

THE WORLD'S LARGEST REINING 2026 EVENT REVIEW



ANDREA FAPPANI
& ALPHA VIKING
mark a 236 in the L4 Open Derby
Finals to clinch the win and set a
new Derby record score

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RECORD-BREAKING GROWTH. UNPRECEDENTED MOMENTUM.

The 2026 6666 NRHA Derby® presented by Markel made history as the **largest reining event ever held, drawing a record-breaking 6,494 entries.** Record participation across Derby, Adequan® North American Affiliate Championships, ancillary competition, and The Run For A Million Qualifier underscored the **continued growth and momentum of the sport.**

More than \$2.1 million was paid out across Derby, Youth, Ancillary, and NAAC competition divisions*, while the Open and Non Pro Finals showcased some of the deepest and most competitive fields in event history.

Beyond the arena, strong attendance, exhibitor participation, and exceptional digital and livestream engagement expanded the Derby's reach and reinforced its position as one of reining's premier events. **The 2026 Derby stands as another milestone for the National Reining Horse Association, highlighting the continued growth, prestige, and strength of the reining industry.**

*Payout figures pending final audit.

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RECORD PARTICIPATION. RECORD MOMENTUM.

The 2026 6666 NRHA Derby® presented by Markel rewrote the record books, **achieving the highest entry count ever recorded at a reining event** while also setting new Derby records for horses entered and stalls occupied.

With unprecedented participation from owners, riders, and horses, the event reached historic milestones across every measure. These record-breaking numbers underscore the continued growth of the Derby and reaffirm its place as the premier event in the sport of reining.

	2025	2026
TOTAL ENTRIES	4,524	6,494
TOTAL HORSES	1,030	1,135
TOTAL STALLS	1,761	2,245



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SIX YEARS. SIX CONSECUTIVE RECORD PURSES.

Since 2021, the 6666 NRHA Derby® presented by Markel has set **new purse records every year**, continuing to raise the standard for reining competition.

In 2026, **all four Open and Non Pro levels (Levels 1–4) reached record purses for the sixth consecutive year**, driven by the strength of the National Reining Horse Association nomination program. The combined Non Pro purse increased 15.1%, while the combined Open purse grew 6.1%.

	2025	2026
OPEN DERBY PAYOUT INCLUDES ALL DIVISIONS	\$982,745	\$1,148,766
NON PRO DERBY PAYOUT INCLUDES ALL DIVISIONS	\$571,246	\$682,754
TOTAL DERBY PAYOUT INCLUDES FREESTYLE REINING	\$1,553,991	\$1,851,917
ANCILLARY PAYOUT INCLUDES 8 & UP	\$115,376	\$145,458
NAAC PAYOUT		\$105,793
TOTAL PAYOUT	\$1.69 MILLION	\$2.1 MILLION





VISIBILITY EARNED. GROWTH ACCELERATED.

Social media delivered the **strongest digital performance in NRHA Derby® history**, generating **6.9 million content views, 169,000+ engagements, and 7,286 new followers** during the two-week event. Video remained the primary driver of audience growth, introducing **new fans to the sport** while increasing engagement across every major platform.

Instagram led all platforms in growth, **increasing reach by 184%, engagement by 212%, and followers by 347%**, while Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube also delivered significant gains. Overall, the Derby **more than doubled audience growth over 2025**, reinforcing social media as one of the National Reining Horse Association's most effective tools for expanding awareness, engaging fans, and growing the sport.

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REACH DELIVERED. GROWTH MEASURED

FACEBOOK

Views: 3.5 million (+34.6%)

Viewers: 505.7k

Content Interactions: 92.7k (+36.9%)

Link Clicks: 5.4k (+54.3%)

Visits: 81.6k (+45.7%)

Follows: 3.1k (+106.7%)

INSTAGRAM

Views: 3.1 million

Reach: 285.5k (+183.8%)

Content Interactions: 76.3k (+211.8%)

Link Clicks: 148 (+19.4%)

Visits: 8.3k (+130.6%)

Follows: 2.1k (+346.8%)

