



EVEN THE BEST have a tough time in the sport of saddle bronc riding, one of the traditional events to be seen at this year's Douglas County Rodeo. Here Casey Tibbs, one of the immortals of the rodeo arena, makes painful preparations to hit the ground after being flung from Miss K-B, one of the horses from the Ray Kohrs' string.

Excitement Part Of Rodeo

Rodeo — pitting athlete against animal—combines the color of fiesta with the primal thrill of true physical danger to produce a

sport of unmatched excitement. The sport which takes its name from the Spanish word for "round-up" had its beginning on the ranges of California, the southwest and Mexico. Mexican vaqueros were the first to carry their strenuous riding and roping skills from long, hard days on the range into leisure time competition with their compadres. The American cowboy who rode into the western scene hard on the heels of the vaquero was

just as eager to prove his superiority on an unbroken horse or in moving cattle.

The cowboys first competed among themselves in their own corral, but soon began challenging hands from the next ranch. Word that men from neighboring ranches would compete with rope and horses attracted people from miles around to cheer on their favorites. Some of the wild bucking horses became as well known as the cowboys who rode them.

Over 3,000 professional cowboys now compete annually in more than 500 rodeos held throughout the year in small towns and large cities in every part of the country by the Rodeo Cowboys Association. Top cowhands travel much of the RCA circuit, paying individual entry fees which may run into several thousands of dollars during the year. For each event the cowboy pays a separate entry fee, which is added to the prizes established by the local rodeo management. When he loses—sometimes only by a fraction of a point or second or an unlucky accident—the cowboy slaps the dust out of his Levi's and tries again.

Rodeo is an organized sport today, but the men in high-heeled boots and big hats who compete for cash prizes and glory are direct heirs of a living history that is as American as Plymouth Rock and Bunker Hill.



CECIL SWAGGART is more famous for his rodeo work than is his home town, Ritter, Ore.

In 1945 the Rodeo Cowboys' Association, 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 R. C. A. 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.

More Money in East
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



RALPH BUELL is reigning bareback bronc world champion. He'll be here.



LOUIE TORRICELLAS is a Eugene competitor due at Fairgrounds.

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 overpopulated with world's champs as wrestling is today.

In 1929, the Rodeo Association of America, an organization of rodeo managements, instituted a point award system similar to that now used by the R. C. A. 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.

Title Dropped
The R. A. A. system is still followed and each year the International Rodeo Association, a successor organization of management, still names its champions. Recognizing that only the R. C. A. system represents all professional rodeos, the I. R. A. recently dropped the title "World's" 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 count-



GENE MILES of Eugene will be back in Roseburg for his 16th rodeo performance.



HARRY CHARTERS of Melba, Ore., was world steer wrestling champ in 1959.

ing 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 head 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. 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.

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FAINTS DURING MUSICAL

NEW YORK (UPI) — Comedian Sid Caesar, who plays seven roles in the Broadway musical "Little Me," fainted Wednesday night during the show's first act.

Exhaustion was blamed by a doctor who examined Caesar. He rested backstage, then was taken to his Long Island home.

The curtain, rung down when Caesar collapsed, went up eight minutes later and the musical continued with understudy Mickey Deems playing Caesar's parts. Caesar was expected to be back on stage tonight.

Murderous Bulls Offer Many Thrills

In India, the land of their origin, Brahmas bulls are considered sacred and roam unmolested through village streets and market places. In rodeo the big beasts are treated with great respect but they are considered more devil than divine.

Actually the Brahmas used in modern rodeo are crossbred and not pure strain that dwells in docile domestication in the Asian nation. And they are more than thousands of miles away from their ancestors in the difference in their disposition.

Rodeo Brahmas are murderous. In spite of their hulking size, they are terrifically fast and agile. Not satisfied with merely throwing their rider, they will try to run him down, gore him and trample him. They are fast, powerful and crafty buckers.

Rope Hold Only
The bull rider has the least to hold onto of any rodeo rider: a simple rope wrapped around the animal. There can be no knots or hitches in it for the rope must fall off when the ride is completed. He may wrap the rope around his hand but few bull riders wrap it tightly. There is no more terrifying sight in rodeo than that of a bull rider with his hand caught in the rigging being dragged helplessly around the arena.

The ride is for eight seconds and

the winners are decided as they are in the bronc riding events. Two cowboy judges, watching from opposite sides of the bull, mark the ride from 1 to 20 points and the animal from 65 to 85 points. The bull rope has a bell fastened to it that hangs below the animal's belly to help encourage it to buck as well as the flank-strap used in bronc riding that is pulled tight as the bull leaves the chute.

You'll see fewer cowboys make qualified rides on Brahmas than you will on the brones—proof of the big brutes' versatility in bucking. Then spin, twist, pitch and kick. If the rider gets too far forward, they'll hook up at him with their horns. If he gets too far back they'll give a mighty heave with their powerful hind quarters that usually sends him flying.

Free Re-ride
If the cowboy is knocked off at the chute or if the bull falls with him he is entitled to a re-ride. If the flank strap comes off he gets a re-ride on the same bull. The rider is disqualified if he uses sharp spurs, touches the bull with his free hand or is bucked off.

Bull riders are marked on the overall skill of their ride and how well they are able to spur. But making a qualified ride is only half of the bull rider's problem. After his time is up, he must get off without being gored, kicked or

trampled. With the big Brahmas, there are no mounted pick up men to ride alongside and help the cowboy down—the bulls wouldn't let the horses get close enough. For assistance the cowboy looks to the rodeo clown who moves in to distract the bull till the rider gets off and away. Once on his feet, the contestant usually loses no time in reaching the safety of the fence.

The Brahma may not be a God but few of the cowboys seem willing to explain this to him. After he tosses his rider and ranges around the arena, you'll see his approach clean the fences of squinting cowboys who scramble for safety.

Except for the clowns, the dignified Brahmas seem to be the undisputed lords of the arena at least.



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