

If you are going to host a Pro Rodeo you should up the bar and have Pro Dirt! The information is available and there are WPRA guidelines to go by for proper ground preparation. With a little effort, your event will be more professional and the rewards immense.

### Basic Ground Preparation Equipment

There are basic elements for arena ground preparation; water, the right tool and a tractor with a competent driver. The Reveal 4-N-1 is the tool of choice for most barrel racing producers.

Don Reveal sold the first tool in 1990 and the Reveal 4-N-1 is now in 47 states and multiple countries. Reveal's design was unique and has been copied with poor results. The concept of chisel plows, channel blades, harrow teeth and rollers are not unique. Putting them all together in one tool was artistry for dirt.

You can take the one tool and rip the ground, level it, pack it and fluff it up and make it look pretty. Whether you are a once a year rodeo committee man or the owner of a million dollar facility, The Reveal 4-N-1 is a cost-effective, versatile tool and can save time, money and effort.

Commercial arenas should pay close attention to the interests of those leasing their facility. You can get technical with your dirt and go to the next level addressing your base, pad and cushion. If you own a commercial facility, you may want to have your dirt analyzed by expert Jim Brown of TexSand Equestrian Service.

### Tex-Sand Equestrian Services

#### Jim Brown

Tex-Sand Equestrian Services, LLC is a total equine surface solution. Jim Brown works with every aspect of the equine surface industry to provide you the most economical, positive solution for your surface needs (whatever they may be). Brown has taken samples from arenas and race tracks all over the U.S. establishing a quality footing for barrel racing and rodeo arenas coast to coast.

"Taking the proper first step, arena soil sampling/evaluation (and water quality), a committee or producer can enter a technically-sound path to first understand the existing conditions and how they may be remediated. There are times where it is more feasible to remove the existing materials and replace, but an evaluation should first be completed to understand why these materials need to be replaced, how the new materials will be any different, and what conditions are present that may lead to the deterioration (performance degradation) of the replacement materials. It is not proper logic to simply change out a "bad" soil and replace it with a like soil (or one which may simply revert to bad performance). It is more logical to first seek to understand, gain enlightenment, and come up with a clear plan to move forward. A clear plan includes a renovation strategy as well as an



photo by Hubbell

## Could this have been prevented?

ongoing management/maintenance plan."

Brown continues, "We are affected most by the size, and shape of the particles that make up the sand, clay, silt, and how these components reacts to water. These are the main building blocks for a good surface, and with today's amendment market you can adjust your surface now easier than ever."

"Sand is our biggest component in the cushion, next is clay, then silt, and the critical factor moisture. The percentages of each component varies with each event; thereby helping to firm, or soften, according to the stresses on the hoof. Allowing the surface to respond properly to support the horse and the stresses he is applying to the surface, provides safety for the horse and rider."

"The ratios of these building blocks for the different events are the guidelines to establishing a more consistent surface from arena to arena, and from coast to coast. Commercial Arenas should of course be held to higher standards and in order to have sanctioned events, the arena surface should meet basic specifications," says Brown.

### WPRA President Jimmie Munroe

Jimmie Munroe is a barrel racer in the arena and an advocate for barrel racers out of the arena. She was a five-time Women's Professional Rodeo Association champion. Munroe served as president of the WPRA (initially called the Girls Rodeo Association) from 1978-1993.

Munroe, a great negotiator, was voted WPRA president again in 2011. "I think it's important for the president to create an environment that is respectful of all the views of the different directors. When it's all said and done, we're a team. We should be able to move forward with the same goal."

"Nothing affects our members more than good ground. They spend so much on their horse's maintenance. It's important to have the optimum ground available for competition. I think with the organization of SAF and possibly having a seminar for the people in charge of the ground, we can improve the current situation immensely. We need to communicate with our rodeo committees and offer good, sound, professional advice when they have

questions about ground preparation. It's just not as easy as some may think to keep the ground consistent throughout several performances."

### WPRA Justin Best Footing Award

Every year the Women's Professional Rodeo Association recognizes rodeo committees that put forth an extra effort to ensure their rodeo has the safest and most consistent ground possible for barrel racing. Through a long and important partnership with Justin Boots, WPRA members and Directors vote for the committees who will receive this special honor.

Committee awards include cash bonuses (ranging from \$350-\$1000 with approximately \$24,000 in total being paid out), plaques and at certain award levels a pair of Justin ostrich or lizard boots.

"The WPRA has long felt that safe and consistent ground not only benefits the barrel race but also benefits the entire rodeo," says WPRA President Jimmie Munroe. "We are grateful to Justin for developing and supporting us with this amazing program and to the committees who put forth the extra effort to ensure a great and safe barrel race."

### WPRA Gold Card Member

This past summer at a PRCA rodeo in Texas, a barrel racer was severely injured. During a performance her horse slipped on the third barrel. His back end went straight out behind him slamming her left leg up into her pelvic bone.

"As the paramedics approached me, I told them I had broken my hip. I was transported by ambulance to an area hospital. After several MRIs I received the results; my hip socket was shattered as well as the ball joint on my femur, my pelvis was fractured front and rear and my L-1 and L-5 vertebrae was also fractured, along with two broken toes. I was a mess."

"Being a member of the WPRA for 28 years, I have always been concerned with the ground conditions. I have mainly rodeoed in Texas and watched rodeo committees work hard to make sure the ground is good, safe and consistent. I have also seen committees and rodeo producers who don't care. Unfortunately, my injury was due solely to bad ground. The ground is something that is manageable with just a little effort. I strongly support SAF and their efforts to bring barrel racing and the sport of rodeo up to the level that other professional sports have achieved."

### United States Team Roping Championships Production/Facility Assistance Mike Qualls

Mike Qualls has assisted contractors and producers with their on-site productions on behalf of the USTRC for nineteen years. This includes arena layout, coordination of facility locations and facil-