

Cal Poly Rodeo Breakaway Jackpot Fundraiser

A Senior Project

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By

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Introduction

Every team member of the Cal Poly Rodeo team is required to bring in a certain amount of sponsorship money to help put on the annual Poly Royal Rodeo each April. While this money helps a lot, more money is still needed to cover the cost of production for Cal Poly Rodeo. This is where a breakaway roping jackpot will come in to play and help cover some additional production costs.

For this senior project, the authors plan on hosting a breakaway jackpot fundraiser for Cal Poly Rodeo. A breakaway jackpot consists of girl contestants roping three calves as fast as they can. The fastest average time overall of the three times added up is the winner of the jackpot. This project will allow the authors to learn what it takes to successfully put on a breakaway roping. In order to put on a successful breakaway roping jackpot, sponsors will be needed. The sponsors will be helping the future of agriculture, as most students who enter the rodeo are agricultural students that use their winnings to help pay for school tuition.

Background

The Cal Poly Rodeo team has been around since 1939, when it consisted of a mere 15 team members, and is now made up of over 70 team members (Cal Poly, 2019). Not only has the team grown exponentially over the years, but the Poly Royal Rodeo has also grown rapidly. The first Poly Royal Rodeo was held in 1950, with only 4,000 spectators. In 2018, the Poly Royal Rodeo had approximately 11,000 spectators (Cal Poly, 2019). In 2016, Head Coach Ben Londo, decided that the Poly Royal Rodeo had outgrown the practice arena.

The Poly Royal Rodeo was held in Spanos Stadium for the first time in 2017 and had a sold-out crowd. Spanos Stadium allowed for more spectators, although putting a rodeo on inside a football stadium requires a lot of money, as the entire arena setup all must be brought into the stadium to be set up prior. Getting all of the materials and equipment inside the stadium in a short amount of time requires a lot of people working as well. With everything that must be done, a large sum of money is needed.

Every team member of the Cal Poly Rodeo team is required to bring in a certain amount of sponsorship money to help put this rodeo on. While this money helps a lot, more money is still needed to cover the cost of production for Cal Poly Rodeo. This is where the breakaway roping jackpot will come in to play and help cover some additional production costs.

The following breakaway rules are directly from the Women's Professional Rodeo Association and can be used in breakaway jackpots for reference and fairness of the sport (WPRA, 2020).

- The calf's whole head must pass through the loop or the contestant will be disqualified.
- The loop must be drawn up around the neck with no extremities in the loop and in front of the tail head, when string breaks.

- If any extremities are in the loop when string breaks, ex. Figure 8 a tail or leg, rope dropped below tail head, etc., the run will be considered a no time. If the string breaks with the extremity in loop and then goes back around the neck of the calf, the run will still be a “no time.”
- If an extremity gets in the loop after the flagger has dropped flag, the run will be legal.
- If an official is available, a spotter will be positioned on the opposite side from the judge, to watch for extremities in the loop, when the string breaks
- Judges and secretary draw per PRCA procedures
- Score maybe same as PRCA Tie Down Roping
- Barrier malfunctions same as PRCA
- Draw of cattle follows PRCA procedures. Reruns on cattle may not be drawn before the completion of previous runs.

Methodology

The authors have talked to multiple breakaway roping professionals and producers, such as Jackie Crawford, Lari Dee Guy, and Ty Yost, to get information on what it takes to put on a successful jackpot (Crawford, J., 2020). Each emphasized that you must run the jackpot in an organized, timely manner for people to want to return. Adding awards and money was also suggested. The plan to get the event scheduled and carry out this project will be to continually talk to these jackpot experts and collaborate with the Cal Poly Rodeo Coach, Ben Londo. The authors will also be sending out a sponsorship form to companies and families who are already close to the Cal Poly Rodeo program in order to raise money and receive awards to be used for the breakaway jackpot.

In the process of planning and putting this breakaway jackpot on, the authors realized that there are a lot more steps than initially expected. Below, the authors have listed out step-by-step how they went about planning this jackpot, how the jackpot was put on, and what they did after the jackpot was over. There are three sections; planning phase, day of jackpot, and post event phase, that will help serve as a guide through each step of putting on a successful breakaway roping jackpot fundraiser.

