

# A Glimpse Behind the Scenes at Round-Up

It Requires Work to Stage the Show But Knowledge of the Cowboy and the Range is First Essential

Watching the production or staging of a Round-up from behind the scenes is a revelation to one not familiar with the work of the impresario who produces these grand operas of the cow country. The championship bucking and potato or quick change races, run the gamut of the range of passions and emotions of the young old west.

It has its Caruso and Meibas, its Weber and Fields, and its orchestra is the great symphony of the sage brush plains, bunch grass hills, mountains and valleys of the once princely domain of the cattle barons. Its libretto is made after the evening song of the coyote, the plaintive lullaby of the murmuring pine and hemlock, and the thundering diapasons of the stampede. The night hawk in his silent watches when he sang his plaintive ballad to quiet the restless herd in the days when the west was young and no more lonely than his entire people are today who look with sinking heart upon the fields of waving, growing grain where once the jack-rabbit scented its myriad ways and the coyote sought consolation in speaking with the great stillness.

Round-ups represent and reproduce the sports and pastimes, passions and emotions of the last of this old west, race, which, like the Indians, dissolve itself into nothingness with the advent of civilization. There are the children of this great separated tribes. Tomorrow there will be none left and round-ups as they are today will be a thing of the past for they will go with the passing of the people who make them. Today they breath the spirit of the old west, tomorrow the imitation of this spirit will be commercialized, capitalized and perfected into a beautiful theatrical shadow of what it once was.

People unacquainted with the peculiarities of these children and watching a round-up from the grand stand or bleachers hastily jump at the conclusion that the thing is automatic and reproduces itself annually like a blooming flower. Entire communities have become dazzled and blinded by the beauty of the finished Round-up and hastily dashed into the vortex only to find themselves flung high and dry on the rocks of financial disaster.

While in 1913 there were just fifty-two round-ups, rodeos, border days and frontier days produced in the Pacific northwest and Canada there were less than half a dozen financial successes. And the reason for this is, not that the shows are not good, but that the management or producing management rather is poor. So to get at the secret of the business one must get behind the scenes at one of the big successes like the Pendleton Round-up or Cheyenne Frontier Days. Both are established, unqualified successes. But from a commercial basis the Pendleton Round-up is perhaps the most representative, it being owned by the municipality of Pendleton, staged and produced by a volunteer association without pay or any hope of reward other than the glory which attaches of being one of the eleven responsible for the Round-up. Its success has been the most phenomenal of any festival of its kind ever given and it is strictly a non-commercial enterprise. From a beginning in 1910 with an attendance of about eight thousand people it had become so widely known in 1913 that more than seventy-five thousand people paid admission at its gates, and its total attendance was twice that of any other two round-ups given. Its slogan of "Let'er buck," is recognized wherever the English language is spoken. The success of the Pendleton Round-up has been the incentive to the fifty-two other cities, towns and communities of the northwest to try their luck at the business. Its property holdings are valued at one hundred thousand dollars and its string of bucking horses alone is worth twenty-five thousand.

**Behind the Scene.**  
 And now to get behind the scene and discover this secret. While there are a thousand and more petty little details and things going to make up the success of the Round-up this article will deal only with the few most important ones. First, then, you must have bucking horses. Not the ordinary bucking horses who will horskip-and-jump all over a forty acre field, but the outlaw who will throw his rider in less than thirty seconds or not at all. Horses of this class are very, very scarce and they easily bring one thousand dollars in the round-up market. There is not a bucking horse in the entire northwest with any sort of a good buck in him but has been seen and worked out by the livestock director of the Pendleton Round-up or one of his wranglers, the same being termed scouts in the baseball world. In the livestock director's card index is listed every horse in the bucking business, the kind of a buck he is, the number of rides, the number of riders thrown, and the kind and class of rider up. For instance, take the famous "Angel" horse. He is an outlaw pure and simple. He was caught up with a bunch in the Lee country. He threw every cowboy working for the I-Z outfit. By this time a Round-up wrangler was on hand. He reported favorably on the horse and another wrangler was sent to check up. The second report was favorable. Then went the livestock director himself all the way to the I-Z country. When he got there he couldn't find a man who would attempt to ride the outlaw. He went back for the Round-up rider. The horse was accepted but in order to get him the owner insisted that the livestock director buy the entire bunch. The "Angel" horse became easily worth a thousand dollars and out of this bunch was discovered the horse Isee and Bear Cat, two first class buckers.

