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LAWSUIT; STAR CALF ROPERS RIGGED LUCRATIVE RODEO AT AT&T STADIUM

BY RYAN OSBORNE

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Two star calf ropers are accused of rigging a lucrative rodeo at AT&T Stadium last year to guarantee themselves a cut of a possible \$1 million prize, according to a lawsuit filed Tuesday in Tarrant County civil court. Tuf Cooper, 26, a three-time world champion from Decatur, and Timber Moore, 30, the current top-ranked roper in the world, are being sued by RFD-TV Events, which promoted and hosted The American Rodeo in Arlington on March 1, 2015.

The one-day event offered prizes of \$100,000 for winners of seven competitions. But it also featured a bonus reward for cowboys who qualified for the event rather than being invited.

A qualifier was eligible to earn up to \$1 million from a “side pot” for winning any of the seven events, according to the lawsuit.

RFD-TV alleged that Cooper and Moore, who were invited to the tie-down roping competition, agreed with Reese Riemer, a qualifier, to “intentionally perform poorly” so that Riemer would have a chance to win the bigger prize.

In exchange for the “fix,” according to the lawsuit, Riemer would split his winnings with Cooper and Moore. Another competitor declined to participate in “the scheme,” the lawsuit says.

The cowboys, according to the lawsuit, agreed to carry out the plan in the finals of the competition after the field had been cut from 17 ropers to four.

Riemer ended up winning the event, with Cooper finishing second and Moore finishing third.

\$517,000

The prize won by calf roper Reese Riemer, who allegedly agreed to Tuf Cooper and Timber Moore, according to a lawsuit filed Tuesday.

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As a result, the lawsuit says, Riemer won \$100,000 for first place and \$417,000 as part of the bonus reward available to qualifiers. He received only a share of the \$1 million bonus because two other qualifiers also won events.

The rodeo, according to the lawsuit, soon “learned of the scheme devised by Riemer, Cooper and Moore” and stopped payment on Riemer’s winning check of \$517,000.

Cooper, though, “obtained and holds money and other assets” earned at the rodeo, the lawsuit says. He would have earned \$25,000 for finishing in second place, according to the competition rules.

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