

## **PBR ON ANIMAL WELFARE**

- PBR has, through its fifteen year history, taken the position that there are **two great athletes** in every 8 second ride. The bulls are treated with as much respect as the human athletes that ride them. A portion of PBR's Animal Welfare Policy summarizes the great respect that everyone associated with the organization shares for our animal athletes:

🕒 **Welfare and Treatment of PBR's Animal Athletes Policy:** Professional Bull Riding is fully committed to ensuring the much deserved health, safety, and respect of each bull that enters a PBR Arena. To mistreat a bull would be a detriment to the sport upon which a bull rider's own livelihood depends. Therefore, the care and treatment of PBR Bulls is a top priority to those who govern and/or participate in PBR events.

- Since PBR's inception in 1996, there have been approximately 94,400 "outs" (bull ride attempts) at approximately 960 events across all of the series operated by or sanctioned by Professional Bull Riders, Inc. for an average of 98.33 outs per event. Of those outs, approximately 35,000 occurred at roughly 265 elite level (Built Ford Toughs Series level) events which PBR operates directly. The balance of the outs occurred at PBR's sanctioned events which are operated by independent third party promoters in accordance with PBR's rules and guidelines, including animal welfare practices and policies.

- **Bull Injuries:** There are approximately 60 bulls at a one day event, 90 bulls at a two day event and 110 bulls at a three day event. A bull bucks only one time per day and no more than two times at a typical event. Approximately 30-40 of the bulls at a typical two day event will buck only once at that event.

- One bull will suffer a minor injury (muscle pull, scratch) every 8 events or 786 outs.

- Bulls that are determined to have an injury are not allowed to compete again until fully recovered, which is generally one to four weeks.

- One bull will suffer a career ending injury every 100 events or 9,833 outs.

- Bulls that suffer a career ending injury are retired to stud and live the balance of their lives as healthy, fully capable breeding bulls. Their injuries do not impede the quality of life or ability to function, but do prevent them from competing at the PBR level as a bucking athlete.

- Four bulls have been euthanized as a result of injuries sustained over the 960 PBR events held since 1992, which translates to 1 out of every 23,735 outs.
  - The bulls that have sustained life threatening injuries at PBR events have been taken to large animal hospitals for treatment and care. Three of the animal athletes that have sustained life threatening injuries received hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical treatments and lived for extended periods of time (up to two years) before the injuries sustained required euthanization.
  - A bucking bull has a .004% chance of sustaining a life threatening injury at a PBR event.

### **PBR Safety & Welfare Measures**

PBR has proactively, and of our own accord, initiated and implemented a number of projects designed to foster and support the welfare of our animal athletes.

- PBR initiated a redesign of the traditional rodeo bucking chute aimed at improving rider and bull safety. The design has eliminated (from the time it was implemented through today) leg injuries suffered by bulls in the bucking chutes, which is one of the most common career ending and life threatening injuries sustained by bulls.
- PBR initiated a redesign of the traditional rodeo lead up alleys and holding areas to further mitigate the risk of injuries to the bulls.
- PBR worked with stock contractors to establish guidelines for the transportation of bulls to and from events. Some of those guidelines include:
  - Bulls ride in trailers with air ride suspensions to reduce the risk of injury during transportation.
  - Bulls are hauled for no more than ten hours at a time and given an equal amount of time to rest before resuming travel.
  - Bulls are housed at local ranch facilities with proper pen size and space per bull in each local market in which an event is conducted. Bulls are trucked to and from the local facility to the event venue each day.
- PBR is working with leading veterinarians and the American Association of Bovine Practitioners (a part of the American Veterinary Medicine Association) to review and document PBR's animal welfare policy and practices. PBR intends to secure a written and published approval of PBR's guidelines by the AABP and AVMA.

- The welfare of PBR's animal athletes is a higher priority than any other consideration when making decisions with respect to animal welfare, including the financial impact of the decisions. One of the best examples of PBR's commitment to animal welfare ahead of profit was the Hawaii All-Star event held in November 2006. PBR had an option to ship bulls to Hawaii via boat which would have taken seven days but at considerably less cost than other alternatives. PBR determined that the welfare of the animals would be compromised if shipped by sea and made the decision to invest nearly \$350,000 in bull related expenses (versus less than \$100,000 if shipped by sea) to fly all the necessary bulls in specialized containers for the event.
- The value of the bulls themselves, both to the contractors who own and breed them, and to the Professional Bull Riders organization as well, would ensure that every effort and safeguard is in place to protect the bulls from any treatment or situation that would adversely affect their ability to continue performing or their future as a breeding bull. Many of the bulls currently performing on the PBR tour are valued in the six figure range, and even the lesser known bulls are far too valuable for their owners or the PBR to allow them to be injured or mistreated.

### **Care of Animal Athletes**

- Bulls receive 25-30 lbs of a special blend of mixed grain per day. Blend varies depending on the bull's needs and the stock contractor.
- Bulls receive 20 lbs of Alfalfa or Alfalfa-grass blend per day.
- Bulls receive a B-12 complex vitamin shot every two weeks.
- Bulls receive a health inspection any time they have to cross state lines.
- Bulls are only allowed to travel a maximum of 10 hours per day. After 10 hours, the bulls are rested for 12-14 hours.
- Bulls are standing in 6-10 inches of sawdust shavings during transport.
- Each stock contractor has a local veterinarian on call for their bulls.

