

SADDLE BRONC

Saddle bronc riding is rodeo's classic event. Many cowboys claim riding saddle bronc is the toughest rodeo event to master because of the technical skills necessary for success. Every move the bronc rider makes must be synchronized with the movement of the horse. The cowboy's objective is a fluid ride, somewhat in contrast to the wilder and less controlled rides of bareback riders. Saddle bronc riders must mark out their horses on the first jump from the chute, much like bareback riders. To properly mark out his horse, the saddle bronc rider must have both heels touching the animal above the point of its shoulders when it makes its first jump out of the chute. If the rider misses his mark, he receives a no score.

A saddle bronc rider has only a thick rein attached to his horse's halter. Using one hand, the cowboy tries to stay securely seated in his saddle. If he touches any part of the horse or his own body with his free hand, he is disqualified. Judges score the horse's bucking action, the cowboy's control of the horse and the cowboy's toes turned out spurring action. To score well, the rider must maintain action throughout the eight second ride.

