

# Clown Must Double In Comedy, Rescue

Dave Wood, one of the between-acts performers at the fair rodeo, is one of a small group of specialists who perform a contrasting dual role.

This young man from Chelsea, Okla., puts on his outlandishly colored shirt and baggy pants to give a show with a trained brahma bull,

so docile it could be walked through the crowd without stepping on a toe. Then when the cowboys try their hand at riding the maddened brahmas from the chute, Wood goes into his antics again without changing his clothes or his crowd pleasing manner.

But this time his job can mean

life or death to a cowboy thrown from one of the beasts.

Clowns in rodeo work are not only specialists in comedy. They are there to prevent tragedy. They are brave men first and funny men only secondarily. The real reason for their presence in the arena — is no laughing matter. The rodeo brahma is probably the most murderous of all domesticated animals.

Though appearing rather docile outside the arena they can be regarded as intentional killers with their huge, banana-shaped horns, their slashing hooves, their tremendous, one-ton bulk. Despite their size they are quick as panthers and just as mean. They hold no fear of a man mounted and will attack a horse and rider without hesitation. For that reason mounted pick-up men can't be used to help rescue the contestants.

This is when the rare courage of the rodeo clown steps in to as-

ist. Whether the rider has been bucked off or whether he jumps off, he has to rely on his own leg power and the daring of the rodeo clown. The clown must stay in close enough to rescue the rider in case of an emergency, and to help him make good his escape. The rodeo clown is a wonderful actor. He is usually able to turn a near disaster into a big laugh for the breathless crowd.

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