Planning Phase

- Talk to Ben Londo, Cal Poly Rodeo Coach, to approve hosting breakaway jackpot at the Cal Poly Rodeo arena as a fundraiser for Cal Poly Rodeo
- Approve date for jackpot
- Create agenda and email template for contacting sponsors
 - Make calls and emails to sponsors about donating awards for jackpot prizes
 - Make calls and emails to sponsors about additional added money for incentive
- Create flyers with jackpot information for social media

- Flyer must include: date, location, time, cost, number of rounds, Cal Poly Rodeo fundraiser, cash only
- Post flyer on Cal Poly Rodeo page and personal social media pages
- Organize awards and added money to be given out to winners at jackpot
- Buy nylon and cotton string that will be used to attach rope to saddle horn
- Create list of jobs for day-of jackpot help
 - Announcer
 - Timer
 - Chute help
 - Catch pen help
 - Back gate help
 - Cattle run up
 - Tractor driver
 - Barrier puller
 - Flagger
 - Spotter
 - Put up banners
 - Take down banners
 - Set Up Lane
- Assign people for each help position
- Invite sponsors and the boosters to come out and watch the event
- Get approximately \$200 in change

Day of Jackpot

- Cut the nylon and cotton string that will be used to attach rope to saddle horn
- Take entries and money; don't let them enter until they have paid entry fee
- When contestants enter have them write down their email, so we can send a survey for them to fill out giving us feedback on the event
- Set up the barrier
- Rake boxes and drag the arena so the ground is smooth and worked up
- Make sure everyone knows the rules, such as bell collar catch only and let them know what the barrier is set at
- Allow for 2 burn cows, more if needed, so the girls can learn the start
- Draw the entries and print out the draw
- Make sure all help is in position
- Help make sure the event runs smoothly by:
 - Keeping cattle run up
 - Keeping the arena clear
 - Making sure the participants are in the box ready to go when called

- Drag the arena after every round to keep it smooth and worked up
- Stay watching the roping and make sure the cattle are fair and reruns are given when appropriate
- Make sure the announcer has the list of sponsors to be able to thank them throughout the event
- Once the entries close, we need to calculate the payout depending on the amount of entries
- Make sure to talk to sponsors and boosters that are at the event and thank them for coming
- Announce results of the jackpot
- Get pictures of the winners with the awards

Post Event Phase

- Post the pictures of the winners on Cal Poly Rodeo page and personal social media pages
- Make flyers that have the sponsors names or logos and post on social media thanking them for their support
- Get the money raised for Cal Poly Rodeo and give it to Ben Londo
- Fundraiser breakaway jackpot is complete

Results

The authors' breakaway jackpot fundraiser was successfully planned out in every category. Sponsor emails were sent out to prospective sponsors and companies, flyers were designed and posted on the Cal Poly Rodeo and personal social media accounts, student rodeo athletes were lined out to help during the jackpot, and contestants were excited to enter. Six individual sponsorships totaled \$2,000 in added money for the winning pot. This would allow the winners to be awarded additional money which is a good incentive to draw in more contestants.

Five additional sponsors donated awards that would be given out to the winners of the breakaway jackpot. The items donated were Kings Ropes shirts and caps, Mad Cow Company bracelet, Cactus ropes and caps, Best Ever pad and goodie bag, and a Ricotti's Saddle Co gift card. The authors created another flyer with the sponsors' names as a way to thank them for their support. Unfortunately, the authors' Cal Poly Rodeo breakaway jackpot fundraiser was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

While the authors were unable to host the event due to the restrictions from the global pandemic, the overall planning of the event was successful. All of the initial planning went

without an issue, responses from sponsors were received promptly, and the awards and added money was mailed back to sponsors in a timely manner. If this project were to be repeated, the authors would do everything the same as for the steps involved in the planning phases.

The only part of the project that would need to be changed is the actual breakaway roping jackpot fundraiser being able to take place. The event was looking to be successful by the many reactions on the event posts on social media. The authors had over 50 people reach out asking about the event and if it was going to be postponed. Postponing the event was a consideration, until the authors realized they were unsure when this global pandemic would end and when restrictions would be lifted. Therefore, the authors' Cal Poly Rodeo Breakaway Jackpot Fundraiser was cancelled and added money and awards received from sponsors were returned.

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