

Amusement parks aren't so amusing

You know, I've always wondered why in the heck they call amusement parks, amusement parks. Tell me what is so amusing about running around a park all day riding rides that either make you sick or scare you to death. I mean, how many people go to an amusement park and say, "Hey, let's go ride on the train that goes around the park all day." No one.

Admit it. The first thing you do when you get through the turnstiles is head for the roller coaster or any other ride that bears the sign: This ride not suggested for people with heart conditions, pregnant women, or persons with back or neck problems. Or you look for the sign with a little person with an arm extended that says, "You must be this tall to ride this ride."

You search the park over for those intimidating signs and when you see one, the adrenalin starts pumping and you get psyched up for the big ride. And no matter how scared you really might be, you get in those long lines. Besides, you don't want to look like a coward in front of your little brother or girlfriend do you?

Why not ride the roller coaster eight times in a row after eating three chili dogs, two donuts, a Coke and three popsicles? That takes some real guts. And the knowledge that you may lose those guts.

So what is this big show of courage all about? Why does a person put himself through the trauma surrounding the roller coaster or any other heart-stopping ride? Well some people dive off cliffs and others ride roller coasters.

In order to fully understand the mentality of the "big ride" maniac, you must go into their backgrounds.

The first type of rider is the white knuckle type. This is the kind of person who has been forced to ride. For example, you see a father with his children in line and you just know he's saying, "Why in the world did I tell them I would ride this lousy ride." And the closer he gets to the ride, the whiter he gets. Looking at the man, you would think he was about to ascend Mt. Everest instead of ride on a stack of lumber with a few hills.

Then you have the high school crowd complete with cigarettes. And you know the high school girls

Rangers' Buddy Bell 'just unreal'

United Press International ARLINGTON — For those who enjoy being wrapped up in trivia, try this one.

What do Ed Brinkman, Roy Howell, Bill Madlock, Len Randle, Vic Harris, Mike Cubbage, Kurt Bevacqua and Toby Harrah have in common?

They all played third base for the Texas Rangers — along with 21 other people during the previous seven years of the club's existence.

But in the opening home stand of 1979, the Rangers 30th third baseman showed in a hurry that he could play the position better than any of the previous 29.

"I don't get excited too often out there," said second-year pitcher Steve Comer, "but when I saw what Buddy Bell was doing at third base I got pretty excited."

Bell labored for seven years with the Cleveland Indians and was a crowd favorite in Cleveland Stadium. But during the off-season, Bell was dealt to Texas in exchange for the last of the original Rangers — Toby Harrah. "I knew Toby had been popular here a long time," said Bell, 27. "I had second thoughts about coming here. I didn't know what to expect."

He found out what to expect in a hurry. Any player who routinely makes the tough play and often makes the spectacular one is going to have an instant fan club.

The Rangers sorely needed defensive help this season, having let games slip away time and again in the past few years because of lapses in the infield. Now, with Bell anchoring things at third, the club probably has its best defensive infield in history.

Bell knows that he will be in for a lot of action this year.

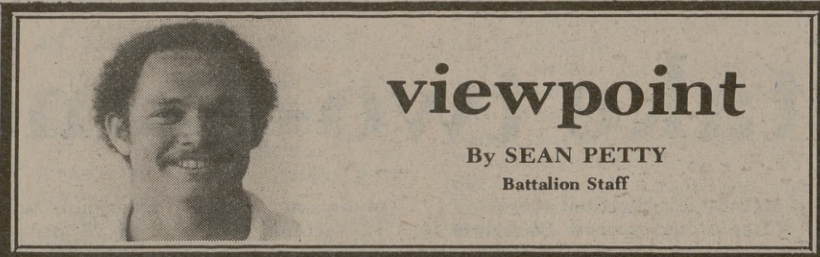
"We have a lot of sinker ball pitchers on this team," he said. "There are going to be a lot of balls hit at me. So far it's been great being here. I go 100 per cent all the time anyway, but if the fans back you up it makes you go that much harder."

Bell keynoted a series of superlative defensive plays made by the Rangers during their first home stand — a group of games which got the club off to its best start ever.

Pitcher Ferguson Jenkins was the beneficiary of some of Bell's handiwork and after seeing Bell in action Jenkins thinks the third baseman is in a class by himself.

The Rangers' new manager, Pat Corrales, takes all of Bell's heroics in stride. Corrales, along with the rest of the American League, has seen plenty of Bell over the past few years.

Buddy just has exceptional baseball instinct," Corrales said, "and not everybody has that. "And his reaction time is amazing. He is just unreal."



viewpoint

By SEAN PETTY
Battalion Staff

because they all have combs sticking out of their back pockets while all the guys have their shirts open and a couple of hickeys on their necks. But at least they really want to ride the hair-raising rides. I guess they

really get off to it man.

And the third type is your basic kid. The kind that runs from ride to ride, stays from dawn until midnight and thinks he somehow has some God-given right to cut in line at any point. And these little rug rats want to ride on every ride, they don't care what it is.

But the thing that amazes me most is the fact that all these people paid \$9.25 to get into Astroworld to have all this "fun." Maybe that explains why some people stay from

opening to closing. I could see some father telling his child, "If I'm paying that much, you're going to stay all day and you're going to have fun."

And it's not enough that you pay that outrageous sum to get in. Once you get in the park, you are sucked into the arcades where you are enticed to spend 50 a shot at just about anything you do.

And thinking you can do just about anything to win one of those stuffed animals, you start spending

the cash. So you pay your 50 and miss the first time. Oh well, try one more time. Oh gosh, you were so close, try again. Wait, wait, just another shot, this thing is getting easy. And about that time you dig and dig in your pocket and guess what ... no more change. "Hey let me borrow 50 cents. I'm gonna win that dog," you say. By that time you're foaming at the mouth. And after dropping \$5.00 in less than five minutes you walk out disgustedly to wait in another long line.

That's another interesting about amusement parks. People wait in long lines, in heat, in winding lines with sweat for 30 minutes, then get on that lasts 30 seconds. Isn't that amazing?

But there are people that enjoy the hair-raising rides. They prefer to stick to the log ride or the tramway across the park, even, ride on the train that goes around the park. Oh well, wait in your own.

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