

STRAIT TALK

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George
2015 Strait
Team Roping Classic
GSTRC

TRYAN and GRAVES Set the Record Strait

by Kent Lynch
Daily Times

Travis Graves may have just proven he's the baddest cat in the free world when it comes to heebers. Graves kicked off the month of March with a win at The American, good for \$100,000, spent the next week in Guthrie, Oklahoma at the Timed Event Championships, where he helped Trevor Brazile cash in \$100,000, then headed to San Antonio, where he and Clay Tryan bested the field at The Strait, earning over \$136,000 each. During the first three weekends in March, the Jay, Oklahoma team roper, who now resides in Morgan Mill, Texas, won roughly twice his 2014 PRCA earnings. Graves also picked up an additional \$34,080 for a fourth place win with Chad Masters.

Tryan, on the head end, is arguably the best jackpot header in the world. This was the Montana-native-turned-Lipan, Texas-resident's second trip to the George Strait winner's circle. He won the event in 2012 with Patrick Smith, joining the elite list of ropers who have claimed the championship multiple times...Jack Stephenson, Steve Purcella, Kory Koontz, Allen Bach, Tee Woolman, Jake Barnes, Speed Williams, Clay O'Brien Cooper and Jade Corkill.

The 33rd Annual George Strait Team Roping Classic was held March 13-14 at the San Antonio Rose Palace in San Antonio, Texas. The 2015 edition of the GSTRC drew 675 teams from across the country to compete in Friday's preliminary rounds, kicking off 18 hours of roping that would result in over \$740,000 in cash and prizes awarded.

The unique format of the GSTRC is not seen in any other major Open roping. Ropers pay \$1,000 per team to compete in two progressive preliminary rounds on Friday, with the top 50 on two head advancing to Saturday's finals (top five from each of 10 rotations). Saturday's roping features three full go rounds for the big money, but teams are starting from scratch. Since its inception and including this year, the George Strait Team Roping Classic has awarded cash and prizes approaching the \$5 Million mark.

Bragging rights this year for the fastest on Friday's two head belong to Levi Simpson and Jeremy Buhler, who received a pair of buckles for their 9.78 on two. Another two buckles were awarded to Clay Smith and Paul Eaves, who turned in the fastest time overall in the preliminary rounds, a



The King of Team Roping, George Strait, presents Clay Tryan and Travis Graves with \$272,640, two Chevy trucks and two Bruton trailers. Tryan and Graves set a record by roping three steers in 3.95 seconds

4.26.

Tryan and Graves entered the last round on Saturday in the number two position with just 1.5 seconds separating the top 10 teams. As they entered the box, Cord Crowell and Camish Jennings, the third high team, led the roping with a 14.38 on three head. The fastest time ever recorded on three head at the GSTRC was a 14.40, posted by Chad Masters and Jade Corkill in 2009. Crowell and Jennings had just bested the record by .2 seconds.

Needing a 4.61, Tryan and Graves went off on one for a 4.19 and the 13.95 on three head, breaking the average record for the second time in the span of a few minutes. They watched as the only team who could spoil the day, Derrick Begay and Cory Petska, suffered a no-time, leaving the championship trucks and trailers to Tryan and Graves.



Cord Crowell and Camish Jennings earned over \$109,000 and the reserve champion saddles by roping three in 14.38. Their time bested the old record of 14.40... but it only stood for one run.

Levi Simpson and Jeremy Buhler roped the fastest two steers on Friday, turning in a time of 9.78. They also picked up eighth place in the final average.



Clay Smith and Paul Eaves roped the fastest time overall on Friday, a 4.26.



The champs split \$272,640 in cash, that's about \$19,500 per second, and each received a brand new Chevy crew-cab truck and matching Bruton trailer. Crowell and Jennings finished as the reserve champions, claiming a pair of saddles and over \$109,000.

