

1956 Rodeo To Be Biggest In County History

Prize Money To Top \$7,500 In 2-Day Fete

The Douglas County Rodeo Assn. has yet to celebrate its second birthday, but the youngsters are getting on the biggest rodeo in county history this weekend.

Prizes totaling \$7,500 will go to winning cowboys. The official prize registered with the Rodeo Cowboys' Assn. is \$4,000. Entry fees boost the total.

Association members here estimate the expense of putting on the two-day show will run close to \$19,000. They're bringing in top entertainment acts, offering the prize money, setting up special concessions and distributing 3,000 programs free of charge. The list continues. It includes the securing of rodeo stock from Christiansen Bros. in Eugene.

The Lane County company furnishes stock to most of the rodeos in the northwest, including the Pendleton Roundup.

The DCR organized a year ago February. It took over sponsorship of the rodeo from the Douglas County Sheriff's posse.

Members of the DCR are: The Roseburg Lions Club, the Roseburg Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Douglas County Mounted Sheriff's posse.

The posse works primarily to make sure the rodeo events are tops. The Lions handle food concessions during the show and the Jaycees supervise the other rodeo festivities. The division of duties appears to work quite smoothly, although the long range planning takes hours and hours, according to association President Robert Tripodi.

Other association officers are Al Clute, vice president; Vondis Miller, secretary; and Ivan Pickens, treasurer.

Senate Hearing Slated On Water Laws Issue

WASHINGTON — A Senate Interior Committee hearing Friday was set for next Friday on a proposed amendment to a bill to require federal compliance with state water laws.

The amendment, by Sen. Neuberger (D-Ore.), would provide for suspension of Federal Power Commission licenses for dam construction projects where state law has not been met.

The amendment was prompted by controversy over Pelton Dam on Oregon's Deschutes River for which the commission has issued a license to Portland General Electric Co. despite the objections of state agencies.

Neuberger said testimony would be presented at the hearing by the utility and various conservation groups, including the Save the Deschutes Committee which was set up to oppose the Pelton Dam project.



HEAD AND HEALS—This team roping duo looks like a sure fire winner. Both Sherman Sullins (left) and Sonny Turman (right) will be on hand Saturday and Sunday to boost their RCA standings. (DeVere Helfrich).

Happy Clowns Guard The Lives Of Brahma Bull Riders Expertly

Two clowns, proficient in their profession of humor, could well be the stars of the Douglas County Rodeo.

They are Sherman Crane and West Curtis. Among the bravest men in rodeo, their jobs are easily the most dangerous. Spectators may watch them with amusement through a long performance, but when the casual observer's clear out the arena for the bull riding event, the observer begins to appreciate the rodeo clowns' importance.

Brahma bulls, unlike the other animals in rodeo, hold a permanent grudge against humans. After they have thrown their rider, many will try to gore him.

Pickup men, used to help the rider down in bronc riding, are of little value in bull riding. The bulls won't let the horses get close enough.

It's up to the clowns to move in on foot and distract the bull to give the rider a chance to dismount and reach safety. If a contestant is thrown and injured, they must get the bull off of him and keep it busy until the cowboy is rescued.

The bulls are all individuals and no two react alike. To do their job well—and to keep from being badly mauled—the clowns must not only know the general fighting characteristics of the breed but also the peculiarities of hundreds of bulls.

But in spite of their hazardous work, most of them are still clowns at heart and they rarely stop when

the life-saving part of their work is over. They'll taunt the bull and let him pass tantalizing close, playing him till the bull tires or turns away.

Even this aspect of their work, apparently done just for the crowd, has its purpose. The bulls have good memories and the next time this particular brahma tows its rider, he'll go first for the familiar figure in the ridiculous striped shirt and baggy pants. And that's precisely why the clown is there.

Congress Asked To Curb 'Extravagant' Spending

WASHINGTON — Rep. Reuss (D-Wis.) asked Congress Monday to curb reported "extravagant" spending abroad by its globe-trotting committees.

Reuss introduced a bill which would deny overseas congressional travelers the privilege they now enjoy of spending "counterpart funds" virtually without limit or accountability.

These funds are foreign currencies received by the United States in exchange for U.S. economic or military aid. Such funds are made available for spending by congressmen on official trips. Reuss said "over a fourth of the members of Congress... travel abroad yearly in pursuit of congressional business, spending several millions of dollars of funds allocated to them by the Congress."

