



BORN to be BAD^C_{O.}

With a nod of the head and a jerk to the left, a feeling of satisfaction is just eight seconds away.

If you're lucky.
The Texas A&M Rodeo Association hosted a National Intercollegiate Rodeo this past weekend with the help of Bad Company Rodeo producers. The contest consisted of exciting rodeo action, a touch of humor from the clowns and a special visit from Miss USA 1989, Gretchen Polhemus.

The rough and tumble sport of rodeo offers a cowboy the chance to display his strength, skills and athletic ability to win the battle between man and beast. Not to mention a healthy helping of prize money if victorious.

But before you decide to trade in your Reeboks for a pair of boots to rodeo in, you should understand some of the risks involved in this dangerous sport from yesteryear.

Bareback riding is an event in which the cowboy squeezes one hand into a rawhide rigging that is placed in the middle of the horse's back toward his neck.

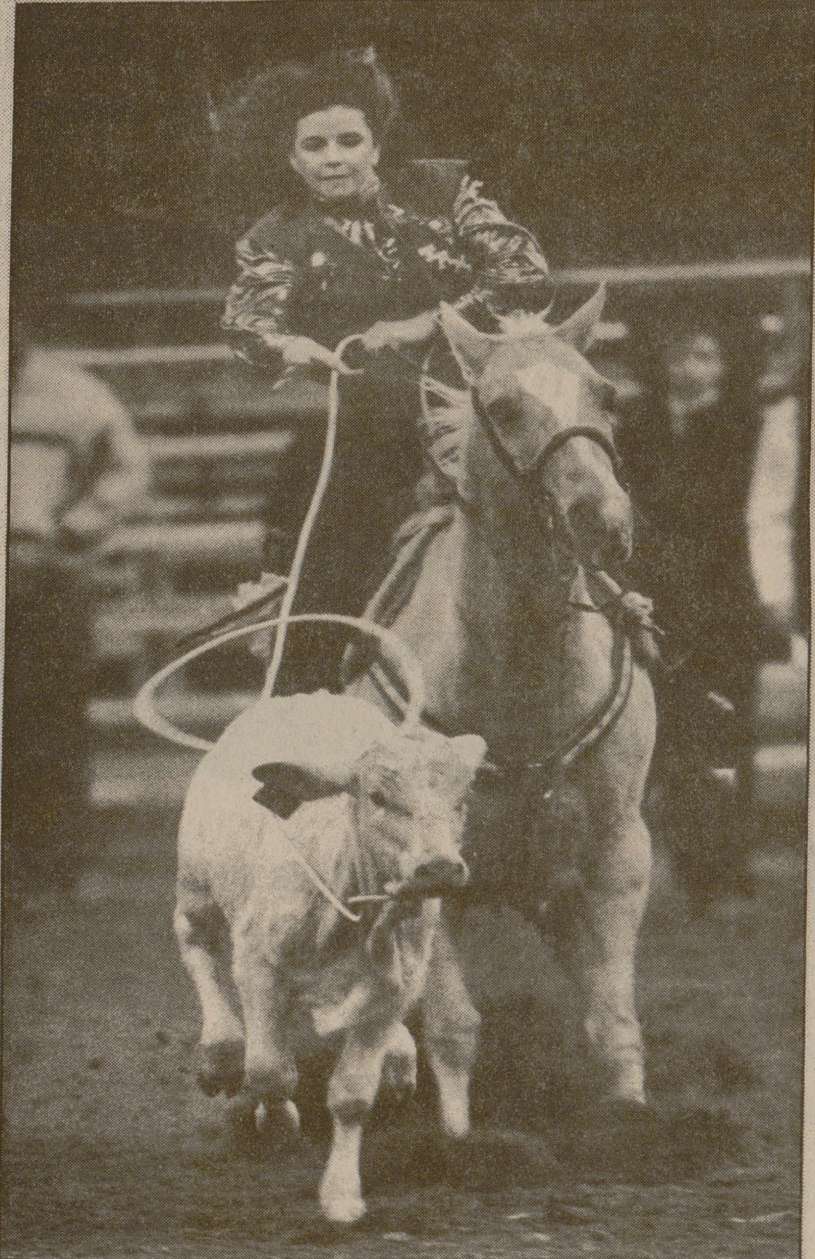
The issue to avoid here is not only being bucked off, but hoping you don't find yourself underneath the horse with your hand still in the rigging. More than likely the horse will help you out of this predicament by stepping on you to force your hand loose.

Saddle Bronc riding is another bucking horse event in which the rider uses a type of saddle instead of just a hand rigging. But the key situation to avoid here is getting a foot hung up in one of the stirrups. If not, the horse will take you on a tour of the arena — by dragging you on your head.

Bull riding is probably the most exciting and action-packed event, and the one most people love to see. By literally tying his hand onto the back of a two-ton bull, the cowboy decreases his chances of departing without injury.

Key points to avoid include being gored by a horn, being stepped on and being hung up in the rope, which, nine out of ten times, enables the bull to tear a cowboy up like a rag doll.

These are just a few of the risks involved in the sport of rodeo. After all, no one said those eight seconds were easy.



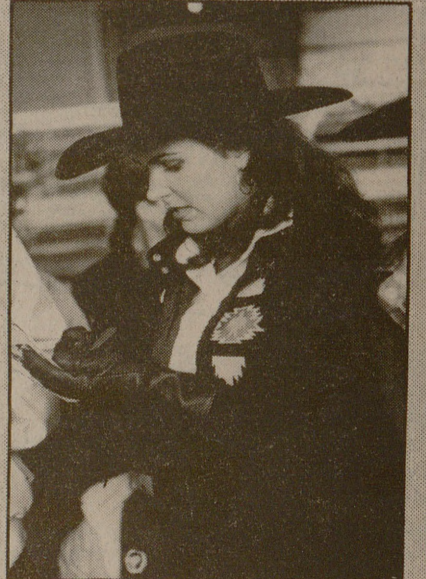
Jo Cox of A&M chases down a calf in the Break Away Roping event Saturday night.



A college bullrider does his best to stay on the bull for the full 8 seconds.



Gary "Roach" Hedeman, PRCA Bullfighter, faces down a bull after it has bucked its rider.



Gretchen Polhemus, Miss USA 1989, signs autographs after Sunday's conclusion to the Bad Co. Rodeo.

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