

# Riding By Reasoning

## "Why Should the Stirrups Be Hung Farther Forward?"

**T**AKE a look at Casey Tibbs' "committee" with its bottom stirrup leather pulled forward and tied in front of the "DEE" rigging ring. Nope, his saddle did not come from its manufacturer that way; nor do the saddles of the majority of top saddle bronc riders. They re-work their stirrup leathers in this manner for reasons which they can "feel" when their money is down in entry fees. These photo-analysis pictures show the two main reasons:

1. Forward hung stirrups allow the riding of the horse's "impact" (backward drive) when it hits the ground with its front feet. Most of the "shock" is absorbed on the rider's feet and legs. His stirrups, being in line with his body, do not throw him off balance and allow him to "brace" on them.

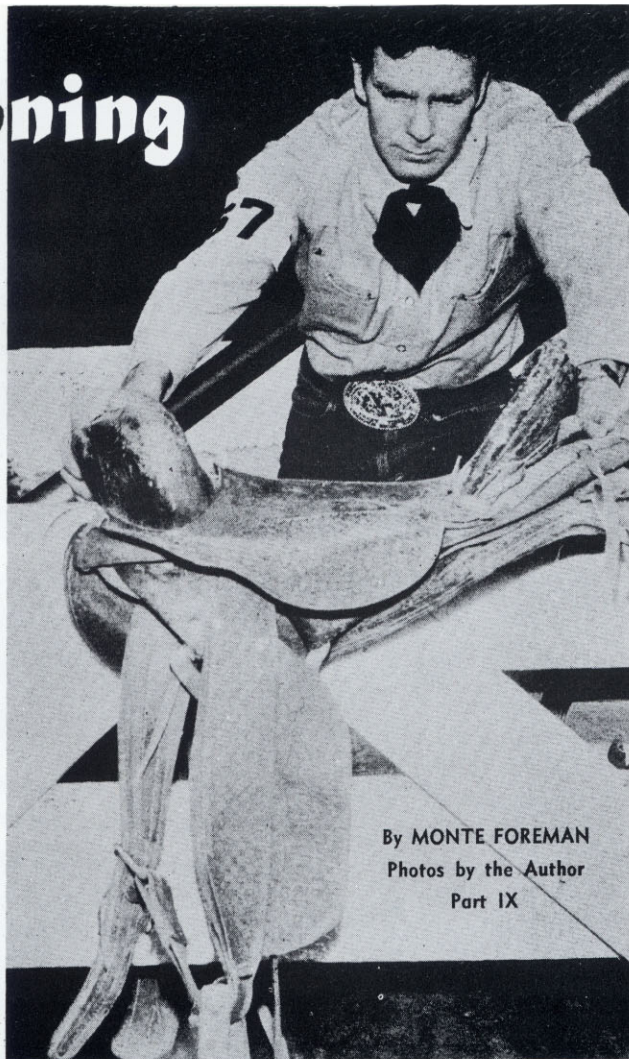
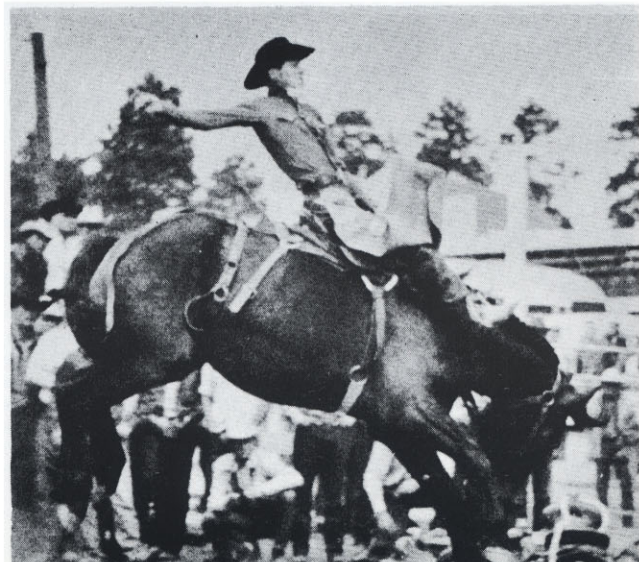
On the ordinary stock saddle the stirrups which are hung way behind, shorten as they are swung forward — most of 'em just *will not* go forward — causing the rider's feet to be "behind" the "impact." He tips over too far forward. The next jump undoes him completely.