Rodeo Champs Split \$24,000 During 1955

The eight rodeo champions and runners-up in the events split \$24,000 between them for 1955. Championships are declared in saddle bronc, bareback, bull riding, calf roping, steer wrestling, team roping, steer roping, and all-around cowboy.

The Rodeo Cowboys' Assn.'s point award system, through board of directors' action in January, guarantees a total of \$3,000 to each champion. The purse in the seven events is split among the winner and the three runners-up on the basis of 40%, 30%, 20 percent and 10 percent. Champion in each event will receive \$1,200, cash from the association. One-fifth share, \$3,000, will go to the All-Around Cowboy.

The \$24,000 purse is made up from the \$25.00 fee each rodeo pays as a point award member, from cash donations to the P.A. system, and from association funds.

The RCA Point Award System credits one point for each dollar won in competition at approved rodeos in each of the seven events named above. To qualify for all-around cowboy the contestant must win points in two or more of the seven events. Results from the five to 100 rodeos over the U.S. and Canada are tabulated in the RCA office in Denver. Each contestant is credited with one point for each dollar won in each event. The standings are published each issue in Rodeo Sports News, and the leading point winner after all rodeo results are in for the year on December 31 is named world champion of the event. The top winner in two or more of the designated events at the end of the year is named world champion all-around cowboy.

In addition to cash, the RCA awards each winner a trophy saddle and belt buckle; each year most of the saddles are given to the RCA through donors to the P.A. Other awards to champions are carried in each issue of the RCA publication under the Point Award Donor's list.

Sewing Contest Winner Returns To Portland

PORTLAND — Mrs. Florence Doss, winner of the \$25,000 first prize in the Singer sewing contest in New York recently, returned to her Portland home Monday night.

She is the latest in a series of Portland women who have won national awards. A few weeks ago, Mrs. Chris Maletis was named Mrs. America in the annual contest at Orlando, Fla.

Rodeo Stars

Cowboys competing for prize money in the 1956 Douglas County Rodeo make a real "Who's Who" listing. All are members of the Rodeo Cowboys' Assn. Many are national champions.

The list of entrants released by the Douglas County Rodeo Assn. may be expanded by late entries. As announced, entrants are:

Bill Linderman — RCA president from Walla Walla, Washington. Named All Around Cowboy in the nation in 1953.

Eddie Akridge — World champion bareback rider last year from Beaver, Okla. Also world champ in 1953 and 1954. He'll compete in bareback, saddle bronc and bull riding.

Lex Connolly — RCA vice president from Fresno, Calif. Currently, a top bull-dogging expert, he will calf rope, steer wrestle and team rope.

Tuffy Federer — In the top 10 in 1955 in saddle bronc, this Cheyenne, Wyo., man will display his saddle bronc skill at the rodeo.

Ross Dollarhide — A Lakeview resident, he was 1952 West Coast Bulldog champ. He's entered in steer wrestling, saddle bronc, calf rope and team rope.

Jackie Middleton — From Redding, Calif., he'll compete in bare back and bull riding.

Dean Oliver — World champion calf roping in 1955, he lives in Boise, Idaho. He has entered the calf roping division.

Jackie Wright — Dayville resident Wright was a national favorite in 1955. He was fourth nationally in saddle bronc and fifth in bareback riding. He has entered both divisions here.

Marvin Cardin — From Burns, he'll participate in bareback and saddle bronc divisions.

Don Toelle — Another Burns resident, Toelle was "aird nationally" in saddle bronc last year. He's listed for saddle bronc and steer wrestling.

George Menkenmaier — This Burns cowpoke is tops nationally thus far in 1956 in the saddle bronc division. He'll try to boost his points and earnings in Roseburg Saturday and Sunday.

Andy Dawcotte — From Phoenix, Ariz., he was champion calf roping in Canada last year. He's entered calf roping and team roping here.

Manuel Enos — From Livermore, Calif., he'll saddle bronc, bareback ride and bulldog.

Bruce Koker — Fifth nationally in bull riding in 1955, he is from Sutherland, Neb. He has entered the bull riding division.

Bill Kunkle — This Portland man was Christiansen Bros. Show Champ in 1955. He's entered bareback, saddle bronc and steer wrestling divisions.

Gene Miles — He has entered saddle bronc and bulldogging. He is from Portland.

Glenn Holm — This Blackfoot, Idaho, man has entered in every division.

Sunny Turman — A 1948 West Coast bareback champion, he comes from John Day. He'll compete in saddle bronc, bareback riding, calf roping and team roping.

