

THE DOWN

(CALF ROPING)

Tie down roping is an authentic ranch skill that originated from working cowboys. The mounted cowboy starts in a three sided box. The breakaway barrier rope is looped around the neck of the calf and then stretched across the open side of the box which leads into the arena. When the calf gets to the advantage point, the barrier is released. If the cowboy breaks the barrier, ten second plenty will be assessed.

Once the calf has been roped, the cowboy dismounts and sprints to the calf throwing it by hand (flanking). The calf must be standing; if the calf is not standing the cowboy must allow the calf to get back on its feet before flanking it. After the calf has been flanked, the roper ties any three legs together with a pigging string (a short, looped roped clenched in between the cowboys teeth). When the roper has finished tying, he will throw his hands in the air to signal to the flag judge.

While the cowboy is accomplishing all of that, the horse has been trained to pull gently on the rope to keep out all the slack, but not to the point of dragging the calf. The roper has to remount, ride forward allowing slack in the rope and waits six seconds to see if the calf stays tied. If the calf kicks free before six seconds the roper will receive a no time. Like in all timed events, a fraction of a second makes the difference between winning and losing.

