

400 Plan to Protest Tobacco Sponsor

Bull riding event's branding spurs concern

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More than 400 children and adults from across Oklahoma will meet Saturday in downtown Oklahoma City to protest a bull-riding sponsorship from a tobacco company.

The protesters will urge [Professional Bull Riders Inc.](#) to drop [U.S. Smokeless Tobacco](#) as a sponsor. The [U.S. Smokeless Challenger Professional Bull Riders](#) Championship tour is in Oklahoma City this week.

The tobacco company, which makes [Skoal](#) and Copenhagen, is the title sponsor.

The protest will begin at 5 p.m. at the Brick Street circle on Reno, between the [Ford Center](#) and the [Cox Convention Center](#). Students Working Against Tobacco, a statewide youth movement that works to expose tobacco companies' youth marketing, will lead the protest.

"We're excited that the sport is growing so much in popularity," [Jennifer Fugate](#), a member of the anti-tobacco group, said in a news release. "But we're concerned that the PBR athletes who display tobacco branding on their clothing are sending the message that chewing tobacco is part of being a grown-up or cowboy."

The PBR Challenger Tour also will have smokeless tobacco samples, scoreboards, banners and ads.