### **Bucking Bulls Q&A**

Like humans, the PBR bucking bulls come in an array of shapes, sizes, and colors, and like humans their own personalities and talents make them unique in their environment. The PBR has a vast number of championship-caliber bulls that compete on the PBR's multi-tiered tour structure. The bulls receive impeccable treatment and are often considered "one of the family."

Here are some frequently asked questions about the welfare of a PBR bucking bull and the equipment used in professional bull riding.

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q:** Can any bull compete in a PBR event?

**A:** Not every bull can compete in a PBR event. Saying a bull is suitable for PBR competition is like saying that any human athlete is fit enough to compete in the Olympic Games. PBR bulls are the highest caliber bucking bulls in the business. Many are products of elite breeding programs that for years have been fine-tuning the important

role that genetics play in producing a great bucking bull. A majority of PBR bulls are bred and born to compete in the PBR arena.

Q: What does the average bull weigh?

A: The average PBR bucking bull weighs in at 1700-1800 pounds. PBR bucking bulls very rarely weight less than 1200 pounds, but at the high-end a bull could weigh 2000-2200 pounds.

Q: What does a bull eat?

A: Bulls eat high-protein feed and alfalfa hay. High-protein feed helps the bulls keep their strength and endurance. Premium alfalfa hay is considered high-quality hay because it provides nutrients that help keep a bull healthy.

Q: Where do bulls live?

A: The bulls live on large ranches where they get plenty of air and exercise. There are many ranches from coast to coast in the United States.

Q: What is the average PBR bull worth?

A: The monetary value of a bucking bull depends greatly upon his proven performance in the arena; however most PBR bulls are worth at least \$10,000, with a few boasting prices of more than \$500,000. A PBR bull is ranked just like the PBR bull riders. When a bull consistently receives high marks, his value increases. The higher the ranking in areas such as overall performance, average buck off time, buck-off percentage and average rider score, the higher the conceivable price tag.

Q: What is the lifespan of a bucking bull?

A: Bucking bulls often live well into their teens which is considered geriatric for any bull. Though a bucking bull may often be in his prime as an athlete around age five or six, many bulls buck past the age of 10, and when they retire from competition they're used as sires in bucking bull breeding programs.

Q: What makes a bull buck?

A: The success of bucking bull breeding programs around the world has proven that genetics is the most prevalent factor in determining a bull's desire and ability to buck.

One of the most common misconceptions about bull riding is that the flank strap is tied to the animal's testicles; this is far from the truth. This is a soft rope that is loosely tied around the bull's midsection in the flank area and slipped onto the bull when it enters the alley to the chute. The slack is taken out of it before the ride, but not tied too tight, and the strap is removed immediately after the ride. (Todd Dewey, *Las Vegas Review Journal*)

It has nothing to do with the genitals as some uneducated detractors would attest. In fact care is taken to ensure that the genitals are not involved as that would adversely affect the performance of the bulls. The flank rope is more of an annoyance than anything else, and the bulls will kick their hind legs out at the height of their bucking action in an effort to dislodge it, resulting in a more uniform and less erratic performance.

Q: What is a bull rope?

A: The bull rope is what the bull rider hangs on to throughout his ride. It is wrapped around the chest of the bull directly behind the animal's front legs. At the bottom of the rope hangs a metal bell designed to give the rope some weight so that it will fall off the bull as soon as the rider is bucked off or dismounts the animal. The bell has smooth, round edges and does not harm the bull in any way.

Q: What is the difference between a Conventional and a Brazilian bull rope?

A: The most apparent difference is that the ropes are pulled from opposite sides. The Conventional rope is pulled from the riding hand side while the Brazilian rope is pulled from the free hand side.

There are also subtle differences in the way the ropes are braided. With a conventional bull rope, the loop (the knotted part of the rope used for adjustment) is on the free hand side of the handle while the tail (the portion of rope that is run through the loop and back to the hand) is on the riding hand side of the handle. The Brazilian rope is braided with the loop on the riding hand side and the tail on the free hand side.

There is also a difference between the Brazilian and Conventional ropes in the design of the handle. In a Conventional rope the hand is placed with the little finger tight against the free hand side of the handle while in the Brazilian rope the web of the hand is placed tight to the riding hand side of the handle.

Q: Do the spurs worn by a bull rider cut or scratch a bull?

A: Bull riders wear spurs that are required to have dull, loosely locked rowels (the wheel-like part of the spur that comes into contact with the animal). The spurs help a rider maintain his balance by giving him added grip with his feet. The spurs do not cut or scratch a bull's hide, which is seven times thicker than a human's skin.

Q: How many miles do bulls travel on the PBR circuit?

A: The PBR has an extensive network of stock contractors who are located in all parts of North America. This means that no matter what city the PBR visits, the best bulls are provided for the event. The bulls arrive at the arena at least 24 hours prior to an event which helps ensure that the bulls are acclimated, rested, well fed and hydrated prior to competition.

Q: Is there a veterinarian on-site at all PBR events?

A: There is always a veterinarian on site at Built Ford Tough Series events. If there appears to be a sick or injured bull at an event, the veterinarian is notified immediately. Health papers are also required on all animals arriving at an event. They are inspected as they are unloaded prior to competition.

PBR stock contractors treat their bulls with respect because they are a huge investment. These animals are truly gifted, so they are given the best care imaginable.