



Former champion Willie Craig still competes at 59.



Rider Ronald Evans leaves bronc with style.

Continued from cover

The inmate clowns circle the arena looking and smiling, but not waving. Then the "free world" clowns, professionals Ralph Fisher, his brother John and Bill Garcee, come in. At once the crowd senses that something is going to happen.

And it does.

Of 30 inmate cowboys who tried to ride bulls for the regulation eight seconds,

The Texas Prison Rodeo is held every Sunday afternoon in October in Huntsville. For more pictures, see pages 6-7.

only four made it. The others literally bit the dust.

More cowboys completed bareback and saddle bronc rides. But for every one that made it, one didn't.

And then there are the events which can't be found anywhere else.

Inmates from the Goree Women's Prison, nick-named the "Goree Cowgirls," compete in two events. Twenty women, competing in pairs, first try to get an axle-greased porker into a burlap bag

and carry it to judges standing in the middle of the arena. It isn't easy.

The second event isn't easy either. The same 10 teams have to drag a frisky two-year-old bull calf to the judges. But first they have to catch him.

And then there is the "Hard Money" event, where 40 male inmates called "red shirts" try to grab a Bull Durham sack with \$100 in it from between the horns of a bull. A rookie in this event may try to reach over the face of the bull, but usually gets hurt for his trouble. The "right" technique is to run beside the bull and grab the money from there.

Last Sunday, headlining entertainer Johnny Rodriguez and others increased the prize money to \$350.

The announcer, "Buffalo" Bill Bailey, has his own event — bawdy prison humor. First he asks the Goree women to wave hello to the male inmates. Then the men wave to the women. Then Bailey says, "That's all you're going to get for the next 20 years."

Or if a rider fails to make the eight second requirement, Bailey says, oh well, he'll be back to try again next year.

Photos by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.