie for the team championship in the CINCH Arena in the Events Center. Exceptional riders are invited to select their best horse to make teams of three that are randomly drawn. There is over \$17,000 awarded in this double-judged event. Each

team earned a payout plus the high score individuals pocketed a winner-take-all jackpot for the high score in each event.

From the first team to the last, this year's performance kept everyone on the edge of their seats. The Black Team, featuring the talented trio of Brogan Hill, JD Yates, and Naomi Bancroft, made an impressive start, setting the tone with a strong score of 571.5. Reining teammate, Sharee Schwartzenberger of Longmont, Colo., riding young horse Witchcraft, flew into the arena for the fifth and final team to mark a 142. Aaron Ralston riding Blue Tucka Joe laid down a picture-perfect steer-stopping run to score a matching 142. Their final teammate Kyle Trahern, of Walsh, Colo., on Khrome combined his rein work score of 143 with a 146, to score a 573 to take the lead held since the beginning.



The Showdown captivated an enthusiastic crowd, showcasing the remarkable diversity and athleticism of these skilled competitors. The fellowship among participants was clear, with cheers echoing for every run and high-fives exchanged at the in-gate, regardless of team affiliation. The event's instant popularity solidifies its status as a must-see highlight for future years.

Photos by Performance Horse Photography

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