Leo Tharn — From Wilderville, he'll calf rope and team rope.

Richard Vredenberg — A Douglas County man, from Myrtle Creek, he will calf rope and team rope.

Arlis Curtis — A resident of Wilson, Wyo., Curtis will saddle bronc and bareback.

Sherman Sullins — All Around Cowboy at the Cow Palace in San Francisco last year, Sullins comes from San Diego. He'll calf rope, team rope and steer wrestle.

UNTIE MAN

An arena employee who, after the flagman has signalled that a tie has qualified, releases the calf or steer from both the rode and the pigging string. Untie men usually work in pairs.

Rodeo is no longer a strictly western sport. Last year there were 56 RCA-approved rodeos west of the Mississippi and more rodeos in New York than in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, South

Way To Determine National Rodeo Champion Established By Association

One of the problems that plagued rodeo from the beginning was how to determine a national champion. Although rodeo is now some 80 years old, the problem wasn't completely solved until as recently as 10 years ago.

In 1945 the Rodeo Cowboys' Assn., Inc., established their point award system, by which each cowboy is given one point for every dollar won at a professional rodeo approved by the RCA.

Although the method sounds simple it was years in developing. In the old days cowboys were considered champions if they won at Cheyenne, and later, if they won both at Cheyenne and Pendleton. With the coming of larger purses in the big eastern cities, however, the faults of this method soon became apparent.

Competition was as tough and a cowboy could win more in the eastern rodeos than at the old well-established western ones. And, of course, there was always the possibility that a top hand would have a better record of winnings through the year than the Cheyenne winner, and be prevented by injuries from competing at Cheyenne or Pendleton.

Other rodeos picked up championship label in their advertising, and for a while the sport was threatened with being as over populated with world's champs as wrestling is today.

In 1929, the Rodeo Assn. of America, an organization of rodeo managements, instituted a point award system similar to that now used by the RCA, and named world's champions for all around cowboy and for each competitive event. The system came in for a certain amount of criticism, however, since it was based on tabulations only from Rodeo Association rodeos, which were a small minority of those worked each year by most of the top cowboys.

The RAA system is still followed and each year the International Rodeo Assn., a successor organization of management, still names its champions. Recognizing that only the RCA system represents all professional rodeos, the IRA recently dropped the title "World" champion, however.

Giving points for the money won is the only practical method of determining a champion in rodeo, where there are no leagues, teams or playoffs. Other methods have been considered from time to time but were discarded as being unrealistic.

One such method was counting

the average total times in timed events and the total number of points marked to each contestant by the judges of the riding events. The major objection to this method is that there is a great variation in the amount of heat start given the stock in timed events, which usually depends principally on the size of the arena. Weather conditions also make a big difference.

There are similar problems in the riding events. For example, at the first rodeos in the spring and at the first performances of large rodeos during the season, the stock is fresher and harder to ride. Some horses won't buck as well under strange lights as they will in the daytime, and with other horses it's vice versa.

Answer Simple — The answer was reasonable, simple and dependable on a national scale. The best man at any rodeo is the man who wins the most money. It is as logical that the man who wins the most money in an event at several rodeos through the year is the best man in that event that year.

That is exactly how the system works out in practice. Last year, Don McLaughlin, who won the 1954 world's calf roping champion-

ship, lost his prized roping horse in a highway accident early in the spring and won no money for the rest of the season. But he had piled up a big enough lead by the end of February that a ewas never overtaken.

On the other hand, all-around champion, Buck Rutherford, and his friend, Eddie Akridge, were engaged in a tooth and nail battle for the bareback riding championship all through the season. First one would edge ahead of the other, then in the next semi-monthly posting of the standings, their positions would be reversed.

The competition wasn't settled until the last rodeo of the year at Kingman, Ariz. Akridge, who was 104 points behind, won \$11 more than Rutherford and took the championship.

You'll still see rodeos all over the country billed as "World Championships." They have every right by the rules, strictly interpreted, to be called that. For if a rodeo has the approval of the Rodeo Cowboys' Assn., every dollar of prize money won at it will count in the race for the world's championship. And no rodeo is big enough that a man can win a world's championship at that rodeo alone.



CLOSE SHAVE—Comedian Wes Curtis doesn't clown all the time. He makes sure brahma bulls don't pulverize cowboys who try to ride them. Above, Curtis plays fasties with a brahma.



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