

BAREBACK RIDING

To score well in this event, the rider must maintain balance, rhythm, and control, while at the same time spurring vertically above his head and horizontally away from the animal, with the follow-through of each spurring lick up the neck and shoulders of the horse. Broncs are scored for high kicking action, power – how hard they kick, lunge, and hit the ground – changing direction, and rolling and twisting. Judges stand on either side of the chute, and the first thing they look for is whether the rider's feet are over the point of the horse's shoulders when the animal's front feet hit the ground on the first jump out of the chute. Each judge will mark one side, using a span of 1 to 25 points each for horse and rider. The four marks will be totaled for the score: 100 points would be the perfect bareback ride. Horses will be ridden eight seconds. Rider cannot touch horse with free hand.

BARREL RACING

Contestant is allowed running start; time begins as soon as the horse's nose reaches the starting line and is stopped when horse's nose crosses the finish line. Contestant must run barrels in cloverleaf pattern, starting at either side. A five-second penalty for each barrel knocked down will be assessed. No two girls may ride the same horse.

BREAKAWAY ROPING

Two loops will be allowed if two ropes are carried. Each rope is tied to saddle horn with string. Rider, starting when the barrier drops, rides after the calf, throwing loop over its head. As rider pulls up her horse, the running calf breaks the string and the rope falls free from the saddle horn. A white flag must be attached to the rope at the saddle horn so judge can tell when rope breaks free. Time is called when judge drops his flag. Ropes must be released from contestant's hand to be a legal catch. Horse must clear box before loop is thrown. A ten-second fine for broken barrier will be assessed.

BULL RIDING

Riding to be done with one hand and loose rope, with bell attached. Bull to be ridden eight seconds. Rider will be disqualified for being bucked off or touching animal with free hand. A resined soft leather glove is worn on the hand the rider uses to grasp the bullrope. Only the squeeze of his hand on the handhold and the wrap of the rope's tail hold him to the bullrope. The bull rider's chaps, perhaps more than in any other event, afford protection against scrapes, stomps and bruises. His dull roweled spurs complete his equipment list. Each of the two judges scores a bull from 1 to 25 on how hard he bucks and kicks, whether he spins, and if he rolls and twists and changes directions during the ride. A high kicking spin is much more difficult for the rider than is a flat spin, and a change in direction in spin is a most difficult move for the rider to adjust to. The rider, on a similar point spread, is scored on his balance, timing, and, most important, his degree of control. A bull rider is not required to spur the animal, as are bronc riders, but his score is higher if he does. Watch the motion of his free arm, for there is the key to balance in the ballet he performs on the bull's back.

TIE DOWN ROPING

If cowboy intends to use two loops, two ropes must be carried. Catch as catch can. Cowboy must dismount, go down rope, throw calf by hand, and cross and tie any three feet. If calf is down when roper reaches it, he must allow calf to get up and then throw him. If roper's hand is on calf when calf falls, calf is considered thrown by hand. Tie must hold for six seconds after roper calls for time, and slacks rope. There will be a ten-second fine for breaking the barrier.

CUTTING HORSE

No choke ropes, tiedowns, or wire around the horse's neck will be permitted. Horse must be ridden with a bridle (with bits in mouth and no noseband or bosal), or hackamore. Quirt or bat must not be carried. Time allotted each horse to work is 2 1/2 minutes. A judge marks from 60 to 80 points. Any rider who allows his horse to quit working or leaves the area before his allotted time is up will be disqualified for that go-round with no score. A horse will be given credit for his ability to enter a herd of cattle and bring one out with very little disturbance to the herd or the one brought out. The horse should never get ahead of the animal and duck it back toward the herd to get more play, but should let the turnback man turn it back to him. A horse will be penalized for the following: each time the back fence is used for turnback purposes; each time he is reined or visibly cued in any manner; if an animal that he is working gets back into the herd; if additional cattle are picked up from the herd; if a horse quits a cow or must be restarted by his rider; and if a horse clears the herd with two or more cattle and fails to separate a single animal before quitting. If a horse turns the wrong way with tail toward animal being worked, he will be disqualified for that go-round with no score.

