

Methane Rangers, Dirt Demons Bring Home National Gas Rodeo Championship Trophies

Annual competition promotes the skills and teamwork of those working in the natural gas delivery industry and provides elite gas crews from across the U.S. an opportunity to showcase their unique industry skills in a series of competitive events.

Racine, Wis., September 30th, 2019

The [2019 National Gas Rodeo](#), organized by MEA Energy Association and sponsored in part by [CASE Construction Equipment](#), held its annual two- and four-person team championship events September 19th - 21st in Independence, Missouri.



The 2019 overall Rodeo champions in the two-person category were the *Methane Rangers* (Jason Ficke, Jimmy Barnard, Kevin Fahnestock [alternate]) of Spire Missouri East. Last year's champions, *Lil' Gashouse Gang* (Stephen Bouse, Barry Hicks, Jeff Bush [alternate]) also from Spire Missouri East took second place, while *The Legends* (Derrick Hogland, Daniel Young, Britt Taunton [alternate], Brett Goggans [alternate]) from Spire Alabama took third place.

The four-person champions for 2019 were the *Dirt Demons* (James Grofe, Cody Hammond, Carl Monda, Devron Rampani, Kyle Witt [alternate]) from Spire Missouri East. Last year's champions, *Gashouse Gang* (Dakota Connell, Aaron Witt, Jon Loughary, Brandon Vickery, Don Jackson [alternate]) — also from Spire Missouri East — took second place, and the *Methane Maniacs* (Zachary Reis, Dale Stallmann, Jim Tylka, Keith Huschle, Josh Bingheim [alternate]) of Ameren Illinois took third.

Native Gas (Sandy Beyale, Darrell Bighorse, Korwin Kinlicheenie, Seth Brown) from Navajo Tribal Authority, Arizona received the Spirit of the Rodeo Award for representing the true spirit of the National Gas Rodeo with their exemplary sportsmanship.

Now in its 29th year, the National Gas Rodeo draws teams from utility companies, unions, contractors, and community colleges across the United States and featured 58 teams (35 two-person teams and 23 four-person teams). The two- and four-person teams compete in various skill-based events focused on safe and time-efficient performance — including a pipe-cutting contest, a meter set, a service installation and a hand-digging contest. The top 12 teams in those events then competed in a timed relay event featuring heavy equipment and hand/tool skills to determine the final winner.

“Each year, this competition continues to get more intense,” says Ed Brenton, product marketing manager, CASE Construction Equipment. “This year hundreds of spectators gathered to see multiple world records broken during the qualifying events, and several new teams inching up the standings board. CASE is proud to continue its sponsorship of this unique and exciting event.”

The event was further supported by equipment and personnel from CASE dealer [Victor L. Phillips Company](#).

The National Gas Rodeo is a program of MEA. The rodeo is made possible through the premier level support of CASE Construction, Centuri, K.R. Swerdfeger Construction, Inc. and Mustang Manufacturing. Individual events were sponsored by Altec, Honeywell, IBEW Local 304, Parker Stockstill Construction and US Infrastructure Company (USIC). This year's National Gas Rodeo was hosted by Spire.



For more information on the Rodeo, and to find out how to enter the competition, visit nationalgasrodeo.org.

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For more information, contact:

Bill Elverman
262.757.5803
bill@pkamar.com

Jessica Klein
262.221.5508
Jessica.klein@casece.com

Brandon Jaynes
219.263.8981
brandon@pkamar.com