

Fred Jones Credits Horse With Cow Sense

There is something special about a man's love for his horse, especially when the two work together in rodeo events and the outcome depends on the horse's ability in every sense of the

word

All a person has to do is mention horses to Fred Jones. His eyes light up and he begins to talk about his horse, Red Stormy. He has had several horses but this registered quarter horse has all the qualities that he has sought for sometime.

However, before Stormy is discussed further, it should be stated why a good horse means so much to Fred.

Fred Jones, maintenance man

with Northwestern Bell Telephone company at O'Neill is a calf roper. He enters as many rodeos as possible, traveling on weekends to take in a rodeo within three states, Nebraska, South Dakota and Iowa, to try his hand.

He was born and raised at Ardmore, Okla., on his folks farm, brought up in real cowboy country. His dad, Charles Jones, has competed in rodeo competition most of his life and it is only natural that Fred should inherit that interest.

Most Oklahoma farm and ranch kids learn roping at an early age since it plays an important role in the life of cattlemen there. The terrain is rougher than that of Nebraska and it is not always practical or possible for the owners to have their cattle in close for constant care. Therefore, the youths, accompanying their dads during the working day, soon learn to rope the cattle out on the range for immediate doctoring, mainly for screw worms.

With a background like this, it wasn't too long before Fred was ready to try a little competing. His first try at roping was when he was 10 years old and he entered a goat roping contest. Since that time he progressed to calf roping and has entered a great many rodeo contests. He has been competing in Nebraska the past five years and his best time so far has been 12 seconds, winning him first place money. He has bettered this time but not in competition where so much depends on the start of the calf and other factors. There is no world record in the roping event because calves and starting methods differ and it would be impossible to judge fairly.

The fastest time Fred ever heard of was nine seconds, and he saw a calf tied at 10 seconds. However, these are exceptional timings. Usually 12 or 13 seconds will get you in the money. So far this year, Fred has been

in two rodeos. He placed fourth at Scotland, S. D., and at Chamberlain, S. D., he placed third in the first go around and tied for first in the second go around. He averaged out second in the money.

Now about his horse. Fred's dad had been keeping a close lookout for sometime for just the right quarter horse. One day he notified Fred that he thought he had found him and when Fred got to Milo, Okla., and had watched Stormy for a while, he knew that this was his horse, regardless of price.

A good roping pony has many qualities—an early speed, the ability to stop hard with the right kind of jerk on the cattle; proper working of the rope—backing up in such a manner that the rope is taut so the rider can handle his calf easier. In Fred's

words, "just good, plain cow sense", and Stormy has this and all the rest better than any horse he has seen yet.

One of Fred's biggest thrills was seeing the national finals at Dallas, Tex., last year and watching the top 15 contestants compete on the finest stock from the United States, furnished by some 200 RCA producers.

His wife, the former Pat Whitcomb of Ravenna, doesn't do much riding but she enjoys accompanying her husband to the rodeos. Plans are already being made for their daughters, Jody, 6, and Melissa, 2½, for some barrel racing sometime in the future. In the meantime the little gals are practicing on their pony, "Big Boy", under the watchful eyes of their dad, Cowboy Fred.

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