TIKTOK

Video Views: 319.5k (+89.3%)

Reached Audience: 309.3k (+95.3%)

Profile Views: 3,113 (+42.6%)

Likes: 38,955 (+77.5%)

Shares: 2,288 (+123%)

Comments: 430 (+34%)

New Followers: 2,086 (+55.1%)

YOUTUBE

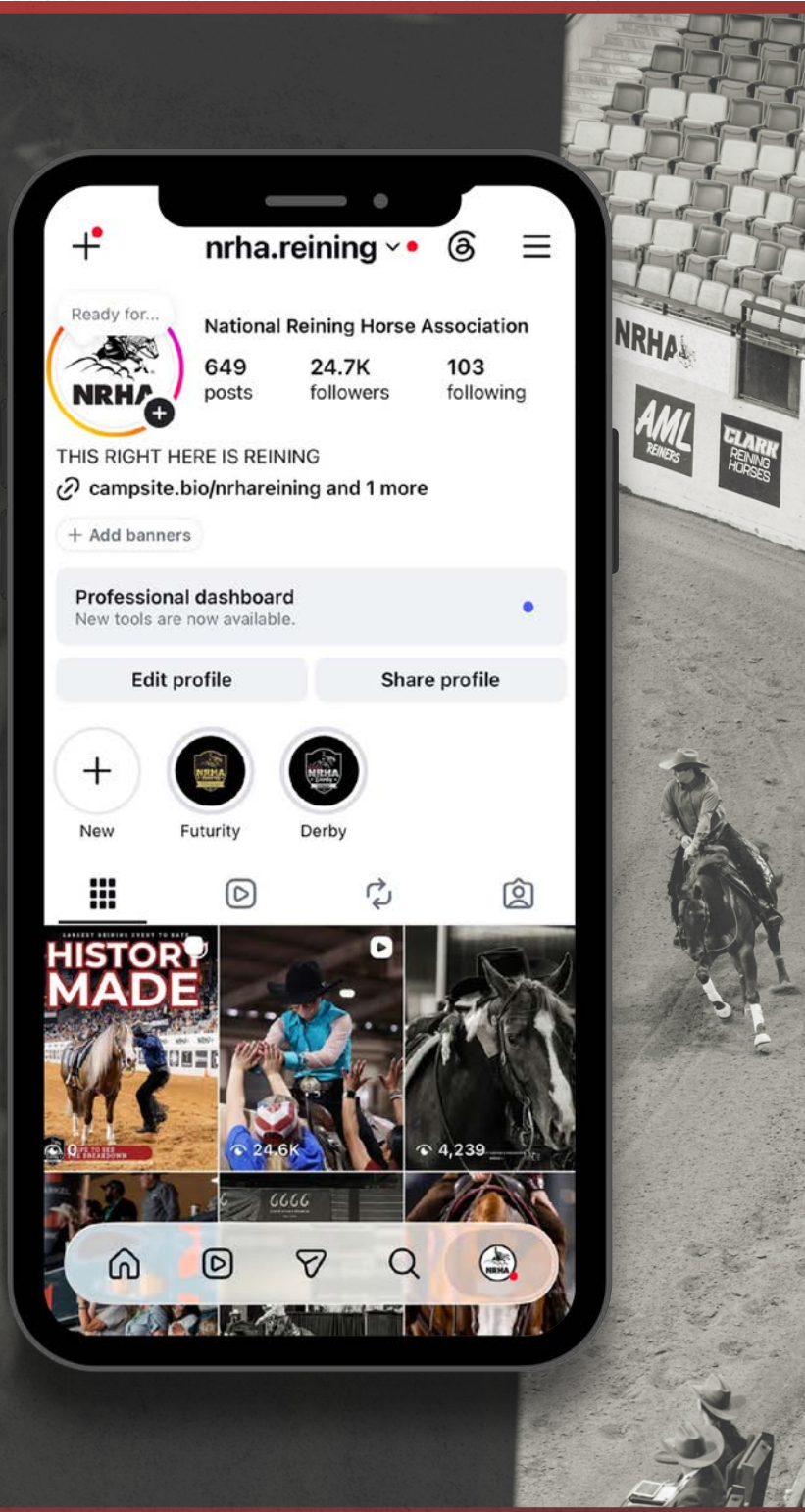
41.3K Total Views

2.0K Hours of Watch Time

+321 New Subscribers

481.5K Impressions

4.6% CTR (industry average: 4-5%)



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REACH DELIVERED. GROWTH MEASURED

BIGGEST WINNERS

Nearly 7 million content views generated during the two-week event.

