

**North American Livestock Show and Rodeo Managers Association
Association of Rodeo Committees**

**2005 Rodeo Committee Forum – “Where Size Doesn’t Matter”
By Wes Allison, President, North American Fair and Rodeo Managers Assn.**

Forum Initiatives

Following is a list of initiatives developed during the Committee Forum portion of the Rodeo Committee Forum held in Omaha, NE. These initiatives are meant to express the concerns facing rodeo committees throughout the industry. Each initiative was voted on by the 52 committees in attendance. The initiatives were then ranked according to those votes. From the list of initiatives 4 overall priorities were developed – PRCA and Committee Relationship, Marketing and Sponsorship, Rodeo Production and Contestant Participation.

PRCA and Committee Relationship

This initiative represents the relations between the PRCA and rodeo committees. The relationship between committees and PRCA is important to the on going success of Professional Rodeo. If this relationship is not fostered by both sides PRCA will cease to exist as it does today. Below are specific areas of concern.

- **Committee Representation on All Boards** – This is top priority for all committees. Committees should be represented by committeeman on all levels of the PRCA. Currently, committees have no representation or voice in matters concerning the future of Rodeo or the PRCA.
- **The PRCA Convention Needs Improvements** – The convention is expensive, uninformative and lacks educational value. It is recommended that a new committee or task force be put in charge to plan and implement the convention. It is also recommended that the convention be moved out of Las Vegas to a time when there are not so many distractions.
- **Better Communication from PRCA Office** – Communication to and from the PRCA Office, Staff and Directors continues to be an ongoing issue. Very little effort is made by these groups to include or inform committees. It is recommended that PRCA host regional meetings (like the Rodeo Committee Forum) to better inform PRCA Committees.
- **PRCA Checks & Balance System** – As members of PRCA all committees should receive a copy of the audited financial statement. Members have a vested interest as stakeholders of PRCA and should be afforded the opportunity to review the financial statement of the organization.
- **PRCA interaction with Committees** – PRCA should bring issues to committees for input and formulation of solutions before decisions are made. Possibly through forums like this on a regional basis. Committees should be involved in the long term planning for PRCA.

- **Avoid Conflicts with Existing Rodeo** – It is recommended that PRCA not sanction any additional rodeos or events (including PRCA produced events) that conflict with existing rodeos. The number of contestants does not justify the need for additional events.
- **Establish a Grievance Committee** – Develop a all-inclusive Grievance Committee with representatives from committees, contestants, contract personnel and stock contractors to hear problems or concerns from particular rodeos.

Marketing and Sponsorship

Marketability and profitability of rodeo continues to present unique opportunities for PRCA, rodeo committees and sponsors. Dividing or segmenting rodeo into tour and non-tour events keep rodeo from being a major sport like the NFL, MLB or NASCAR. To secure the future of ProRodeo changes must occur in marketing and sponsorship.

- **Share National Sponsor Money** – It is recommended to formulate a plan to “trickle down” national sponsor money to each rodeo based on the size of the rodeo’s population and market.
- **National (PRCA) Involvement in Promotion** – PRCA should develop a national advertising campaign and help promote rodeo throughout the Country. This would help build a larger fan base and would involve mainstream marketing and advertising outlets.
- **Entertainment Value of Non-Sanctioned Events** – Each local market is different and non-sanctioned events like mutton bustin, wild horse races and chuck wagon races help to market the rodeo locally and sell tickets. Selling tickets is what committees count on to sustain the rodeo’s future. It is recommended that PRCA stay out of the production of the local rodeo and allow non-sanctioned events to occur to insure the profitability of local rodeos.
- **Recognition of Rodeo Markets** – Recognize rodeos by the market size (potential population of ticket buyers) vs. added money. This would rank the rodeos more accurately and could allow for rule changes or different sponsor requirement for smaller markets.

Rodeo Production

The quality of the rodeo depends on all facets working together from the committee to the stock contractor to the contract personnel to the contestant. When one entity fails to fulfill their portion of the “Rodeo Contract” then the entire rodeo losses. Local production of the rodeo is as important as any part since the fans attending the rodeo are from the local area.

- **Consistent & Quality Rodeo** – It is recommended that efforts be made to make rodeo more consistent throughout PRCA rodeos. This would increase the overall quality and marketability of rodeo in local markets. It must be done in all facets of rodeo not just the committee requirements but also contestants, contract personnel and stock contractors. It is easier to market 1 consistent, quality product than 700 different products.
- **Educate Contestants about Production** – There is a lack of education among the contestants about the dynamics of rodeo production. In particular the cost of production

and stock. It is recommended to look at a possible “stock charge” that is a flat fee each contestant pays to the committee to offset the increasing cost of stock and production.

- **No Double Money in Team Roping** – Committees oppose adding team roping as a mandatory event. As part of this initiative the committees expressed concerns over the fact that if added money to team roping had to be doubled many rodeos would simple have to lower added money in other events. Committees encourage PRCA not to listen to one group when looking at the whole picture of ProRodeo.
- **Lack of Rough Stock Contestants** – Turnouts in rough stock events continue to pose a problem during performances. All committees expressed these problems despite efforts to improve stock and added money. More effort needs to be focused on fostering new rough stock riders including, but not limited to bull riding. Stiffer penalties should be enforced if a contestant turns out. Penalties could include larger fines, suspension of card for a particular time period or loss of card depending on the number of times a contestant turnout for non-medical reasons.
- **Performance Selection through ProCom** – Committees recommend making it easier for contestants to select or have preference for a particular performance.

Contestant Participation

Contestants must actively promote and market rodeo as a whole. The “Cowboy Mentality” of worrying about where the next rodeo is will not secure the future of the contestant or ProRodeo. Contestant participation goes beyond the rodeo secretary’s office and the pay window.

- **Contestant Involvement in Local Rodeos** – There is a need for contestants to be more involved in promoting rodeo locally. The contestants come to town and leave after the performance. Fans do not have time to meet them. Contestants should be required to participate in fan meet and greets, autograph signing, local sponsor visits, etc. at the local rodeo level. Each contestant would be required to make “X” number of local appearances per year and may chose which rodeos.
- **Top Contestants in Performances** – The top contestants need to compete during the rodeo performances and not slack. The marketability of the rodeo in many local areas depends on the “Star Factor” or those contestants with recognized names in the business.
- **Uniformity of Entry Fees** – Entry fees should be uniform for all rodeos and events. This would do away with the fact that some rodeos have a large total purse due to the number and amount of entries fees paid. By doing this the contestants are truly running for the added money not other contestant’s money.
- **Contestant Loyalty** – Committees expressed a concern that the contestants were not loyal to a particular rodeo. It is asked that PRCA assist with educational opportunities on how to attract contestants besides added money.
- **Encourage Circuit Participation** – PRCA should encourage all contestants to compete in the Circuit System. This would strengthen circuit finals and build a local fan base.