

Rodeo Timekeeper



**Thank you for your support of the
Montana High School Rodeo Association members**

Qualifications of Rodeo Time Keepers

1. Knowledge and love of the sport of rodeo.
2. Freedom to spend the time without having to worry about children, horses, etc.
3. Precise knowledge of the rules and the ability to enforce them.
4. You must show integrity – be fair, be consistent, don't be biased.
5. You must have the ability to concentrate – don't anticipate. Here are some helpful hints:
 - a. Know where to look for the barrier, flagger, etc.
 - b. Look at the correct position at the right time.
 - c. Don't try to see something that isn't there.
6. A good timer notices everything in the rodeo but is seldom noticed. A good timer is considerate and courteous without sacrificing firmness.

Timers Checklist Before Each Performance

1. Arrive at the rodeo early enough to consult with the other timer, and be in position in the announcers stand at least 15-20 minutes early.
2. Have a rule book readily available.
3. Be aware of all rules pertaining to your job.
4. Have plenty of sharpened pencils available. (Pencils don't smear in the rain.) Usually the judge needs extras also (although this usually isn't your job).
5. Have at least two (2) digital watches (one for each timer) plus backups in case of a failure. A sweep watch is handy in timing rough stock events, but not mandatory. Try to use digital watches with the feature "lap time."
6. Have a whistle(s) available.
7. Acquire timers' sheets from the secretary and go over any changes such as medical outs, notified turn outs, etc.
8. Position yourself in the crow's nest.
9. Agree in advance who will time which rough stock event. If using automatic buzzer, agree who will serve as a back-up.
10. Agree who will inform the announcer of the contestants' times.
11. Go to the bathroom before the performance begins.

Timers Checklist During the Rodeo

1. PAY ATTENTION! You can't watch the rodeo!
2. Your foremost concern at the rodeo is the contestant.
Bar any extra people from the crow's nest (spectators, kids, parents, etc.)
Discourage the secretary from setting up her office there.

3. Small talk, gossip, talking of any kind has no place in the announcer's stand while timing a rodeo. If you're talking you're not PAYING ATTENTION.
4. Be precise! Your job is not to watch the rodeo. Watch the judges, flaggers, etc.
5. You must work from the same position the entire rodeo. Make sure you are close to the announcer. ("Position" means somewhere in the announcer's stand, in the same general location. Don't move away from there.)
6. The timer who times the first performance of the rough stock event must time that event for each performance thereafter.
7. Remember that you're the timer, not the judge.
8. If both clocks malfunction, or at least one timer doesn't get the time, contestant will get animal back. If there are barrier penalties, then the start will be lap and tap. (Do you know what "lap and tap" means?)
9. Watch the judges closely for penalties, broken barriers, one foot in team roping, etc., before announcing the official times.
10. In the Barrel and Pole Bending, record the average time in the "Backup" column, electric eye time in the "Official" column, penalties in other columns, and total time in the "Total" column (Official time + penalties: $17.61 + 5 = 22.61$). In the Timed Events, write the Averaged time under "Time", penalties in "Penalties" Column, and the total of both in the "Total" Column. If a contestant is disqualified or gets a no time, mark a line through the time and in the total column write "NT". Do NOT Erase!
11. Concentrate, don't anticipate.
12. Don't be afraid to tell behind-the-chutes spectators/help or those in front of the barrier flag to move if they are in the way.
13. Don't be afraid to admit if you have anticipated the flag, missed the flag, etc., and also, don't be afraid to insist that you have the correct time.
14. You have an obligation to make sure the announcer announces the time or score. Either tell the announcer, or point to the figure on the timer's sheet if you can't get a word in edgewise.

Actual Timing

1. Use digital watches. Those digital watches with the features "lap time" are good to have, especially when the Flagger makes a mistake, and especially good when timing those events when contestants can carry two loops.
2. NHSRA rules state that times must be recorded to the hundredth (X.XX).
3. Use your index finger and not your thumb. Scientific studies have shown your index finger is more accurate than your thumb.

4. Timing the riding events:

- a. NRA, NHSRA, NIRA, PRCA rule: Time starts when the animal's inside front shoulder passes the plane of the chute and shall be timed for 8 (eight) seconds.
- b. You must be in such a position to see the animal's front shoulder. Sometimes it is hard. You cannot watch the ride? Watch-the-watch. At about 7.5 seconds take a deep breath and blow (for a couple of seconds). You must blow the whistle at the eight second mark even if the rider bucks off; you are supposed to be watching the watch. If you have access to a sweep hand watch, use it during the rough stock events; it is much easier to time.
- c. Questions:
 1. What do you do if the horse backs out of the chute and stands there with his front feet still inside the chute?
 2. What do you do if the animal takes a couple of steps forward out of the chute and stands there with his back feet still inside the chute?
- d. It is not necessary for you to record the score, but you may have to help the announcer get the score from the judges.
- e. At some rodeos you may be assisted by a judge, or rodeo personnel who flags the starting time from the chute. If you cannot see the front shoulder of the animal, ask a director to flag the start for you.