2. On the upward "drive" or jump, when the contest rider's spurs "cattle-board" the saddle, the "D" keeps the bottom stirrup leather approximately the same length as the rider's leg from the knee down. That allows his knee to stay in the same place, which is a necessity, for his knee is his "only" leg contact maintained *throughout* the ride. His knees also give him support when he gets slightly "out of time" with the horse. When his knee comes loose, going backward, the cantle of the saddle usually hits him in the seat . . . and "goodbye" entry fee!

On the ordinary stock saddle the stirrups always lengthen at the rider's knee when swung to the rear, causing his knee to jerk loose. They don't do that on the re-worked "committees" . . . nor the "Balanced Ride Saddles."

The "Balanced Ride" and "Re-worked Committees" work practically the same; exceptions being that the "committee" swell is too wide (pushes rider's legs out) and it has slightly more bulk under the rider's upper legs. The seat and stirrup hang are the same. The three-quarter

● 2. Marking "BUCKSHOT" out on the winning ride at The Ute Trail Stampede (Woodland Park, Colo.). Casey is set to meet the backward "drive" when the horse hits the ground with his front feet. His body, stirrups, and feet will be in a direct line with the horse's "impact" when it hits the ground.

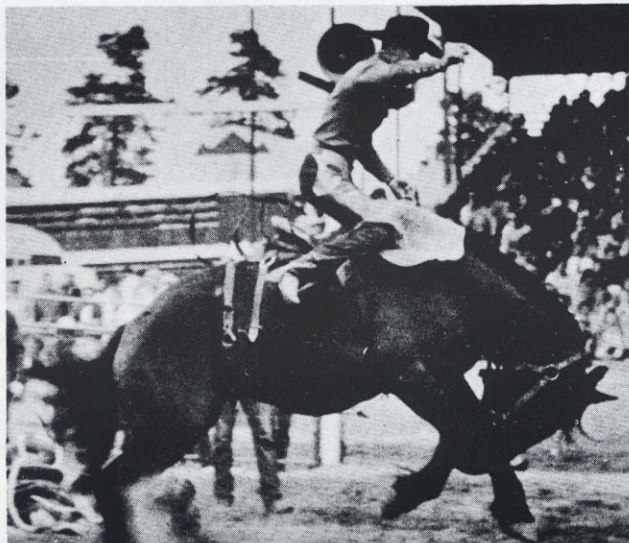


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Part IX

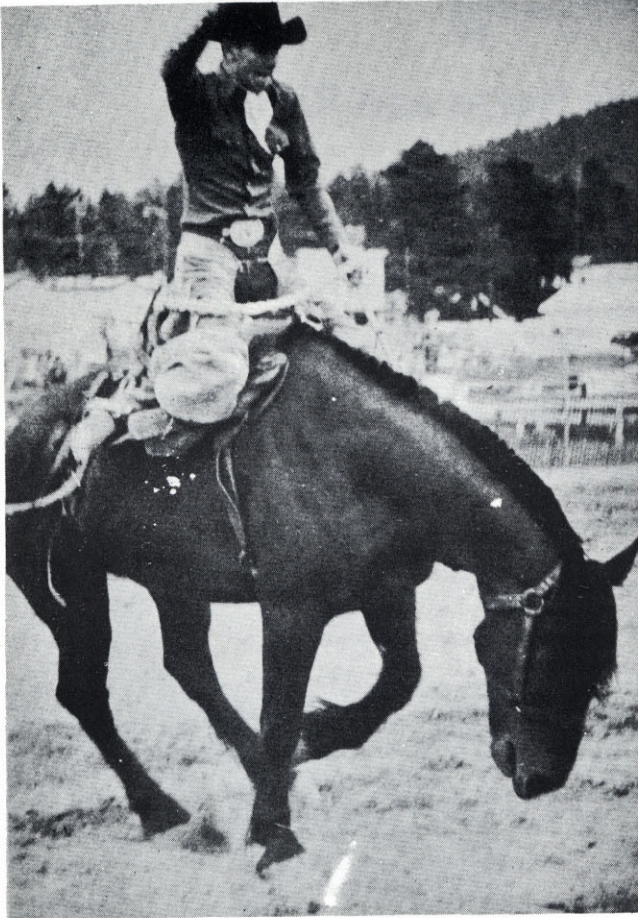
● 1. For five years Casey Tibbs has won the RCA saddle bronc championship. Here he shows his battered, beat-up "committee." His lower stirrup leather is not pulled up there for display; it's tied under the bar to "hang" that way, and its fender leather is also cut away in front near the swell and over the bar so that it also hangs farther forward.

