

Riding By Reasoning

By MONTE FOREMAN

Photos by the Author

Part XII

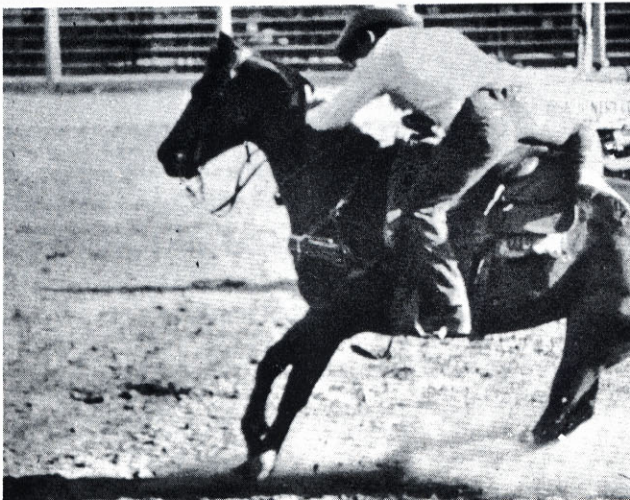
Gerald Roberts, 1948 all-around champion cowboy, says, "Monte's sequence pictures are really something! A man can sure see what caused him to be right or wrong — and he gets positive picture proof instead of what someone else might think they saw."

"More about balanced and out of balance stops — and their effect"

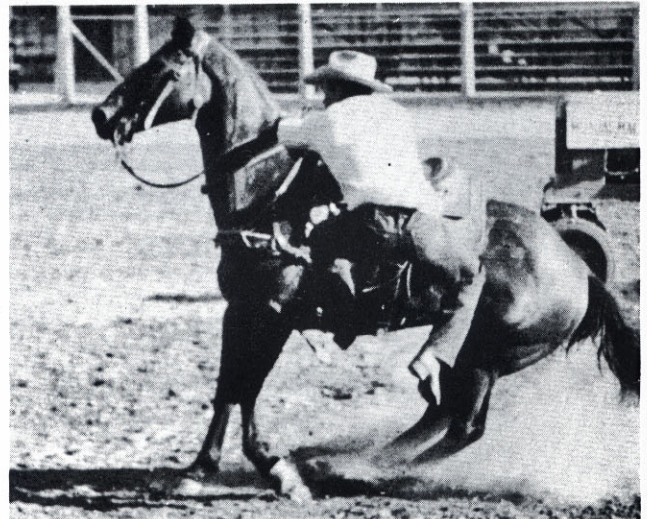
TO emphasize again just what a rider's weight on the horse's loins does, my friend, Casey Darnell — top calf roper and 'dogger — worked his mare, Miss Fortune, for us to get sequence pictures showing the difference between "GET-OFF" and "STAY-ON" stops.

Many calf roping horses have a good balanced stop. On reined horses, to this day I've never seen a balanced stop made while contesting with a little speed. I wondered why. Got to taking pictures, studying them — and found out.

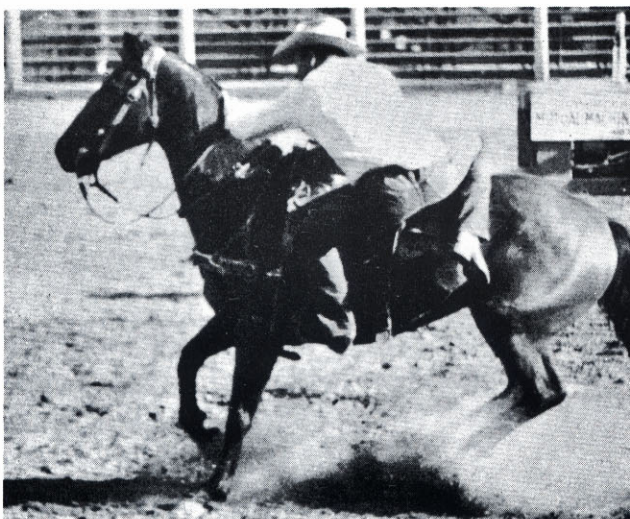
Casey Darnell and I got to talking about stops while we were at the Colorado State Fair at Pueblo. We made these pictures of his mare (Miss Fortune) because she is also one of the top reined horse winners in cow country, as well as being mighty fast transportation to calves which Casey catches and wraps up fast enough to keep him rodeoing instead of ranching. Casey did not exaggerate his riding because we both wanted to see the pictures for the effect — and here 'tis:



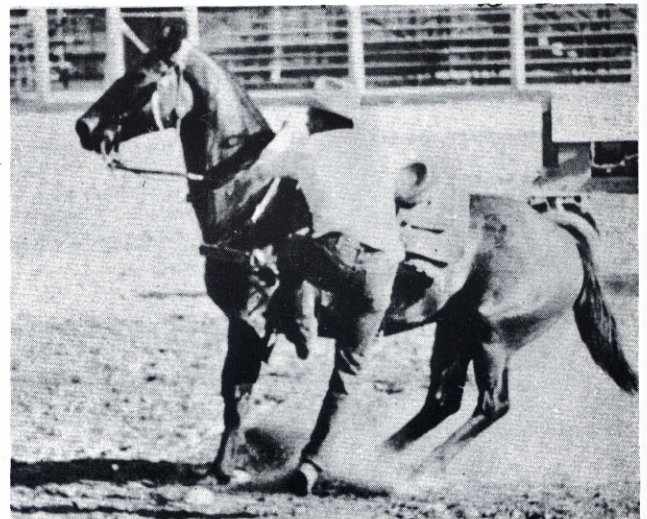
● 1. Casey starts his "get-down." Mare down on her right forefoot — and two hind! (Note moving tractor in background going about 15 m.p.h.)



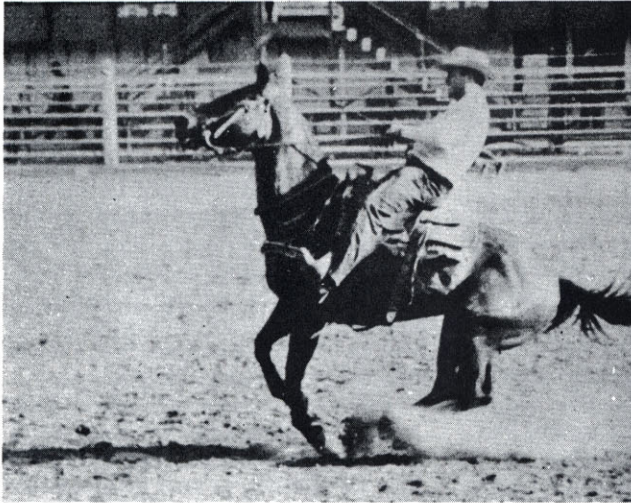
● 3. Her right front again on ground. Hind still skidding. (Compare horse's head and gate now.)



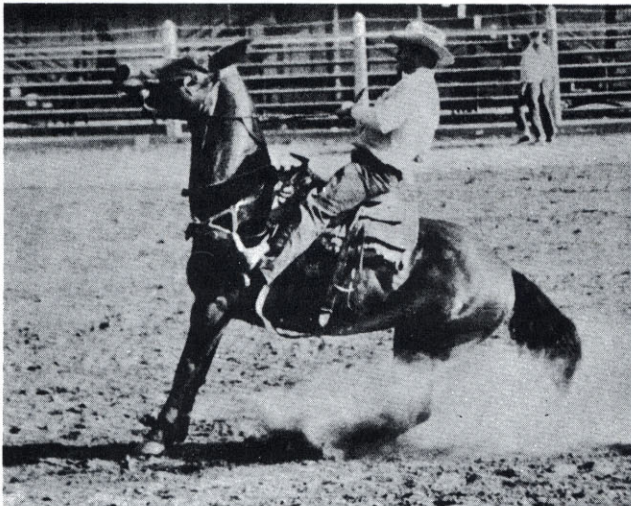
● 2. Now her left front down (running with both front feet), but hind feet are skidding; do not come off the ground, nor SPREAD TO THE REAR! (Note mare's nose and gate at upper left for distance it takes in this stop.)



