

After they circled the sun dance lodge, the drummers were there and sang the chief's songs and white horse (riders) dance. This dance is in honor of the chiefs, anybody helping or taking part had to give a gift worthy of the chiefs or something of great value to them or to help some one whom they feel is in need. At this time the young men made their horses dance just like a high-school horse today. The old man or the older warriors made their horses walk backward and then forward at the closing of the song. These horses that were ridden in the sham battle were all given away to friends or different tribes. After this the participants of the sun dance went to their respective sacred lodges where their leader had a special prepared last meat for the four day ritual.

During the night their clothes were taken away from them by relatives and given a sheet and a breechcloth, red bead ornament around their shoulder to their waist. The sheet was worn during the day like a dress from the waist down, or a cover for the night. Articles furnished by the leader of the group was sage weed for the ankles, wrist, and hair, eagle bone whistles with an eagle plume on the end, painting of the participants according to their clan, painting of their faces was most remarkable, as you could hardly recognize one from another dancer. After this readiness you could sleep preparing for the run for the tree that was to be planted in the center of the sun dance lodge.

The workers or leaders had been working on the sacred pole. This ceremony was usually made by a man who had been wounded, and his helpers were warriors in their own right. They stripped the bark from the tree to make a cross. The trunk was painted as a human with the war colors of the Poncas, red and black. A black handkerchief was tied under the tree top fluttering to tell the Almighty, the prayers of the leaders, dancers and the people.

When this was completed four lodges were erected by the Sun Dance leaders for their participants, two on the east side and two on the west side of this, inside of the main camp. After this was done the dance leaders looked around for new dancers. A man was sent to the families who would likely have male members