



## Rodeo in America: Wranglers, Roughstock, and Paydirt

By Wayne S. Wooden, Gavin Ehringer

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*Rodeo in America* celebrates a great national pastime and tradition. Taking the reader "behind the chutes," Wayne Wooden and Gavin Ehringer reveal the essential character of rodeo culture today and show why it retains such a strong hold on the American imagination.

As the authors detail, contemporary rodeo has evolved into a much publicized big-time phenomenon even as it strives to stay close to its fundamental cowboy roots. The Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) now sanctions 750 to 800 annual rodeos worth more than \$22 million in prize money, attended by nearly 20 million spectators, and watched by millions more on ESPN and TNN. The National Finals Rodeo (NFR) alone offers more than \$2 million in prize money and is attended by 170,000 spectators every December in Las Vegas.

Filled with telling anecdotes and insightful observations, the authors highlight rodeo's glamour and glory, hazards and hardships, while clarifying its many dimensions as sport, profession, business, community event, family tradition, and pop cultural icon. Bareback and bull riders, calf ropers and steer wrestlers, barrel racers and saddle bronc busters, bullfighters and arena clowns, stock breeders and local organizers, judges and journalists, the famous and aspiring, winners and losers all are given their due in a work that reflects the enormous allure and demands of rodeo life.

Based on research and interviews conducted at the National Finals, as well as at rodeos large and small in San Francisco, Denver, Houston, Cheyenne, Calgary, Dodge City, Pendleton, and Prescott, among many others, *Rodeo in America* provides an entertaining and highly readable guide for aficionados and novices alike.

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#### Review

"The definitive book on rodeo near the end of the twentieth century."—**Randy Witte**, publisher of *Western Horseman* "Rodeo in America" is the most comprehensive, probing look to date at modern rodeo. It takes you behind the chutes to see rodeo firsthand and up close. You'll learn about the pranks, pain, and joy of going down the road. You'll meet rodeo cowboys firsthand, from weekend warriors to seasoned NFR pros. Rodeo fans and Western enthusiasts in particular will enjoy rubbing elbows with the performers, judges, clowns, bullfighters, stock contractors, and host of others who give rodeo its excitement and appeal."—**Richard W. Slatta**, author of *Cowboys of the Americas* "As America becomes more and more urbanized, fewer and fewer people have an understanding of rodeo, either as sport or as folk entertainment. This book, containing a wealth of behind-the-scenes information, provides the uninitiated with a sense of what rodeo is really like."—**James F. Hoy**, author of *Cowboys and Kansas* "Highly recommended. Here is an authentic and engaging book that makes this unique and fascinating American cowboy sport come alive. It presents such a clear and exuberant picture of rodeo that readers may well want to pack up and start 'on down the road!'"—**Elizabeth Atwood Lawrence**, author of *Rodeo: An Anthropologist Looks at the Wild and the Tame*

#### From the Back Cover

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#### About the Author

Wayne S. Wooden is professor of sociology and coordinator of the Criminal Justice and Corrections Program at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. He is the author of *Return to Paradise* and *Renegade Kids, Suburban Outlaws* and coauthor of *Children and Arson* and *Men Behind Bars*.

Gavin Ehringer is a freelance journalist and former media assistant at the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. He has published more than 500 articles in journals such as *Prorodeo Sports News*, *Western*

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