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Published: December 15, 2009 12:06 am |  No comments posted.

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Peek performance



AP PHOTO/ISAAC BREKKEN -- Josh Peek competes in the steer wrestling event during the ninth go-round of National Finals Rodeo at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas on Friday.



Pueblo cowboy cashes in at NFR

By JUDY HILDNER
THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

Josh Peek cashed in big time in Las Vegas over the past two weeks but he didn't go near a casino.

The 30-year-old Puebloan made his money on the dirt of the Thomas & Mack Arena at the National Finals Rodeo. In his third appearance at the NFR, Peek claimed the NFR all-around title with \$113,000 in winnings over 10 days.

And the distractions of the famous Vegas Strip were nothing to Peek, who kept his competitive focus despite dealing with a broken-down stock hauler and helping care for his twin babies.

"You do whatever you've got to do," Peek said cheerfully from the road Monday, driving through Colorado's snowy mountains toward home.

"We had a great final, especially having my family there. It was a real blessing," Peek said. "We took the twins everywhere. It's not worth winning if you don't have your family around you." He was runner-up in the final world all-around standings to Trevor Brazile, who won his seventh title, tying the legendary Ty Murray. Peek's 2009 winnings in steer wrestling and tie-down roping totaled \$245,067, well back of Brazile's yearlong total.

But Peek said winning the NFR title over Brazile was huge.

"To beat someone of his caliber was awesome. He's such a tough competitor," Peek said.

Peek qualified for both his events at the NFR, his fifth trip to the PRCA's

equivalent of the Super Bowl. And he's a stickler for details, not only taking

his own horses to Las Vegas but a few head of practice calves, too.

"We stayed at a friend's place about eight miles outside of town. That way I could practice and keep the horses and myself sharp," Peek said. "I didn't practice that much, but if I needed to work on something, it was right there."

The NFR stretches over 10 days, culminating on Saturday night. There are payouts for each performance and Peek picked up plenty of cash right out of the chute when he won the opening night's tie-down competition with a 7.5-second time. That set the tone for a great run.

Now Peek and his wife, Kori, will take a holiday break. The twins, Emry and Keagan, will be six months old on Friday and they are headed to Pratt, Kan., to celebrate the 100th birthday of Kori's great-grandfather on Sunday.

"We'll have all those generations together," Peek said.

They'll spend Christmas with the Peek family in Pueblo and then take a Disney vacation before Peek tackles another rodeo.

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PEEK TIME - Josh Peek file

- **Bio:** Born Sept. 12, 1979 in Pueblo; wife Kori; twins Emry Autumn and Keagan Cole, born June 18, 2009.
- **Family ties:** Brothers Jon and Jeremiah also hold PRCA cards; Parents Ray and Nadine own Mesa Sand & Gravel; Owns Three Peeks Trimming, a cattle hoof trimming business.
- **College:** Colorado State University-Pueblo, business degree.
- **Rodeo:** Won numerous college titles; first inductee into the Frank Phillips College Rodeo Hall of Fame; has steadily moved up in PRCA rankings over past five years, placing second in 2009 world all-around with \$245,067 in earnings; closing in on \$1 million in career earnings.