

Rodeo Grounds at the 1923 Celebration in Heppner



THIS PHOTO of the 1923 Morrow county rodeo is another of the remarkable pictures taken by the late Bert Gilbert Sigsbee with his panoramic camera. This was the second year of the organized rodeo—the year that Eva (Padberg) Griffith was queen. The view looks to the south—to the hill back of where the hospital now stands. At the left in the picture is what is now Fairview Way, but no houses

were there in those days. Bleacher seats are located where the present grandstand sits. The year 1923 was a rough one for cowboys in the rodeo and several were hurt. This picture was supplied by Randall Peterson, and the original in his possession is much larger and shows the grounds in better detail than can be reproduced here.

'She's Wild; Let's Go!' was Early Day Slogan at Big Event

By HELEN SHERMAN

Through the years, at rodeo time, has been heard the rising cry, "Bigger and Better Than Ever; She's Wild, Let's Go!" The

slogan has never lost its appeal, although originating back in 1923, the second year of the annual whoop-to-do. It was through the middle and

late 20's that it generated its continuing popularity, each year improving just a little over the year before with added events, more skilled riders and wider forms of entertainment offered. The late September days were sometimes rainy and unpredictable, but the committee could always count on a large and enthusiastic crowd, come the days for the "big show." It followed, rather than preceded the Pendleton Round-Up for a good many years.

Eva (Padberg) Griffith, still an enthusiastic supporter of today's shows, reigned as queen of the second annual affair in 1923.

"Miss Padberg is a thoro western product, having been born and reared on a Morrow county ranch. She has a typical western beauty combined with the skill of horsemanship and handling of the lariat. Her choice has met with the utmost satisfaction," a report reads from the Gazette-Times of September 20, 1923.

Thrilling the large crowd was a string of 16 bucking horses from the Pendleton Round-Up, as well as a good show from the local cowpunchers. Included in this group were Jack and Dolph Brown, Ralph Reid, Eddie Sheridan, Herb French, Jackie French, George Hennings, Alderman, Galax, Lloyd Matteson, Deb Bellenbrock, Albert Peterson, Buck Lieualen and Charles Latourell.

Winning riders were Jack Terry, Dolph Brown, Emery Moore and Lloyd Matteson, all home town riders. Several were thrown in the bucking contests and hurt seriously. Ceell Lieualen, who received the worst injuries, was thrown over the horse's head and struck by a hoof. He had his jaw broken in two places and was unconscious part of the night. Others injured were Dolph Brown, Lynn Hale and Herb French.

Entertainment included a big carnival with lots of rides and

concessions, boxing match between "Moose" Norbeck and Jake Dexter, big jazz fest and a rousing '49er dance. Altogether it was declared a "good tonic" for the town and county, and all left with determination to meet again the following year on Gentry field.

Jack Terry was championship winner again in '24, with good results put in by Ed Thompson, Tony Vey and Red Parker. Miss Alice Rietmann was crowned queen of the event, was complimented on her excellent riding

abilities and "presided in a real queenly manner." Crowds were not as large as was hoped for because of rain and wet grounds. Chariot races, a milking contest and more bucking contests were added to the features of the year before.

Receiving the trophy for best all-around cowboy in 1925 was Jack French with 51 points, edging Vernon Waid with 50. Placing second in the bucking finals was Emery Moore, and third went to Ralph Reade. Among the new events was the popular pony

express and relay races. Leading the grand parade was Miss Mae Kilkenny, attractive Rodeo queen, daughter of John Kilkenny of Hinton Creek. On the general committee in charge were L. V. Gentry, C. W. McNamer, Chas. H. Latourell and John French.

"It was a gala holiday, with the streets and windows colorfully decorated and these far outshone by the flashy western garb of the celebrators surging through and by them," the local paper reported. "Wide sombreros, gaudy shirts and bandanas, and high heeled boots were the ruling attire of the day. The roping was especially good, Sam Smith caught and tied his calf in the good time of 40 seconds, while Eddie Sheridan broke all previous rodeo records in the steer roping with the time of 27 1/2 seconds. The Dalles band furnished music in the spectacular parades, to which nearly 200 head of Morrow county's prize horses pranced, mounted by Rodeo performers and enthusiastic citizenry."