"committee" rigging is not suitable for heavy roping, as is the full double or seven-eighths, but used on a working horse, the "Re-worked Committee" rides nearest to a "Balanced Ride" of any saddle on the market.

● 3. As the horse takes off on the next jump, Casey's feet head for the cantle-board of his saddle in perfect form riding the "forward impact." Contrary to the arguments of some "campfire" riders, there's lots of daylight under every top bronc rider's seat when "in time" with the horse and spurring the cantle. Notice how his knee stays put, supported by the lower stirrup leather.



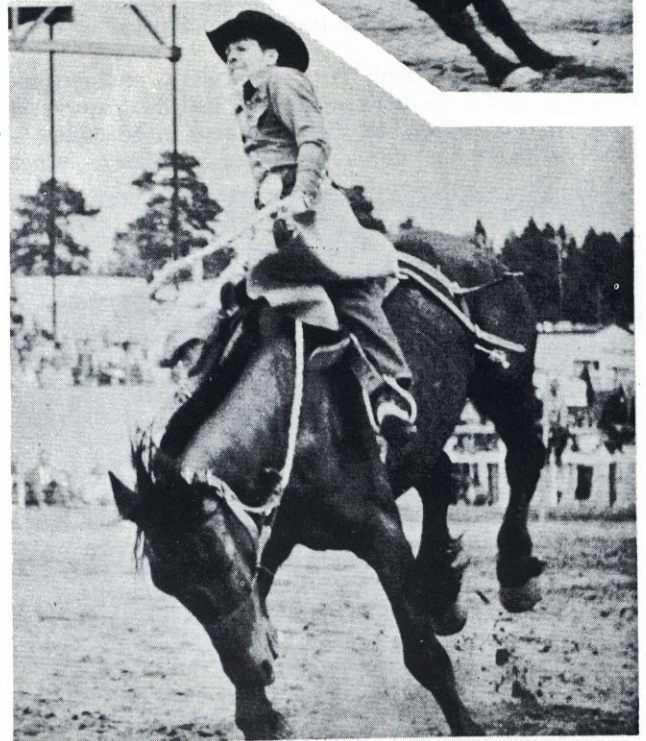
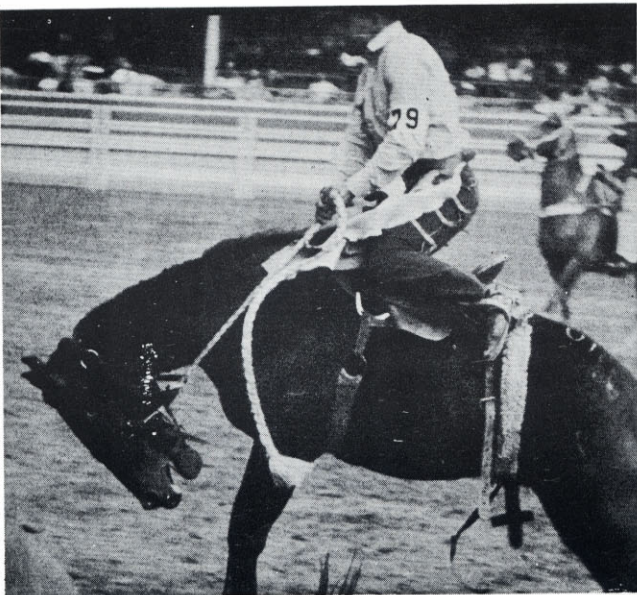
● 5. Coming down, his feet go to meet the "impact" again. Rhythm ... beautiful rhythm! Riders call it "in time!"



● 4. Going up again, the knee grip is easily seen as his spurs go upward ...

● 6. This horse is a lot harder to ride than it appears. Casey's face is showing the strain, but he makes it look easy as he goes down, meeting the "impact," "in time," and on a loose buck rein.

● 7. Deb Copenhaver, Post Falls, Ore., another great contest rider, is shown here slightly "out of time" when his horse ducked off as Deb was going for the cantle-board. Note how the lower stirrup leather is turned back, stopping his knee from getting too far out of its position ...



● 8. ... And how he comes down with his feet to meet the "impact." Note the difference in the straightness of his back and Casey's upon "impact," but the rhythm is the same; cantle-board on the upward jump; absorb the jolt on their stirrups when the horse hits the ground. Many horses have a quick and hard change of pace which causes a rider to lose his "time," which Deb did, but only for a split second. It caused him to grab the buck rein with his right hand. Seeing that grab, the judges put him in the "poultry business," by giving him a "goose egg" for a starter!