GOAT TYING

The goat is tied to a stake with a rope ten feet in length. Starting line will be 100 feet from the stake. Contestant must be mounted and ride from the starting line to the goat, dismount, throw the goat by hand and tie any three legs together with a leather thong or pigging string. If goat is down when roper reaches it, the goat must be elevated by roper so that at least three legs extend directly underneath before being thrown. Time is called when the roper stands back with hands raised. Judge waits six seconds to determine that the goat is securely tied.

POLE BENDING

Pole bending pattern is to be run around six poles positioned in a straight line. Each pole is to be twenty-one feet apart and the first pole is to be twenty-one feet from the starting line. Starting either to the right or left of the first pole, rider runs course pattern. Five-second fine for each pole knocked over. No two girls may ride the same horse.

QUEEN CONTEST

The NHSRA Queen Contest is a competition for the girls of each state and province in the National High School Rodeo Association. To qualify for the National High School Finals Rodeo competition, contestants must be the winners of their state/provincial queen contests and chosen to represent that state/province and must meet other eligibility requirements. Girls who have just completed their senior year in high school are not eligible. The NHSRA Queen is selected based on her judged performance in these eight categories: Modeling, Personality, Appearance, Personal Interview, Prepared Speech, Impromptu Speech, Written Test, and Horsemanship.

STEER WRESTLING

The mounted steer wrestler is placed in a box behind a barrier; his hazer in a box on the opposite side of the steer. The steer must be given a head start. The contestant and his hazer overtake the steer at speeds up to 30 miles per hour. He starts to leave the saddle as his horse reaches the steer's tail. The hazer is allowed only to keep the steer running in a straight line. As the steer wrestler drops over the steer, the horse carries him up to the steer's head. He scoops the right horn in the crook of his right arm, and grasps the left horn in his left hand. The horse carries his feet out in front and at a slight angle for the best position to make the throw. Timing is critical; the point is to turn the steer back instantly so that its own momentum aids in wrestling it to the ground.

SADDLE BRONC RIDING

As in the other riding events, the two judges on either side of the chute each score the horse and rider on 1 to 25 point spreads, for a total possible 100 points. The saddle bronc, like the bareback horse, is rated on how high he kicks, the strength and force of his bucking action, his reverses in direction, and for rolling and twisting action. For the control looked for by the judges, the saddle bronc rider's spurring action must be exquisitely timed to the horse's bucking rhythm. The more the rider turns out his toes, the more his spurs will drag in contact with the horse. Length of stroke from neck rearward to the back of the saddle also increases the rider's score. Riding rein and hand must be on same side. To qualify, rider must have spurs over the break of the shoulders and touching horse when horse's front feet hit the ground first jump out of the chute. Ride to be eight seconds. Rider will be disqualified for being bucked off; changing hands on rein; losing stirrup; or touching the animal, saddle or rein with free hand. The classic event of rodeo, an outstanding saddle bronc rider is a beautifully choreographed dance of man and wild horse pitted spirit to spirit in intense poetry in motion.

TEAM ROPING

Team may be composed of two boys, two girls, or a boy and girl. In dally team roping, ropes are loose from the saddle horns, and after making the catch, the ropers must take a wrap around the horn. Time is taken when both ropes are tight and both horses are facing the steer. There are strict rules defining a fair head catch. The rope must be around both horns, the neck, half a head. There is a five second penalty for catching only one hind foot. There is a ten-second penalty for breaking the barrier.

REINED COW HORSE

Both boys and girls may compete in reined cow horse. This is a judged event, not a timed event. Contestants are evaluated in rein work (a pattern consisting of circles, lead changes, sliding stops, spins, and backing up) and cow work ("boxing" or controlling a single cow on the end of the arena, then turning it on the fence and circling it in the open). Judging, scoring and equipment rules are based on the existing National Reined Cow Horse Association rulebook and adapted for NHSRA competition. Rein work and cow work are judged separately on a scale of zero to 80. A score of 70 represents an average performance. The rein work and cow work scores will be added together for the final score. A total score of more than 60 is required to receive placing or points. The best rein work demonstrates a horse that is willingly guided, with little or no apparent resistance. Bad manners exhibited by the horse will be penalized. All deviations from the exact given pattern must be considered a loss of control and marked down accordingly. Credit shall be given for the smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness and authority of performing various maneuvers while using controlled speed which raises the difficulty level and makes the horse more exciting and pleasing to watch. In the cow work, the most difficult work with the greatest degree of control will score the highest. Safety for contestants, horses and livestock is a priority in all aspects of reined cow horse.