7,286 new followers acquired across Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.

169,000+ engagements across Facebook and Instagram.

Instagram emerged as the fastest-growing platform:

- Reach increased **184%**
- Interactions increased **212%**
- Followers increased **347%**

TikTok continued strong momentum:

- Video views increased **89%**
- Shares increased **123%**
- Audience reached nearly **310,000 users**

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WHERE ATTENDANCE WAS IMPACTFUL.

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

14,883

EXHIBITOR/VIP

11,960

TICKETS SOLD

2,123

HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS

1,536

RV NIGHTS

2,481

TOTAL NIGHTS

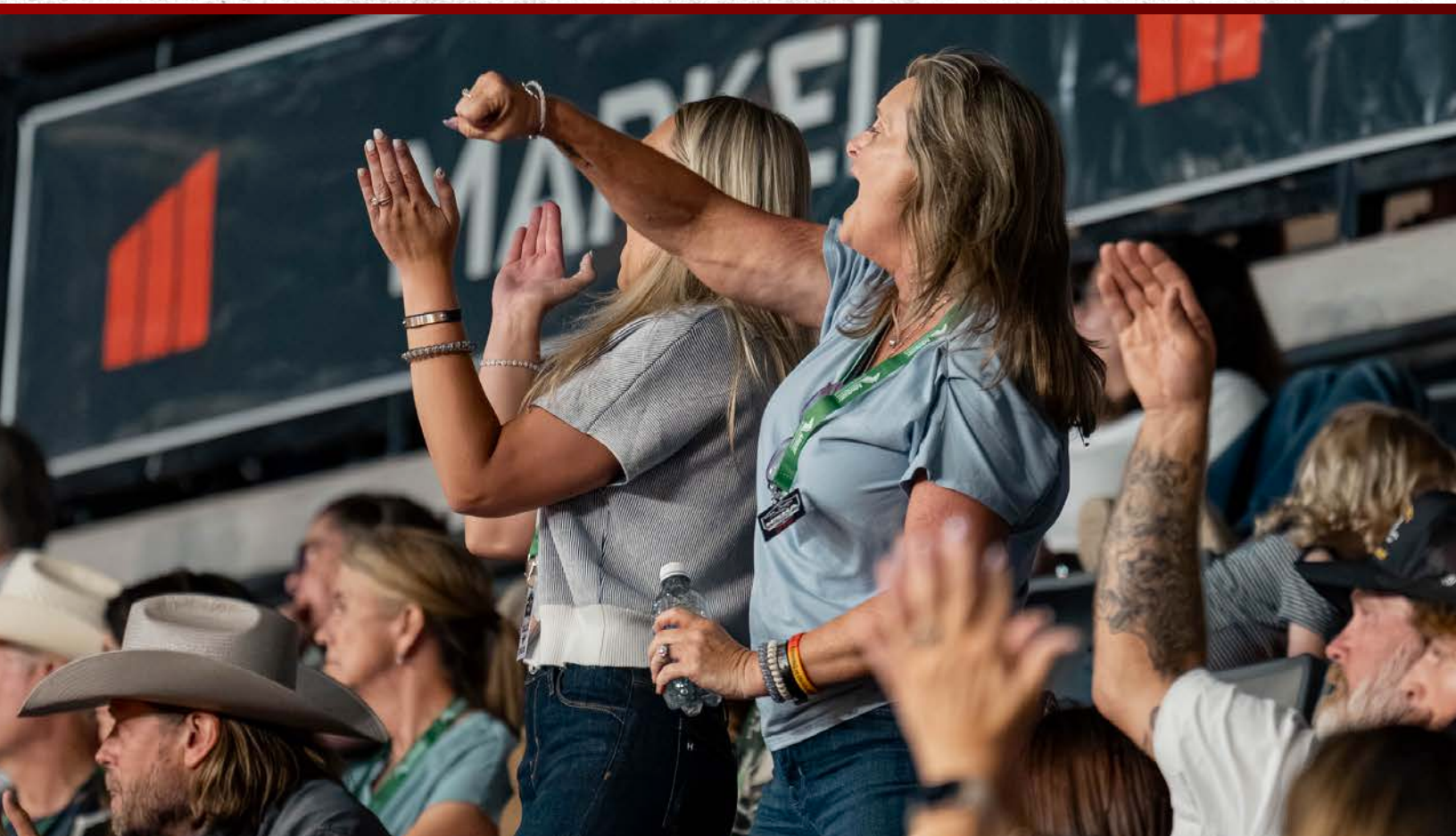
4,017

\$8.8M

ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$4.5M

DIRECT SPENDING



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LIVE COVERAGE. LASTING IMPACT.

The 2026 6666 NRHA Derby® presented by Markel was broadcast via the ThorSport Livestream, accessible directly through the **NRHA Derby website**, delivering seamless, **real-time coverage** to **viewers around the world**. This global livestream extended the reach of the event far beyond the arena, allowing fans, competitors, and industry stakeholders worldwide to engage with premier reining competition as it unfolded.

BIGGEST WINNERS

Nearly 450,000 Livestream Views - a substantial audience for a niche equine sport, especially over a 12-day event.

More than 206,000 unique viewers. That means nearly **half of all viewers came from unique individuals**, indicating the audience wasn't just a small group watching repeatedly - it reached over 200,000 different people.

The livestream achieved **global reach**. More than **79 unique regions** are represented in the viewership - an excellent display of **NRHA's international footprint**.

Approximately 78,063 hours of watch time.

