

# City girl meets country in Houston

By Jane G. Brust

Battalion Staff

I wasn't wearing a pair of Wranglers branded with a Skoal can. I wasn't even wearing a western hat and boots. Neither was Ronald McDonald. But he probably enjoyed himself at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Friday night—I know I did.

I don't know about Ronald's tastes, but I like country and western music and I enjoy a Long-neck now and then. But that's about as country as I go. And yet, there's something about going to that annual Go Texan event that makes this city gal feel like part of it.

Perhaps it's the eau de ammonia and manure fragrance wafting through the Astrohalls. Or maybe it's the coarse cattle calling, the hacking of hoofs and the melancholy moo-ing that makes me feel a little bit country. At any rate, the livestock show and rodeo once again let me share in the country folks' way of life.

I witnessed the calf roping, the barrel racing, the bronc and the bull riding — and I had to wonder what it was like to be out there actually

the boots, check the beautiful western shirts. Needless to say, those shirts haven't spent a great deal of time soaking up sweat out on the range.

And check the hats! I don't think one can find that many feathers in the St. Louis Zoo! I prefer the rattlesnake bands around the crowns myself.

Of course, few people wore something other than blue jeans. That is just what one wears to a livestock show and rodeo. I must point out, however, that the Derrick Dolls did not wear blue jeans to the livestock show. As a matter of fact, they did not wear much of anything. I guess that's why they're Derrick Dolls and not dungaree dolls.

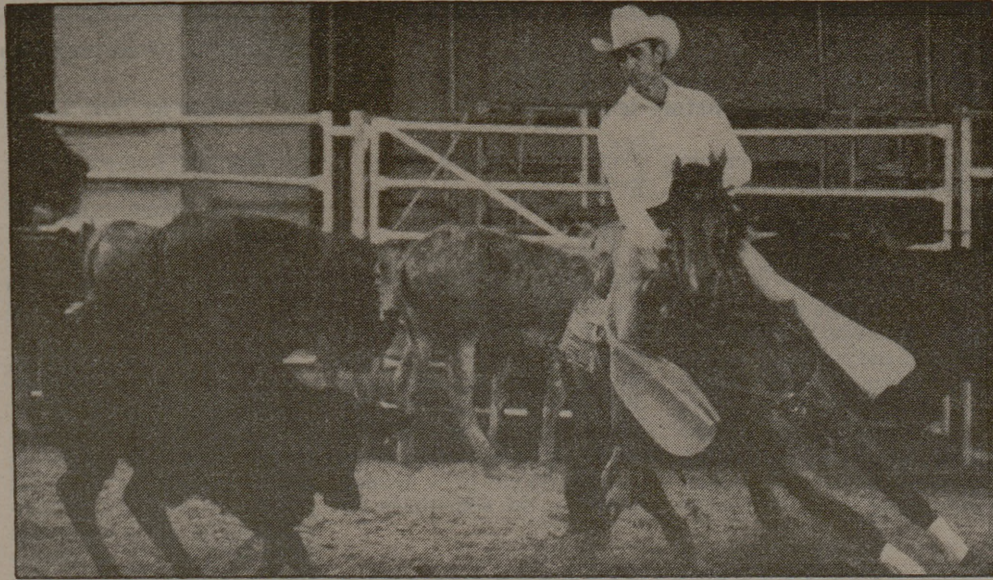
The real dolls in the Dome were the wide-eyed youngsters enjoying all the sights and sounds. The names engraved on their little belts barely fit across their fannies, and their boots will be outgrown before next year's show. But they were dressed in rodeo fashion, and they were having a ball.

If I remember correctly, that's how I got my start. I had a little red bandana and a cowgirl hat



A bareback bronc takes a cowboy for a wild ride in the Houston rodeo, above. Left, cutting horse competition in the horse arena matched horse and rider against calves determined to break away.

Photos by Brian Tate.



running the events. I watched the young whip-snappers chasing calves in the calf scramble, and I inhaled the dust stirred by the chuckwagon races.

Yet I was far removed from all of this. I could sit comfortably in my box seat, wearing my Gloria Vanderbilts and sipping my beer, just taking it all in.

I couldn't help but take in the assortment of people there with me.

Yes, along with the "real" cowboys and cowgirls, there were the urban cowboys and cowgirls and cowpersons who strutted in Cutter Bill's finest western apparel. Check the belts, check

when I was about three feet tall, and I've outgrown them both. But I still attend the rodeo, and I still walk through the livestock show.

Times change, of course. A new brand of astro-turf, with white hash marks and maroon and white lettering, lined the Astrohalls. Yes, part of Aggieland, some of the old Kyle Field turf, lined the paths travelled by hoofs and feet.

That turf was new, and the Derrick Dolls were new, but the rodeo spirit is the same. I'm not a real cowperson and I don't pretend to be — but I did have a good time just being there and feeling a part of it.

I guess that's why I want to go back next year.

## "Even Mickey gets his tux at GQ!" at GQ!"



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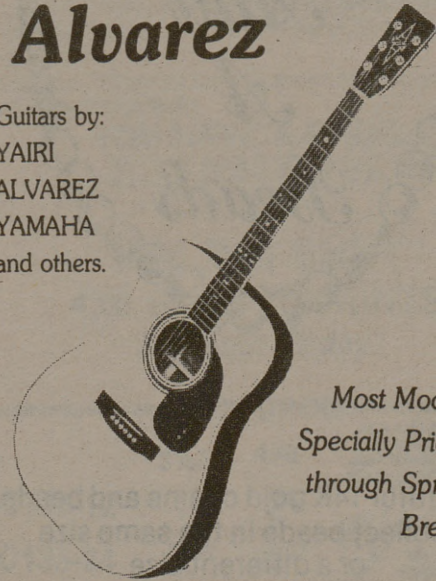
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