**Rare Buckers Wanted.**  
 Why must a round-up have such excellent buckers? That brings up the second important consideration, the character and peculiarities of the cowboy. Now a good cowboy rider will ride an ordinary bucking horse before breakfast and think nothing of it, but when he goes out to ride at the Round-up for a championship before a packed grand stand of thirty-five thousand people, he wants a horse that no one else can ride. He doesn't bet that he will ride the horse but he is staking his whole reputation on this one throw of the dice. He knows that if he rides Angel or Long Tom to a finish he will have all that glory and renown of which his class are so inordinately fond. While on the other hand if he rides a little goat jumper and wins he feels disgraced by seeing a school boy mount and ride the same horse perhaps the next day or the next week.

The champion cowboy is not riding for the purse. If he were he would prefer what is known as "show buckers," horses which he could ride to a finish with all that cowboy class which is so essential in good riding. He could win a purse every day in the week with show buckers but any other cowboy and a great many who are not cowboys could do the same thing. What your real, true cowboy is riding for is the distinction of being in a class all by himself, being touted as the man who rode Angel, Long Tom, Whistling Annie, Hot Foot, Cyclone, Speedball, Gaviota, Steamboat or Teddy Roosevelt. Just to show his disdain for money, although he may at the time be absolutely broke, he will not participate in a bucking contest where the list contains unknown or mediocre buckers.

An illustration of this was given in September of 1913, when a certain city put on a round-up with nothing more than two bunches of wild horses. These they gave fancy names and advertised them as outlaws. But when the show was over the records showed that out of eighty rides only three men were thrown. You couldn't get a real rider to admit that he was a contestant in that round-up. The cowboy would rather go broke all summer than win a thousand dollar purse on a horse that a girl could ride.

In his steer roping he is just as particular. He must have his own roping horse, even if he has to ship it all the way from the ranch in Arizona where he happens to be working at the time or bring it over land. He will take nobody's word as to the qualities of a roping horse except his own. And he is always suspicious. He sleeps in the stable with that horse to see that no one comes any "high-life" on him and he carries his rope continually on his arm, sleeping with it under his pillow. He is afraid some one will cut the stands and when he comes to the steer ready for a bust his rope will break, putting him out of the running. To make him satisfied the management must give him every opportunity to protect his horse and rope. And he is right, too, for the intelligence of the roping horse is wonderful. Take the old Charley horse belonging to Ed McCarty of Cheyenne. He is now about fourteen or fifteen years old, too old for contest work, but McCarty ships the old fellow along with his other horses

wherever he goes and for exhibition purposes only will take the old horse out, rope, butt and hog tie a steer in less than thirty seconds without bridle, halter or anything on the horse's head. Should the management tell McCarty that they didn't have room in their stables for that piece of excess baggage he would raddle his entire outfit and go back, never again to return to the Round-up.

While the cowboy is always morally convinced some one is trying to job him he can always be depended upon to go through with his program if properly handled, otherwise he will sulk and moop around and go away thoroughly disgusted without any real or apparent reason for it. His peculiarities must be understood and properly administered unto to get him to go into the arena strutting like he was the old lord of the cow country. And he is simple as a child, a little boy grown very big, the most generous hearted person on the face of the earth until he thinks you are trying to hand him something when adamant is pliable beside of him. If he is hurt and goes to the hospital he is sure to have a grouch and a grievance. When he comes out limping on crutches a director goes to him and says: "Well, Bill, I suppose the Round-up would be getting off cheap by just handing you five hundred dollars to sort of pay you for your time lost. What do you say, is that enough?"

