Stories from the Sidelines
A View from Behind the Chutes
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I have no financial or others conflicts of interest related to the contents of this presentation.
True disclosure

- My work in rodeo was never a paying job. From 1996-2007 I was "local help" working alongside the assigned athletic trainer with Justin Sports Medicine. I was also fortunate to assist Rich Blyn and the Extreme Sports Medicine team covering Professional Bull Rider events for well over a decade. Each event was a learning experience and special thanks goes out to Dr. Tandy Freeman, Dave Lammers, Rich Blyn, Doug Ollie, Peter Wang, Dave Edwards, Robin Rivers and many others for teaching me for 20 years, and providing a treasure trove of professional and personal memories.
Learning on the job
Introduction to rodeo

- A conversation, a phone call, and a road trip
- First event – PBR Touring Pro, Huntington WV.
- On to Columbus, OH
First lessons

- Rodeo athletes travel a lot, may compete in multiple organizations, and medical care is patchwork.

- What’s a rehab plan??

- The referee doesn’t blow a whistle

- Bull fighters are amazing athletes
Rodeo – more than bull riding

- North Washington, PA Fireman’s Rodeo – 1997

- 5-days, outdoors, the clinic was a construction trailer

- There is no such thing as “bad weather”

- Beware of bucking horses!
Rodeo – different events, different demands, specialized athletes

- Events in pro rodeo
  - Bareback
  - Steer wrestling
  - Team roping
  - Saddle bronc
  - Tie-down
  - Barrel racing
  - Bull riding
Perspectives gained

- No contracts
- Not competing, not winning
- Should he/she compete – negotiations and decisions
- Changing landscape
Preparation

- Rodeo sports medicine is primarily acute care / trauma care with a dash of primary care to keep it interesting
- Treatment may be a one-time encounter
- Extensive use of taping and bracing – much self-applied depending on the setting
- Rehabilitation must fit into the lifestyle
Emergency care
Emergency care

- EMS personnel present may be very unfamiliar with rodeo and livestock

- Pre-event huddle is a must

- Be sure the arena is safe before summoning their assistance
Musculoskeletal care ++

- Injuries from foot to head (and shoulder, elbow and hand!!)

- Rough stock events have the highest incidence of injury but every event can generate a serious injury
Cultural understanding

- No coaches – communication is directly with the athlete
- Independent, tradition bound, athletes
- Respectful and thankful of what you do but wary of those from outside the rodeo community
- Proceed with respect and caution
Thank you!