

Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association

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PRCA

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Virtually everyone, especially members of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) believe that animals should be treated humanely and with dignity. The PRCA values its animals and staunchly protects them with rules specifically designed to prevent cruelty or even unintentional mistreatment.

Humane treatment of PRCA animals, both in and out of the arena, is a fact well-documented by veterinarians and research studies.

PRCA rules so successfully protect animals that the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recognizes PRCA guidelines in its position statement on the welfare of animals in spectator events. The AVMA position reads, in part, "The AVMA recommends that all rodeos abide by rules to ensure the humane treatment of rodeo livestock, such as those established by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association."

Contrary to the unfounded and inflammatory statements of some special-interest groups, the PRCA goes to great lengths to ensure the proper care, handling and treatment of all animals involved in PRCA-sanctioned rodeos.

Animal rights activists often proclaim that rodeo exploits animals, but they do so without valid support of their argument. The propaganda espoused by the so-called animal-rights groups appeals to emotionalism, not reason, and too often the hidden interest lies in raising funds rather than caring for animals. To accomplish their goals, these organizations commonly alter or even fabricate facts. **The truth is, it simply would be senseless for anyone connected with professional rodeo to give their animals anything but the best of care.**

Like a well-conditioned athlete, an animal can perform well only if it is healthy. Any cowboy will tell you he takes home a pay-check only when the animal is in top form. Stock contractors, the ranchers who raise rodeo stock for a living, also have an obvious financial interest in keeping the animals healthy. Simple business logic dictates that only a fool would abuse an animal that is expected to perform in the future.

Anyone who attends a PRCA professional rodeo can be assured that the greatest care has been taken to prevent injury to animals or contestants. All PRCA members are bound by the not-for-profit corporation's

bylaws and rules, including a section that deals exclusively with the humane treatment of animals. Anyone who violates these rules may be disqualified and reported to the PRCA, which will levy fines.

Professional rodeo judges, who are charged with the enforcement of all PRCA rules, believe in these humane regulations and do not hesitate to report violations.

Among the five dozen PRCA rules that protect animals is one that authorized the officials to disqualify a contestant and levy a \$250 fine on the spot for unnecessary roughness. The fine doubles with each offense. Fact: the first rules for the humane treatment of livestock were established in 1947 by the PRCA, a full seven-years prior to the founding of the Humane Society of the United States.

Veterinarian support and advice are an important part of the PRCA animal welfare program. Rules require veterinarians to be on-site at all PRCA sanctioned events and sections of slack. Surveys are frequently conducted by the on-site veterinarian to ensure the guidelines are being adhered to. Results from these surveys conclude that the PRCA is doing a very good job of making sure injury to the livestock are significantly low. For instance, in 1993-94, a survey conducted at 28 PRCA rodeos indicated that the injury rate for animals was so low as to be statistically negligible. Of 33,991 competitive animal runs, only 16 injuries occurred which translates to an injury rate of less than five hundredths of one percent. Other informational surveys throughout the years have also indicated that animal injury rates in professional rodeos are extremely low.

The PRCA has taken animal welfare yet another step. In 1993 the PRCA helped to form a new organization, the Animal Welfare Council. Responsible animal people involved in recreation, entertainment and sports with animals came together for the purpose of forming an organization which promotes the humane and responsible care of animals, but also considers the people involved with animals. The desire was to provide an organization with a balanced and sensitive approach to animal welfare. To date, the Animal Welfare Council has become a non-profit organization with over 100 member organizations. Hopefully, this will be the model "animal welfare" organization of the future that can represent animals and people.

Additionally, the PRCA has worked hard to encourage other rodeo organizations to adopt and adhere to good animal welfare practices and conduct themselves with rules similar to those of the PRCA. In past times, the PRCA only represented about 30% of all the rodeos taking place in the U.S., but due to a better networking system, most youth rodeo associations, as well as many, amateur groups now follow PRCA guidelines for animal welfare. The PRCA has helped to raise the 30% representation to over 70% representation of those following humane rules and enforcement procedures. The

goal is to reach 90% or above.

Facts based upon sound documentation provided by qualified animal experts, namely large animal veterinarians, are the backbone of the PRCA animal welfare program. The PRCA takes great pride in the welfare of its animal athletes. **Without the cowboy, there is no rodeo, without the fan, there is no rodeo, without the stock contractors, there is no rodeo, and most of all, without the livestock, there is no rodeo.** (*Presentation of video: Animal in Rodeo, A Closer Look.*)

Abstract

Use of corticosteroids alone or combined with glucose to treat ketosis in dairy cows

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Relative efficacy of 4 treatments for ketosis in cows and factors affecting therapeutic success were evaluated in a clinical trial. Ketosis was diagnosed by measuring urine acetoacetate concentration of all postpartum cows in 7 commercial dairy farms. A total of 127 cows were included, 82 (65%) of which also had a retained placenta or metritis. Median time from calving to treatment was 6 days (range, 1 to 35 days). Treatment with dexamethasone (40 mg, IM) and 50% glucose solution (500 ml, IV) or with flumethasone (5 mg, IM) and 50%

glucose solution was significantly more efficacious than treatment with dexamethasone alone, but efficacy of treatment with flumethasone alone was not significantly different from that for treatment with flumethasone alone was not significantly different from that for treatment with dexamethasone alone. Uterine disease was the only significant confounding factor affecting recovery. In each of the treatment groups, plasma glucose concentration was significantly increased following treatment.