"Now see here, Sam," Bill replies, thinking of the thousand dollars he had intended to sue the management for, "that's sure generous but it was all my own fault. I ought to know better'n to take that haw Onidian, 'cause he just nacherly beat me to it. He was some too quick for me and I didn't calculate the distance correctly. I sure am to blame an' no other person. Serves me right, too. I ain't kicking, but I was thinking that if you all would pay that hospital bill and square up with the sheepshearer who patched me up and maybe buy me a new pair o' boots, 'cause they slit that right one slick down from the top where the ankle was swelled, 'an they was fine boots too, why I'd jest call it square and feel highly grateful to you all during all my bonned days."

You settle on that basis and Bill goes away declaring that you are the finest bunch of people he ever did business with.

Had you approached him on the other tack Bill would never have settled for anything less than a thousand dollars in money, a new pair of boots, a new suit of clothes, a horse and a railroad ticket home, although he couldn't possibly have made use of both of them. The probabilities are Bill would have failed to get what he wanted but you would have failed to give him support and admiration.

Two months before the date of the opening of the Round-up the livestock manager has raked the northwest with a fine tooth comb for outlaws and buckers with a reputation. The herdsmen is brought in from the winter ranges and from six weeks to two months before the show begins these buckers are "tried out." Each horse is ridden once the first week. The second week he is ridden twice and after that as often as good judge-

ment decides until the week immediately preceding the opening day when he is ridden every day. No, that is wrong. He is not ridden. He is mounted and made to do his bucking stunt and then the rider is thrown or he jumps off or is picked up by the pick-up men. From ten to twenty seconds is all he is allowed to go and he is never allowed to go above forty-five seconds even when in the finals for the championship. As the bermuda is tried out the bucking list is made up. Such buckers as Angel, Long Tom, Hot Foot, Rambling Sam and so on, get the worst of it in the try-outs. They are ridden every day, scratched just enough to make them mean and take the soreness out of their muscles. The cowboys who do this try-out work are paid good money for it is worth something to get on Long Tom every day when you know that he is going to throw you. But they are not allowed to enter into the bucking contest, for riding the horses so many times they learn the tricks and stops and thereby have an advantage over the cowboy who mounts them for the first time. The bucking list is then made up and the horses picked for each of the three days and Friday forenoon for there are always so many contestants eager to ride that time will not permit them to ride in the afternoon alone, the surplus is worked off on Friday morning.

The trick and fancy ropers and riders are hired under contract, drawing all the way from ten to five hundred dollars a day, according to their ability and reputation. This is not because these people are so very scarce but rather because they are too numerous. Either a trick or fancy riding or roping contest open to the world as the main events of the Round-up are, is the slowest thing on the face of the earth. And to work either one of these contests off to a finish at the Round-up would require about two hours each day. The ordinary Round-up audience will stand for fifteen minutes of this stuff but no more. Consequently the director of non-competitive events hires his fancy ropers and riders outright, gives them all an equal show in front of the grand stand, limits the whole thing to ten minutes and everybody is satisfied.

Contrary to the general impression the director of non-competitive events also has charge of the cowgirls' bucking contest. This, too, is one of the big secrets you learn when watching the Round-up from behind the scenes. Every girl that rides at the Round-up is paid about five hundred dollars for the three days and very, very often she will not mount more than once. In addition to the pay which she receives she also has a chance to win the purse and the prize saddle, for their contest, so far as the contest part is concerned, is carried on under the same rules and conditions as the cowboys' bucking contest. There are several reasons why the girl riders are paid whether they win or not, but the two principal ones are very queer. While the audience goes wild with delight at seeing a cowboy thrown they get up and leave if a girl happens to be dumped from a pitching cayuse. And girl riders are divided into two classes, the "slick" and "hobble" riders, and they

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 Goodyear glove rubbers .. 69c

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 A better grade .. \$5.50

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