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Seward County 5 State Fair Adds Mutton Busting for Kids

Mutton Busting Planned for July 28

LIBERAL, KS - Get ready to ride! Seward County Five State Fair is proud to announce the addition of a Mutton Busting for kids to this year's events. No more standing at the fence or sitting in the stands wistfully watching bull and bronc riders show off their prowess - kids can now get in on the action.

"Kids who want to participate in this wild and wooly event must weigh 60 pounds or less," said Five State Fair Board Association Member Nancy Kletecka. "All kids must wear a helmet and their parents will need to sign a release form before they can participate. We will be furnishing the helmets. This is a fun event and gives younger kids an opportunity to participate in a rodeo type event."

Mutton Busting has been documented as having been introduced to the National Western Stock Show at least by the 1980s when an event was sponsored by Nancy Stockdale Cervi, a former rodeo queen.

"For those who are not familiar with this event, Mutton Busting is like riding a bucking horse only you are on sheep," Kletecka said, "The riders are much closer to the ground and the sheep don't buck - they just run in an attempt to get the rider off of their back."

The sheep are held still either in a small chute or by an adult handler while the child is placed on top of it in a riding position.

"Once the child is seated atop the sheep, the sheep is released and usually starts to run. It's not an 8-second ride - the majority of the contestants will fall off in less time than that."

Prizes will be awarded in the event for those who can stay on the longest.

There are no set rules for mutton busting other than to just have fun, according to Kletecka, and of course restrictions on who can participate which is based on their age, height and weight.

"These restrictions are in place to prevent injuries to the sheep," she explained. "And because we are concerned with keeping the rider and the sheep safe, we are restricting the use of such things as spurs."

Those interested in participating should be at the Beef Barn July 28 at 6 p.m., July 28.

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