The C. F. Zeigler United Shows brought rides, five shows and 20 concessions to the 1926 show. Five hundred reserved season tickets went on sale for seats in the big, new grandstand built that year. Pretty Miss Eva Wilcox, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Wilcox of Lexington was named to hold the scepter of authority that year. Her attendants were Miss Doris Wilcox, her sister, and Miss Kathryn Bisbee of Heppner. Rodeo headquarters were in the Garrigues building next to the Heppner garage. First daily event of that year took place on September

23, the same night as the world's championship fight between Jack Dempsey and Gene Tunney. New events added that year were the pony express race, the Roman race and the derby race. Champion cowboy was Bert Troub of Colfax, Wn. The popular derby race winner, with \$100 first prize money, was "Red Boy," a racer owned and bred by B. F. Swaggart.

Bulldogging was added for the first time in 1927. Champion buckaroo was Tim Dery of Eugene, and estimated receipts hit a new mark, placed between \$4500 and \$5000. Gerald Swaggart took the \$100 first prize in the Morrow county derby, with Barney Ward, second, and A. Cunha, third.

Queen Katherine Bisbee, riding her favorite pony, headed the big parade and was prominent in all its affairs. Among the headlining artists were Skeeter Bill Robbins and Dorothy Morrell, trick roping and riding artists and friends of Rudyard Kipling.

The naming of Miss Inez Hayes, a native Morrow county girl, as Queen of the rodeo on September 27, 1928, proved to be a "fortunate choice." "She was accustomed to the saddle, through a life spent on a cattle and wheat ranch on Rhea Creek, the daughter of Mrs. J. M. Hayes." Her attendants were Mae Groshens, Ruby Matteson, Katherine Bisbee and Roxie Kipling.

A new record of 89 participants took part in the events of the seventh annual rodeo and could "truly be recorded as hav-

(Continued on Page 4)

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MORROW COUNTY

RODEO

September 1 - 2, Heppner

<h3 style="text-align: center;">\$1300 PRIZE MONEY</h3> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>N. W. Saddle Bronc</td><td>\$ 300.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Calf Roping</td><td>100.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Bull Riding</td><td>100.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Cow Milking</td><td>100.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Bull Dogging</td><td>100.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Bareback Riding</td><td>100.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Wild Horse Race</td><td>100.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Races</td><td>350.00</td></tr> <tr><td>OBRA Girls Barrel Racing</td><td>50.00</td></tr> <tr><td>\$10.00 Entrance</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td>\$1,300.00</td></tr> </table>	N. W. Saddle Bronc	\$ 300.00	Calf Roping	100.00	Bull Riding	100.00	Cow Milking	100.00	Bull Dogging	100.00	Bareback Riding	100.00	Wild Horse Race	100.00	Races	350.00	OBRA Girls Barrel Racing	50.00	\$10.00 Entrance		Total	\$1,300.00	<h3 style="text-align: center;">3 BIG SHOWS</h3> <p>SATURDAY— 1:15 p.m. & 8 p.m.</p> <p>SUNDAY— 1:30 p.m.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">SPECIAL LOCAL EVENTS</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shetland Pony Race • Saddle Horse Show • Wild Horse Race • Morrow County Amateur Calf Roping • Girls OBRA Barrel Racing • Morrow County Derby • Calgary Roping • Cowgirl Races on Saturday and Sunday for Morrow and adjoining counties. • Junior Roping • Wrangler Cow Riding • Bull Riding • Special Saturday Night Show
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RODEO ADMISSION

General Admission:
Adults \$2.00
Students \$1.00

Saturday Night:
Adults \$1.00
Children 50c

No Reserved Seats

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THE CLOWN!

Other Rodeo Week Attractions

STREET PARADE SAT., SEPT. 1 10 A. M. HEPPNER	WRANGLER HORSE SHOW RODEO GROUNDS Friday, August 31	RODEO DANCE SAT., SEPT 1 FAIR PAVILION 10 P. M.	WRANGLER COWBOY BREAKFAST SUNDAY, SEPT. 2 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. WRANGLER CLUB HOUSE
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Countywide Picnic, Courthouse, Sept. 1, Noon

Visiting Courts and Dignitaries As Guests

VISITORS WELCOME

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