5. Timing the timed events:

- a. Time should be taken between two flags with the average of two times.
- b. Make sure ahead of time you can see the barrier flag, and make sure you know where the flagger is.
- c. Make sure you know ahead of time what the time limits are. Each association has its own time limit. **MHSRA Time Limit Rule: In all Timed Events there is a 30 second time limit. Example: 29.99 + penalties is a legal time. 30.00 on a timer's watch is a No Time.**
- d. Recording times: The MHSRA and NHSRA require that all times be recorded in hundredths (X.XX). The PRCA, NRA, and NIRA all require that times be recorded in tenths (X.X). The NRA requires that the hand times as well as the electric eye times, in the barrel racing be recorded in hundredths (X.XX).
- e. Begin the time when the barrier flag pops. Turn your attention immediately to the field flagger and stop the time when he flags the contestant.
- f. Consult with the other timer, average your times. Inform the announcer and record it on the timer's sheets. See Averaging times.

- g. Record the times even if the judge flags out the contestant; cross it out or mark a line through it, then write a "NT". Don't erase, even if you are using pencil.
- h. Record time + penalties and total time. Example: $(6.51 + 5 + 10 = 21.51)$.
- i. Reading the electric eye: Read only to the hundredth, drop the thousandth, do not average it or round up or down. You must record both the electric eye time and the hand time. If the electric eye fails, the Average Time will be the time the contestant gets. (Note the differences in the rules among the various associations.)
- j. Watch the flagger at all times, and keep this rule in mind: any timed event, if an animal escapes from the arena, flag will be dropped and the watches stopped (Record that time for later reference). Contestant will get animal back with lap and tap start, and time already spent will be added to the time used in qualifying. Any penalties (i.e. broken barrier) will also be added.

Averaging Times

1. Timers must use hand-held digital watches and record the average of the two times, to the hundredths at MHSRA sanctioned rodeos.
2. Determine the difference between the two times.
3. Divide this number in half.
4. Add it to the slower time.
5. The contestant always gets the benefit. That is, don't average up as they do at track meets or swim meets.
6. It is common for two timers to be several tenths apart, but not several seconds off. If you are, use the faster time unless one timer realizes they anticipated the barrier flag or the flagman's flag, or unless one timer realizes he/she is late or early in starting or stopping the stop watch.
7. If you are consistently seconds apart something is wrong. Maybe the watches are not functioning properly. Are the batteries dead? Maybe you are not PAYING ATTENTION!
8. If one of the two timers misses the start or stop or is delayed in starting or stopping the watch, or if the watch used by one timer malfunctions, that timer shall declare the problem to the other time and only the time recorded by the other timer will be used.
9. If both timers miss the start or stop of the run, or if both watches malfunction, the contestant will receive a re-run. You can see from this that PAYING ATTENTION is vital!

10. If you are inexperienced (never having timed a rodeo before) spend a rodeo timing behind the two experienced and/or certified timers during the actual rodeo and slack to increase your confidence and skills.

MHSRA RULE: To become a certified timer for MHSRA, a person must take a certified timers course (MHSRA, NRA, PRCA) **AND** shadow at least one rodeo. After being certified, if there is a State Director or judge's report of an issue, then the timer must shadow another rodeo before timing an MHSRA event again. If there is a second report of an issue, the MHSRA board of directors will review the timer's continued certification.

11. Here are some examples on averaging times:

- a. Times on watches: 9.06 – 9.08
Difference of 0.02. Divide in half = 0.01. Add to slower time.
Time = 9.07
- b. Times on watches: 8.11 – 8.50
Difference of 0.39. Divide in half = 0.19. Add to slower time.
Time = 8.30
- c. Times on watches: 9.08 – 8.81
Difference of 0.27. Divide in half = 0.13. Add to slower time.
Time = 8.94
- d. Times on watches: 7.66 – 7.56
Difference of 0.10. Divide in half = 0.05. Add to slower time.
Time = 7.61
- e. Times on watches: 3.28 – 3.37
Difference of 0.09. Divide in half = 0.04. Add to slower time.
Time = 3.32
- f. Times on watches: 5.16 – 5.02
Difference of 0.14. Divide in half = 0.07. Add to slower time.
Time = 5.09
- g. Times on watches: 9.55 – 9.87
Difference of 0.32. Divide in half = 0.16. Add to slower time.
Time = 9.71

