

Riding By Reasoning

By MONTE FOREMAN

Photos by the Author

Part VIII

The Foreman '54 "Balanced Ride" Stock Saddle

FREQUENTLY I hear this comment regarding these articles: "Sure, I feel better riding up there, and my horse works better, but it's hard work and strain to stay there. Fine for a short time, but no good for long riding!" Perhaps this is true, because most conventional saddles today cause the rider to slip back. The rider is trying to work *with the horse*, but ends up working *against his saddle*. Maybe now is the time to show the main features of the balanced ride stock saddle, which *allows* the rider to *get with his horse* for a few minutes or all day, without discomfort to horse or rider.

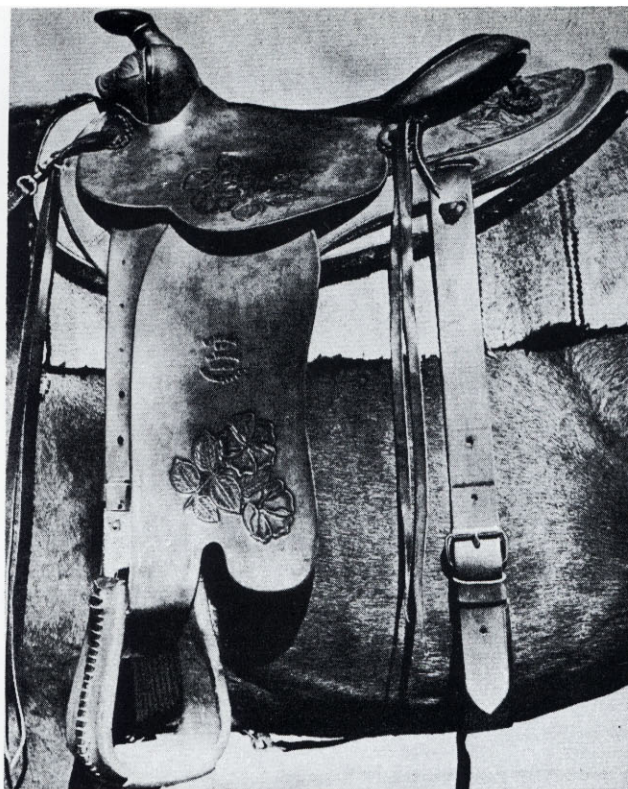
Three major features are put together for this "balanced ride" saddle: 1. The bulk under the rider's legs has been eliminated due to the skirt-rig combination, which gives a very close horse contact — and rider grip when it is needed.

2. The stirrups are hung forward similar to most top contestant bronc saddles — and again bulk has been eliminated but strength retained.

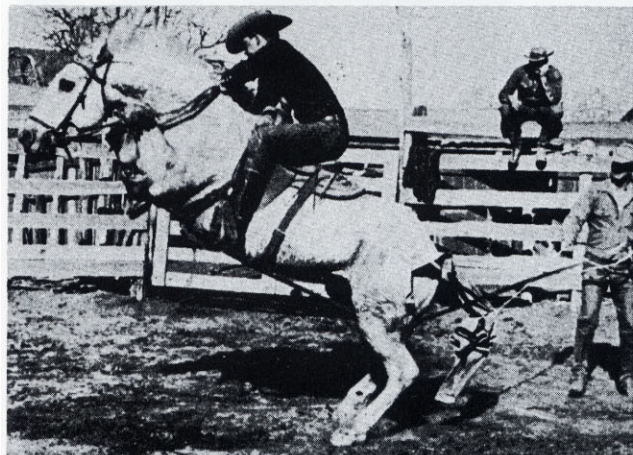
3. The seat is practically level, making it easier for the rider to ride his crotch — and lean forward without strain — or pain!

(If any one of these three major features is changed or altered, the full purpose of the saddle is lost!)

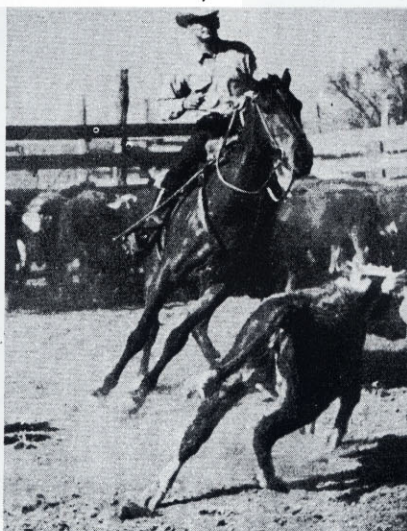
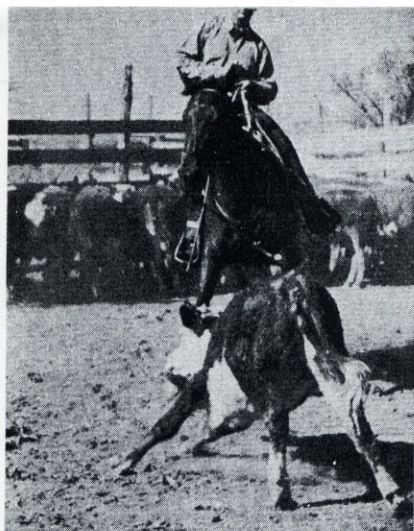
It must be kept in mind that this saddle is not the *substitute* for good riding, but that it makes possible for both the horse and rider to do their respective jobs better. There is no substitute for practice, know-how, and good horse handling, but a novice rider can learn more quickly, a good rider can ride better, and any horse should be able to perform a little better under the balanced ride stock saddle . . . depending upon the skill of the rider!