A George Strait tradition continued this year in the form of red-wrapped steers. Steers in the draw are randomly wrapped with red horn wraps and are worth quite a bit of cash if one is roped in the fastest time of the round. If a red wrap is the winning time in the first round, a bonus of \$10,000 is paid to the winning team. If the fast time is not on a red wrapped steer, that cash carries over to the next round. A total of \$30,000 bonus money is available in Saturday's three rounds. This

WHO WON WHAT

AVERAGE

- 1st: Clay Tryan/Travis Graves - 13.95 - \$272,640
- 2nd: Cord Crowell/Camish Jennings - 14.38 - \$109,060
- 3rd: Dustin Bird/Paul Eaves - 15.16 - \$74,980
- 4th: Chad Masters/Travis Graves - 15.35 - \$68,160
- 5th: Arky Rogers/Kyle Lawrence - 15.52 - \$54,520
- 6th: Clayton Haas/Jory Levy - 16.12 - \$40,900
- 7th: Adam Rose/Byron Wilkerson - 16.25 - \$34,080
- 8th: Levi Simpson/Jeremy Buhler - 16.33 - \$27,260

GO ROUNDS

- 1st: Dustin Bird/Paul Eaves - 4.42 - \$13,000
- 2nd: Cale Markham/Buddy Hawkins - 4.68 - \$3,000
- 3rd: Kaleb Driggers/Junior Nogueira - 3.89 - \$23,000

FAST TIME OVERALL - FRIDAY

Clay Smith/Paul Eaves - 4.26 - Buckles

FASTEST ON TWO - FRIDAY

Levi Simpson/Jeremy Buhler - 9.78 - Buckles

year, Dustin Bird and Kollin VonAhn roped a 4.42 in the first round on a red-wrapped steer, earning the \$10,000 cash bonus in addition to the \$3,000 go round prize. Cale Markham and Buddy Hawkins turned in a 4.68 in the second round for \$3,000, but Kaleb Driggers and Brazilian sensation, Junior Nogueira roped the fastest time of the weekend in the third round. Their 3.89 second run on a red wrapped steer was good for \$23,000.

In 1983, Strait and his late brother, Buddy hosted the first George Strait Team Roping in Kingsville, Texas. The grand prize for the 137 team event was a two-horse trailer. Almost \$5 million later, the event annually hosts close to 700 teams and has become the richest open roping in the universe.

As always, Strait himself was on hand to welcome ropers and present awards. He was joined in the arena between rounds Saturday by Lieutenant General Leroy Sisco, US Army Retired, to make a presentation on behalf of the Military Warriors Support Foundation Homes 4 Wounded Heroes. Sisco and Strait presented Corporal Leland Arledge, a Purple Heart recipient, and his wife Jennifer, a mortgage-free home in Hot Springs, Arkansas. This marked the 640th home, the 52nd by Strait, presented



For his 33 years of dedication to team roping, George Strait was presented a four-year-old AQHA mare, courtesy of Dean Tuftin, right. Shown are Dustin Noblitt of Pro Equine Group, Louis Russo of Justin Boots, Ricky Bolin of Resistol, Robert Lever of Wrangler, Strait and J.D. Yates.

through the MWSF to deserving military heroes.

In another presentation on Saturday, Strait was surprised by announcer Reed Flake, Dustin Noblitt of Pro Equine Group, Robert Lever of Wrangler, Louis Russo of Justin Boots, Ricky Bolin of Resistol, J.D. Yates and Dean Tuftin. The group presented a four-year-old AQHA mare, from Tuftin's ranch, to Strait in recognition of his passion for team roping the past 33 years. Tuftin said Strait had admired his horses in years past and made

the comment that he'd like to own one of them.

"It's been 33 years of fun," said Strait, upon hearing the total cash and prizes awarded by his event through the years. "I had no idea we'd given away so much. Time flies when you're having fun."

Keep having fun George, the ropers love it when you do. You've worn the crown, "King of Country Music" your entire career...I think it's safe to call you the "King of Team Roping" now.



George Strait Honors Another Military Warrior

During the 2015 GSTRC Retired Lt. General Leroy Sisco and George Strait presented a home on behalf of the Military Warriors Organization to Retired Sergeant First Class Christopher Livesay of Wichita Falls, TX. The 2-time Bronze Star recipient was wounded and lost his leg during combat in Baghdad, Iraq in. We congratulate and thank Sergeant Livesay for his service to our country.

