

Riding By Reasoning

By MONTE FOREMAN

Photos by the Author

Part XVI

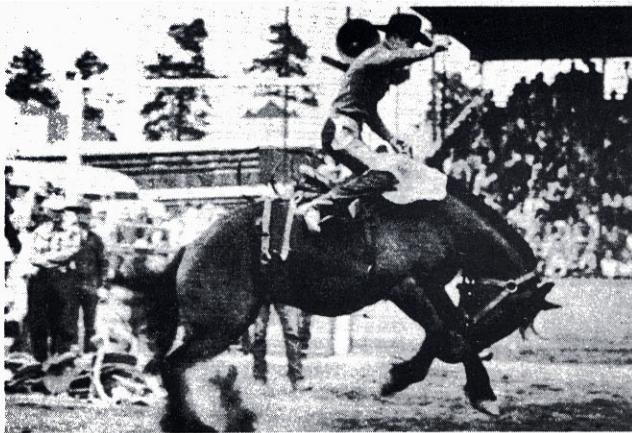
There are differences in riding barebacks and saddle broncs.

IT would seem—logically speaking—that bronc riders could contest with equal efficiency on both bareback and saddle broncs, but a glance at rodeo records shows a different story.

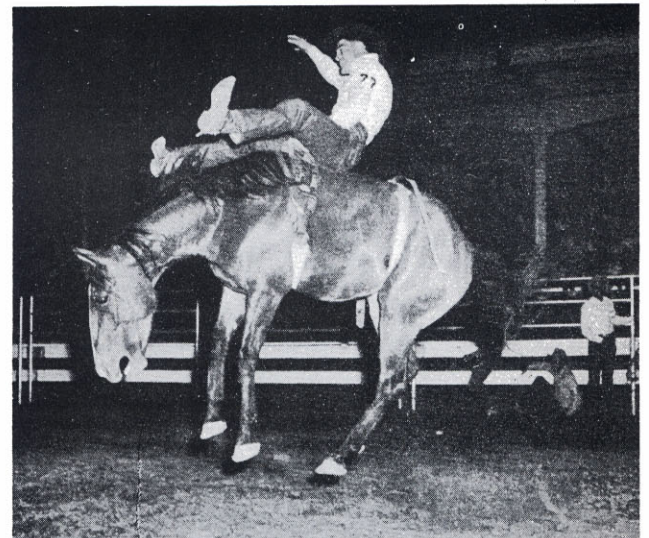
True, a few boys do contest at both—and win at both—but they are outstandingly spectacular at only one. There's a reason: The contesting of barebacks and saddle broncs happens to be the direct opposite on the upward jump of the bronc. The barebacker stays on his seat, holds onto his one-handed rigging hold, and moves his feet forward and upward over the horse's neck. The saddle bronc rider does the opposite. He raises up out of the saddle, grips with

his knees, and spurs backward, upward toward his cante. He rides the line of the horse's drive both up and down. The barebacker rides this line only upon the horse's ground impact, using his hand hold to keep him on the top while he raises his legs. Here are pictures of a few of the champions which show their specialties.

As shown here, it is difficult to contest both bareback and saddle broncs because the rider spurs a different way on each. However, it's not impossible for a man to be equally good at both, especially with Tibbs, Tompkins, Linderman, Akridge, Rutherford, and a few others making the hair fly. Harry Tompkins contests no saddle broncs as far as this writer knows, but just imagine him with Casey Tibbs' saddle riding lick—and Casey with Harry's bareback lick! Either one's capable of doing that impossible thing, so don't be surprised when it happens!



• Casey Tibbs (all-around champion 1951, bareback 1951, saddle bronc 1949, '51, '52, '53, and '54) won both saddle and bareback championships in 1951, and now he's contesting on bulls, too! Here Casey spurs toward his cante on the upward jump. His most spectacular lick is still on saddle broncs, but he's also a shade "western" on bulls and barebacks! Photo by Foreman



• Buck Rutherford (1954 all-around RCA champion) on a bareback in beautiful shape at the peak of the jump, his toes turned out—and grinning like a burro eating cactus! Photo by Coil of Stewart's



• Gerald Roberts (all-around champion 1948) in practically the same position as Casey. Photographers and cowboys alike have never cared for this pose during rides because it does not show enough action, but it's part of the "wonderful lick!" Gerald, Casey, and many others have seen some of these sequence pictures and movies I've taken of their rides. You should hear some of the kidding, jawing, and remarks as they study the rights and wrongs of "wot happen." Photo by Foreman



• Jim Shoulders (runner-up to 1954 all-around champion, all-around champion 1949, bulls 1951, and barebacks 1950) in perfect form, and as the horse, Colored Boy, hits the ground he will feel Jim's spurs in his shoulders. (Note that the bareback riders sit their horses both up and down when in best shape.) Photo by Chamberlain



● Jerry Ambler (1946 saddle bronc champion) spurs the cantle at the peak of the jump in best saddle riding form. (Note that his, Casey's, and Gerald's seats are completely out of their saddles, their upper bodies leaned forward with their main horse contact mainly with their knees, spurring backward; exactly opposite from the bareback riders!)

Photo by Sullivan



● Bill Linderman (all-around champion 1950 and 1953, saddle bronc 1945 and 1950, 'dogging 1950) in perfect form for the impact on a saddle bronc. This picture is during the time when a saddle bronc rider's seat touches the saddle. (On the first couple of jumps out of the chute when the rider is "marking" his horse out, he also rides the upward jump with his seat in the saddle, then he changes his time and goes to spurring backward. That change in time gets lots of boys thrown, too!)

Photo by Sullivan



● Jack Buschbom (bareback champion in 1949) in top bareback form. The picture was taken just after the peak of the jump when both the horse and Jack's spurs are coming down. His spurs will hit the horse's shoulders upon its ground impact.

Photo by Chamberlain



● Harry Tompkins (all-around champion 1952; bulls 1948, '49, '50, and '52; bareback 1952) meets "Old 91's" impact with his spurs down, same as the saddle and bareback riders. (Riding bulls, believe it or not, is a combination of both bareback and saddle bronc riding.)

Photo by Harris