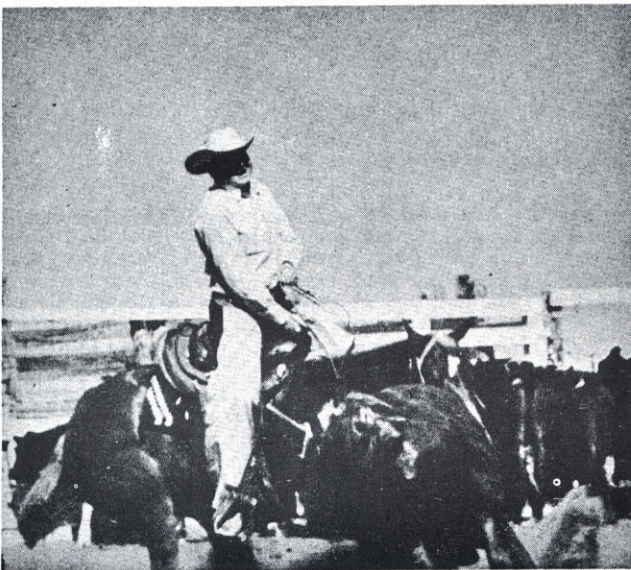
● ONLY 26 POUNDS . . . yet tree and rigging are unconditionally guaranteed! (Foreman's own saddle.)



● Sam Redford using the Running W and a "balanced ride" saddle for "sacking out."

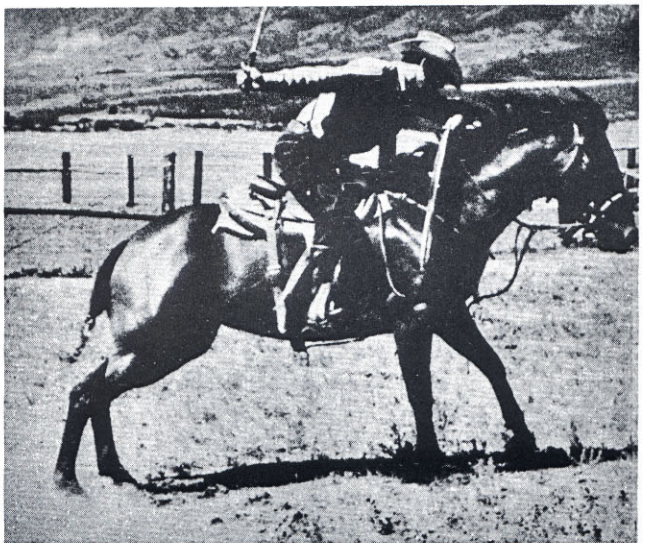
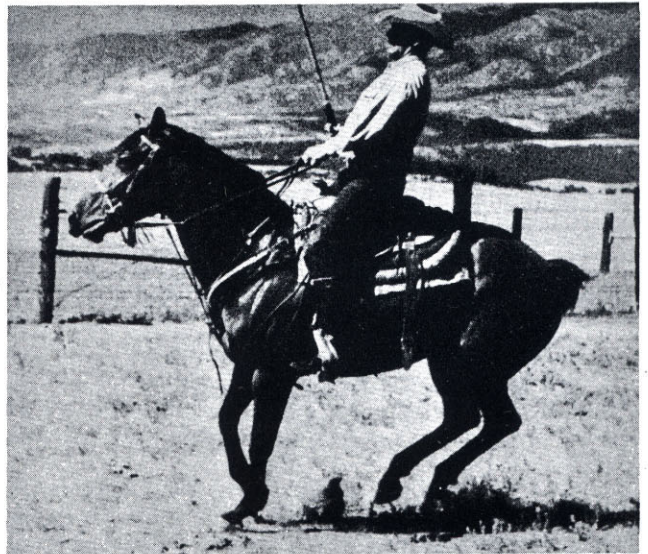


● The leg grip afforded by the Balanced Ride Stock Saddle, and the position which the rider is carried on the horse, help allow the horse to work more freely — and help keep the rider more *with* the horse. As a result, the horse can better stay "head to head" *with* the critter.



● Photo-analysis allows us to see that the lack of leg grip on a conventional saddle must be made up elsewhere to stay on the horse. Sometimes it is in "belated body balance" (rider behind the movement of the horse), more often it has to be in the vice-like grip on the saddle horn. Belated body balance frequently keeps the horse working slightly *behind*, then too far by, on his blocks.

Keep in mind that this rider is doing a typical job of riding a cutting horse. He is doing what most riders do in contesting to help make up for the shortcomings of the conventional saddle. You may see some riders doing a better job—you'll see even more of them doing a much worse job.



● On "handling" stops (top), rolls (middle), and jump-outs (bottom), the three main features of the "balanced ride" stock saddle help "let" the rider keep "in time" with his horse's "drive," no matter from which direction this "drive" comes. (Use of polo mallet or a rope accustoms the horse to the rider *doing something* on his back while working on these maneuvers.) Staying in balance with a fast-working horse is not easy. It takes lots of know-how and practice—and a saddle that helps!