Championship Saturday remains the highest viewed day with 43,450 views, 65,100 impressions and 19,376 unique viewers - demonstrating a strong interest in the event's marquee competition.

More than 99% of livestream traffic occurred on NRHADerby.com, reinforcing the value of NRHA's owned digital platforms.

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RUN GUESS: INTERACTIVE FINALS EXPERIENCE



Run Guess, powered by Spooks Gotta Whiz, is an interactive fan game that puts reining enthusiasts in the judge's chair, allowing them to predict scores in real time during the **2026 Level 4 Non Pro Finals** and the **Level 4 Open Finals**. Players earned points for accurate score predictions, with **prizes awarded to the top three participants at the conclusion of each finals.**

Fans across the **Oklahoma City Fairgrounds—and worldwide via the ThorSport Livestream—played along**, driving meaningful in-venue and digital engagement. On a peak night at a premier western event, **Run Guess typically attracts 100–250 players; during the NRHA Derby[®], participation exceeded 450 players**, demonstrating exceptional fan interaction at scale.

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For sponsorship opportunities, please contact Christy Landwehr
at clandwehr@nrha.com or (405)946-7400 x 122.

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MEDIA PARTNERS





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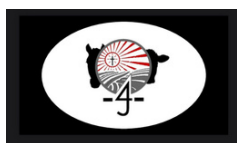
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L4 OPEN CHAMPION: 6666 RANCH/MARKEL
L4 OPEN RESERVE CHAMPION: OO7 – VARGO RANCH
L1 NON PRO CHAMPION: OXBOW RANCH
L2 NON PRO CHAMPION: HAALA DENIM
L4 NON PRO CHAMPION: CLASSIC CANYON RANCH
L1 NON PRO RESERVE CHAMPION: L & W EQUINE, LLC
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MASTERS NON PRO CHAMPION: C&L INSPECTION

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- MICHELLE & TIM PAULSEN - NON PRO LEVEL 1
- SCHREIBER CORPORATION - OPEN PRIME TIME
- KEVIN TRUAX - OPEN & NON PRO PRIME TIME



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