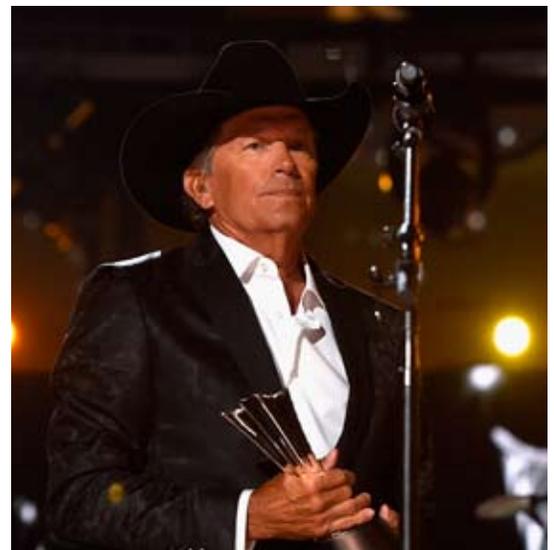


George Strait Honored at AMC 50th Anniversary Award Celebration

At the 50th Academy of Country Music Awards at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, TX, George Strait was one of only seven artists to receive the prestigious 50th Anniversary Milestone Award commemorating ground-

breaking career achievements in ACM Awards history. Strait, who has won a total of 21 ACM Awards over the course of four consecutive decades, took home his first Entertainer of the Year trophy in 1989 and

repeated the feat 24 years later in 2013. He has also been honored with the ACM's 40th Anniversary Milestone Award in 2005 and was named the ACM Dick Clark Artist of the Decade for the 2000's.













♪ Anita's Notes ♪

Welcome to the summer issue of Strait Talk.

As you all know we closed the George Strait General Store and Fan Club office in January of this year. In November of 2014, we made the announcement that we would close our operation after 32 years as George had decided to end his touring days. After the Christmas Holiday, we had a very short sale and sold out of all our merchandise in 3 short days. In all honesty, we did not have a lot left over as we knew it was coming. It was a very sad time for us to see everything go. After the sale, we packed up 32 years' worth of photographs, newspaper clippings and anything else you can think of. On Feb. 13th, 2015 we closed the doors, hugged each other and shed a few tears. Being that we are all close in distance, we do try and keep in touch as much as we can. It has been very hard getting used to not going to the office and talking to you guys every day, but it was such a wonderful ride working at the George Strait Fan Club. The friendships we made, and there were many, we try and hold on to. I know we will see each other again at the Team Roping or maybe a show somewhere and that is a good thing.

We hope you all watched the 50th Academy of Country Music Awards from AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas on April 19th. George Strait was the first to accept the ACM Milestone Award after performing "All My Ex's Live in Texas". The other Awards went to Garth Brooks, Brooks & Dunn, Kenny Chesney, Miranda Lambert, Reba McEntire and Taylor Swift. It was a packed house loaded with great entertainment.

As you can see, we traveled to the 33rd Annual GSTRC in San Antonio, Texas and had a blast. The event is run by George and his family. A lot of time and energy goes into the event. In addition, the staff at the San Antonio Rose Palace does a great job. From the story and photographs you see elsewhere in the newsletter, you can see it was a very successful event and we look forward to the next one. No date has been set yet. We will keep you posted.

There have been many questions addressed by the GSFC members and hopefully, we can clear up a few things.

There is no fan club renewal anymore as all of the information that was previously available only to Fan Club members will now be made available free of charge on our website and Facebook page.

Strait Talk will continue to be published and emailed to members until the end of the year. It

is also available for free now on the website.

You can now read all new and old Strait Talk's without logging in.

Please keep your Username and Password from the past. Do not lose it as it may be necessary in the future.

If and when George Strait decides to do a concert appearance, the information will be made available on the website and Facebook page. You should also be notified by email.

Hope this helps a little. We will continue to post any new information on the website.

The "King of Country" just released an original song, "Take Me To Texas," as part of the soundtrack for the highly-anticipated TV series, *Texas Rising*. Penned by fellow Texas native and GRAMMY Award-winning songwriter Shane McAnally and GRAMMY-nominated artist Brandy Clark, "Take Me To Texas" is one of

26 tracks released to digital retailers via MCA Nashville on May 18. *Texas Rising*, a 10-hour, five-part series event depicting the Texas Revolution and how the legendary Texas Rangers came to prominence, premieres on The History Channel on Monday, May 25 at 8 p.m. CT.

Watch for the next CD that should be released in early fall. The new single, "Let it Go" is climbing the charts as we go to press. We will make any info available on the website when it becomes known.

A very Happy Birthday to George and Bubba Strait. We hope you guys have a wonderful celebration.

Till the next issue, please continue to Pray for our Servicemen and Women across the world. Thank you all for your service to our country. God Bless each and every one of you.

