

National Gas Rodeo Crowns 2026 Champion Teams

Gas Godz, representing Pacific Gas and Electric, and Cone Smashers, representing Fabick Cat, are the 2026 National Gas Rodeo Overall Champions.

BLOOMINGTON, MN, UNITED STATES, September 29, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Natural gas professionals from across the country put their skills, precision, safety knowledge, and teamwork to the test at the 2026 National Gas Rodeo & Expo earlier this month. A total of 56 teams representing 14 states competed in this year's event at Turfway Park in Florence, Kentucky.

In the four-person division, the Gas Godz, team #410, representing Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), earned the overall championship, ending the three-year winning streak of the reigning champions. Team members included Captain Santos Sandoval, Richard Thomason, Kyle Balestrieri, and Alex Mena.

In the two-person division, the Cone Smashers, team #205, representing Fabick Cat, earned the overall championship. The team included Captain Barry Hicks, Stephen Bouse, and alternate Miguel Ochoa.



Cone Smashers, representing Fabick Cat



Gas Godz, representing Pacific Gas and Electric

“The National Gas Rodeo gives these professionals an opportunity to demonstrate the skills they use every day to safely and reliably serve their communities,” said Stacey Bonine of MEA Energy Association. “What makes the competition especially meaningful is the pride the teams take in their work and in representing their companies. You see tremendous skill on the field, but you also see teamwork, camaraderie, and respect among competitors.”



Powered by MEA Energy Association (MEA), the National Gas Rodeo promotes teamwork and pride in the natural gas industry through competition centered on safe and efficient job-related skills.

This year, 32 two-person teams and 24 four-person teams competed in qualifying events that challenged participants to safely and efficiently complete tasks including installing a service line, manually excavating a pit, cutting six-inch metal pipe, and assembling a meter set.

The top 10 teams in each division advanced to the relay, a multi-step event requiring competitors to combine technical ability, communication, speed, and precision. Tasks included operating a utility truck with a trailer and carefully maneuvering an egg using a backhoe bucket.

Teams often spend months preparing for the National Gas Rodeo, dedicating countless hours to practicing events, refining strategies, and building teamwork. Many participating utilities also host in-house rodeos, where employees compete for the opportunity to represent their company at the national competition.

“The hours of preparation behind these performances are remarkable,” Bonine said. “But the Rodeo is about more than who finishes with the fastest time. It celebrates the expertise of the people working in the natural gas industry and gives them an opportunity to learn from one another, build relationships, and take pride in their profession.”

For the third and final year, Duke Energy and Piedmont Natural Gas served as host utilities for the National Gas Rodeo at Turfway Park.

“An event of this size simply would not happen without an extraordinary group of partners and volunteers,” Bonine said. “We are incredibly grateful to Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas, Turfway Park, our sponsors, the National Gas Rodeo Committee, and the many volunteers who gave their time and expertise to create an outstanding experience for our competitors and their families.”

For those unable to attend in person, the competition was livestreamed allowing colleagues,

friends, family, and other natural gas professionals to follow the action.

The National Gas Rodeo Committee provides guidance and support for the planning and execution of the competition. Committee members help define events, rules, and schedules; prepare the competition site; and serve as judges throughout the Rodeo.

2026 NATIONAL GAS RODEO OVERALL CHAMPIONS:

Two-Person Field

- 1st Place: Cone Smashers (team #205) from Fabick Cat | Captain: Barry Hicks | Stephen Bouse | Alternate: Miguel Ochoa
- 2nd Place: The Duke Boys (team #228) from Duke Energy | Captain: Hunter Barrons | Trevor Barrons | Alternate: Ryan Regenstein
- 3rd Place: Combustion Cowboys (team #204) from Duke Energy | Captain: Charles Troxell | Brandon Oldendick | Alternate: Wyatt Blackburn

Four-Person Field

- 1st Place: Gas Godz (team #410) from Pacific Gas and Electric | Captain: Santos Sandoval | Richard Thomason | Kyle Balestrieri | Alex Mena
- 2nd Place: Mad Tappers (team #416) from City Utilities of Springfield | Captain: Jordan Crockett | Heath Linders | Casey Wallace | Dorian Miller
- 3rd Place: Gas Masters (team 412) from Duke Energy | Captain: Cameron Smith | Jamie Exum | Cody Adamson | Dakota Boatwright | Alternate: Donald Latimore

FASTEST TIMES: Qualifying Events and Relay

Two-Person Field

- Meter Set: Combustion Cowboys (team #204) from Duke Energy
- Pipe Cut: The Duke Boys (team #228) from Duke Energy
- Service Install: The Duke Boys (team #228) from Duke Energy
- Hand Dig: Not For Hire (team #223) from CPS Energy
- Relay: Cone Smashers (team #205) from Fabick Cat

Four-Person Field

- Meter Set: Mad Tappers (team #416) from City Utilities of Springfield
- Pipe Cut: Gas Masters (team #412) from Duke Energy
- Service Install: Gas Godz (team #410) from Pacific Gas and Electric
- Hand Dig: Gas Masters (team #412) from Duke Energy
- Relay: All Gas No Brakes (team #402) from CPS Energy

The Gas Masters from Duke Energy - Cameron Smith (Captain), Jamie Exum, Cody Adamson, Dakota Boatwright, and Donald Latimore received the Spirit of the Rodeo Award. When unexpected circumstances left a team from another company without equipment, the Gas Masters stepped up and shared their own. Their selflessness, sportsmanship, and camaraderie truly embody the spirit of the National Gas Rodeo and the natural gas industry.

Scott Snedden with Ameren Illinois was the winner of the Caterpillar Mystery Event. Cornhole team Skunk City won the Milwaukee Tool Cornhole Tournament, with fellow cornhole team Smells Like Money taking second place. Dylan Gillespie with San Diego Gas & Electric won a PlayStation 5 for guessing correctly how far the natural gas pipeline inspection gauge, also known as a PIG, would fly.

6" Delivery from Xcel Energy won the contest for favorite team shirt and the charity of their choice will receive a \$1,000 donation. Gas Godz of Pacific Gas & Electric came in at second place and the charity of their choice will receive a \$500 donation.

The Rodeo is made possible through the top-level energizing support of sponsor MRC Global, essential sponsorship by CPS Energy and Kerotest, and premier support by Badger, Caterpillar, Milwaukee Tool, Southeast Connections, Studson, and Vimocity.

Learn more about the National Gas Rodeo & Expo at [NationalGasRodeo.org](https://www.nationalgasrodeo.org).

About MEA Energy Association:

MEA serves the people who deliver electricity and natural gas to homes and businesses. Founded in 1905 by distribution utilities, MEA was created to improve safety and operational efficiency across the energy industry. That mission continues today through education, leadership development, and professional connections. Energy delivery companies, contractors, and suppliers across the country rely on MEA for workforce development, technical education, and networking opportunities. MEA provides in-person learning opportunities, webinars, more than 400 online technical courses, safety assessments, evaluator training, operator qualification (OQ) compliance tools, and leadership development programs that support professionals at every stage of their careers—from the field to the executive suite.

Stacey Bonine
MEA Energy Association
+1 651-289-9600

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