



## **The Finer Points of Rodeo Events How to Keep Score with the Judges**

For Immediate Release

Surrey, British Columbia: As Canada's third largest rodeo payout and one of the most popular rodeos on the professional tour, the Cloverdale Rodeo is proud to draw the top athletes in the sport today. Featuring saddle bronc, bareback and bull riding, as well as ladies barrel racing, the Cloverdale Rodeo is one of the fastest paced and exciting in the world of pro rodeo. Each of the four events featured at Cloverdale is unique, with its own rules, techniques and scoring.

In addition to all the other factors that come into play, a winning score is determined by both the cowboy's and the animal's performance. In the roughstock events (bareback, saddle bronc and bull riding) the horse or bull accounts for half of the score. Barrel racing contestants depend on their horses to assist them in a good run.

As with any sport, it is to the spectator's advantage to recognize what judges are looking for in any ride or run.

### **1) Saddle Bronc Riding**

Timing and control are the definitive factors in scoring saddle bronc riding. A rider who synchronizes his spurring action with the animal's bucking efforts will receive a high score. Other factors considered in the scoring are the cowboy's control throughout the ride; the length of his spurring stroke and the length of the ride - a perfect rodeo ride is eight seconds.

Model spurring action begins with the rider's feet far forward on the bronc's point of shoulder sweeping to the back of the saddle, or "candle", as the horse bucks. The rider then snaps his feet back to the horse's neck a split second before the animal's front feet hit the ground.

A bronc rider will be disqualified if he touches the animal, himself or his equipment with his free hand, if either foot slips out of a stirrup or if he drops the bronc rein.

### **2) Bull Riding**

Bull riders are not required to spur. Staying aboard a wildly kicking bull that weighs a ton or more is usually enough to impress the judges. Officials watch for bull riders to remain over the middle of the bull without tilting or leaning back. In addition to good body position, other factors considered in scoring are use of the free arm and spurring action. Although not required, spurring will add points to a rider's score. As in all the roughstock events, half of the score in bull riding is determined by the contestant's performance and the other half is based on the animal's efforts. A bull rider will be disqualified for touching the animal, himself or his equipment with his free hand. Like other roughstock events, the perfect ride is eight seconds.

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### 3) Bareback Riding

A bareback rigging, made of leather and rawhide and roughly resembling a suitcase handle, is the cowboy's grip during his eight-second ride and the only equipment allowed in bareback riding. The rider must hold on with only one hand; he will be disqualified if he touches his equipment, himself or the animal with his free hand at any time during the ride. A bareback rider must begin with his feet above the break of the horse's shoulder. This is called a "mark out", and failure to have the feet in proper position at the beginning of the ride results in disqualification. The rider is judged on his control during the ride and on his spurring technique. The horse's performance also accounts for half the total score.

### 4) Barrel Racing

Barrel racing is pure speed – the fastest time wins. Times are so close that only an electronic eye timer measuring to the hundredths of a second can record the differences. The horse and rider start in an alleyway, gaining momentum as they approach the first of three barrels, placed in a cloverleaf pattern, that they will circle. After circling the third barrel, the horse and rider races back to the start/finish line, where time is stopped. A rider may touch or even tip a barrel, but a five-second penalty is added if the barrel is knocked over. A barrel racer looks for a supple, athletic horse that can make turns around the barrels without pausing or stopping.

For further information about the 2009 Cloverdale Rodeo and Country Fair visit:  
[www.cloverdalerodeo.com](http://www.cloverdalerodeo.com).

#### About:

The Cloverdale Rodeo and Exhibition Association is the non-profit organization that manages the world famous Cloverdale Rodeo & Country Fair held every year on the May long weekend (May 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009) at the Cloverdale Fairgrounds in Surrey, British Columbia.

The Association is also responsible for the year-round management of the eight facilities on the Cloverdale Fairgrounds that host over 1,000 events annually, including trade shows, concerts, festivals, sporting events, horse and dog shows, swap meets, flea markets, weddings and meetings.

For more information on the Association and the 63rd annual Cloverdale Rodeo and the 120th Country Fair visit: [www.cloverdalerodeo.com](http://www.cloverdalerodeo.com).

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