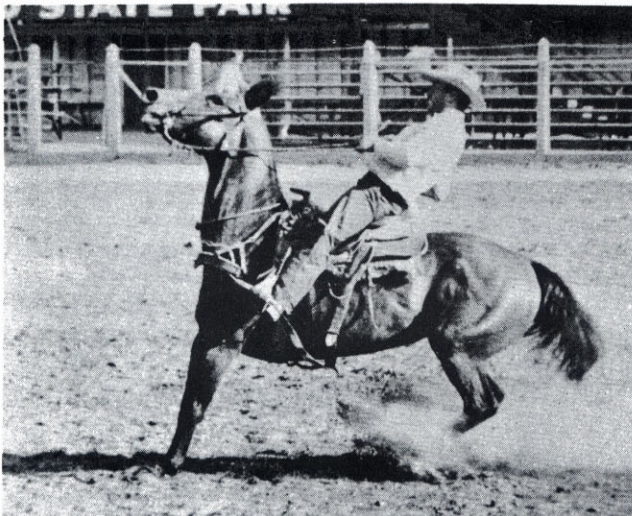
● 4. Again back on the left front — and right coming off the ground still running with her front feet. No stiff legged, propped front leg stop jolt here. **THIS IS A BALANCED STOP!** It's easy for the rider to get down without being thrown off balance too!



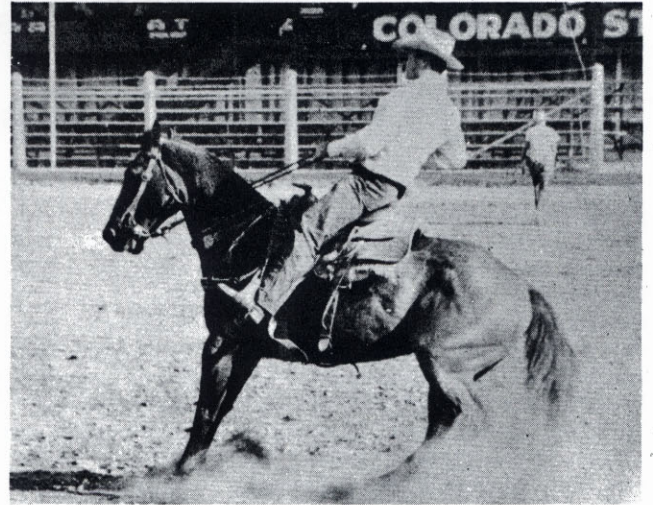
● 5. Stay-on stop. Note that Miss Fortune's hind legs are practically the same as in No. 1. Front legs, head carriage are different — and out of time! (If you look close, the two walking boys' feet can be seen just behind Casey's back. Distance of part of this stop can be judged by them in this and next picture.)



● 6. Fortune skids on hind legs, then front feet prop together — both down at same time! (Note boys in background.)



● 7. Still trying to stop after a bounce and jolt — and her hind legs are spread backward which does not happen in balanced stop. (Boys completely out of picture. Note boy heading for gate.) Mare still not stopped . . .



● 8. Look where boy is now. He's had time to take one complete stride toward gate. The mare is now stopped. It takes a lot more distance on the propped, stiff-legged stop. Hard on horse and man.



● 9. Balanced stops can be had when rider stays on if a lot of things are done by the rider while in balance and in time with the horse. One of the most important is keeping weight off the horse's loins. All my weight practically is on "Henry's" front legs. To me this seems to be the most — or one of the most important factors for getting balanced stops, turns, roll-backs, and inside rolls. In order to keep weight off the horse's back, a feller needs stirrups that are hung forward (not swung forward) and a rigging that does not keep rider's legs from getting close onto horse's sides. Man almost has to keep all his weight on his feet and legs.

“Odd as it seems, when the rider's weight is *forward* the horse works *lighter* on his front feet. When the rider's weight is *back*, the horse's front feet get far more *jam* and *shock* because the hind feet cannot get up under him to help absorb the strain. Study the front feet, and the hind feet, in these pictures.”
