Local girl to compete

All-American rodeo finals run today in Harrisburg

HARRISBURG — Put on your boots and pull down your hat for the 1979 American Rodeo Finals to be held Saturday at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg.

This is the second year for the nation's biggest money winners in rodeo to compete for big prizes – this year totaling over $25,000, with top winners receiving engraved saddles, gold and silver buckles, boots, hats, horse trailers, and much, much more.

"This will be the highlight of the year for Pennsylvania rodeo fans," said State Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell.

"Pennsylvania has several small outdoor rodeos, but the American Finals Rodeo is the only indoor rodeo in the state. Rodeos provide excellent family entertainment along with an education of rodeo skills and thrilling competition."

Two shows, approximately two and a half hours each will be held November 10 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Points scored by each individual during the two competitions will be averaged and the top winners will be announced at the conclusion of the show.

The nation's top ten individuals from each division will be competing in bull riding, saddle bronc riding, bareback bronc riding, steer wrestling, calf roping, barrel racing and team roping competition.

Cowgirl Tammy Rhineer, 17, of Willow Street, Lancaster County, will be a contender in the womens barrel racing competition.

The womens barrel racing is a timed event involving a cowgirl and her horse. Three barrels are positioned at three corners to form a large triangle.

The cowgirl rides her horse around the barrels in a cloverleaf pattern. Eighteen seconds is the average time for each contestant. A five-second penalty is added for each barrel which is knocked over.

Another Pennsylvanian, Joe Heller of Lewistown, Mifflin County, will be competing in the saddle bronc riding competition.

The All-Around Cowboy and All-Around Cowgirl will be selected at what is considered by many as the finest professional rodeo in the country. Rodeo contractors across the country will handpick their meanest and best bucking bulls for the American finals.

This year's Miss Rodeo Pennsylvania, Cindy Coleman of Scranton, Lackawanna County, will be presenting awards at the event.

Over 30 displays of western tack and garb will be on exhibit, along with snowmobiles, cars, jeeps and trucks on the lower level.

One of the main attractions at the rodeo finals will be last year's saddle bronc champion Ed Prozer of Durant, Oklahoma, competing against Gary Doner of Canada.

Doner was this year's saddle bronc winner at the Calgary Stampede held in British Columbia. The Calgary Stampede is known as the biggest outdoor rodeo in the world.

The saddle bronc riding requires a ten-second ride for the entrant to qualify. Large 13,000 to 19,000 pound crossbred draft horses are ridden. The rider must keep his feet touching the horse over the break of the horse's shoulder until the horse completes his first jump. The rider spurs the horse in an arched direction from the shoulders to the back of the saddle to keep the horse bucking. The spurs are dulled as to not injure the horse. The rider holds onto the horse with a braided rope rein attached to a sheep skin lined halter around the horse's chin, nose and head.

Both Rhineer and Heller have placed among the country's top ten individuals for their division.

Tickets may be reserved by calling 717-238-2816, or purchased at the Farm Show ticket gate beginning October 31 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Ticket prices are: Box, $6.50; Reserved, $5.50; and General Admission, $4.50. All seats for children under 12 years old are reduced by one dollar.

The rodeo is sponsored by Champion Enterprises, Ltd. in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Farm Products Show Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

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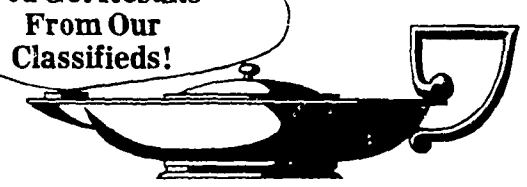

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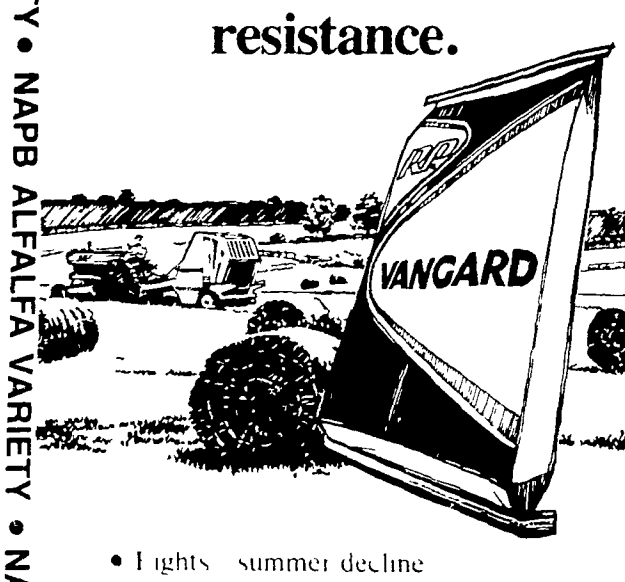

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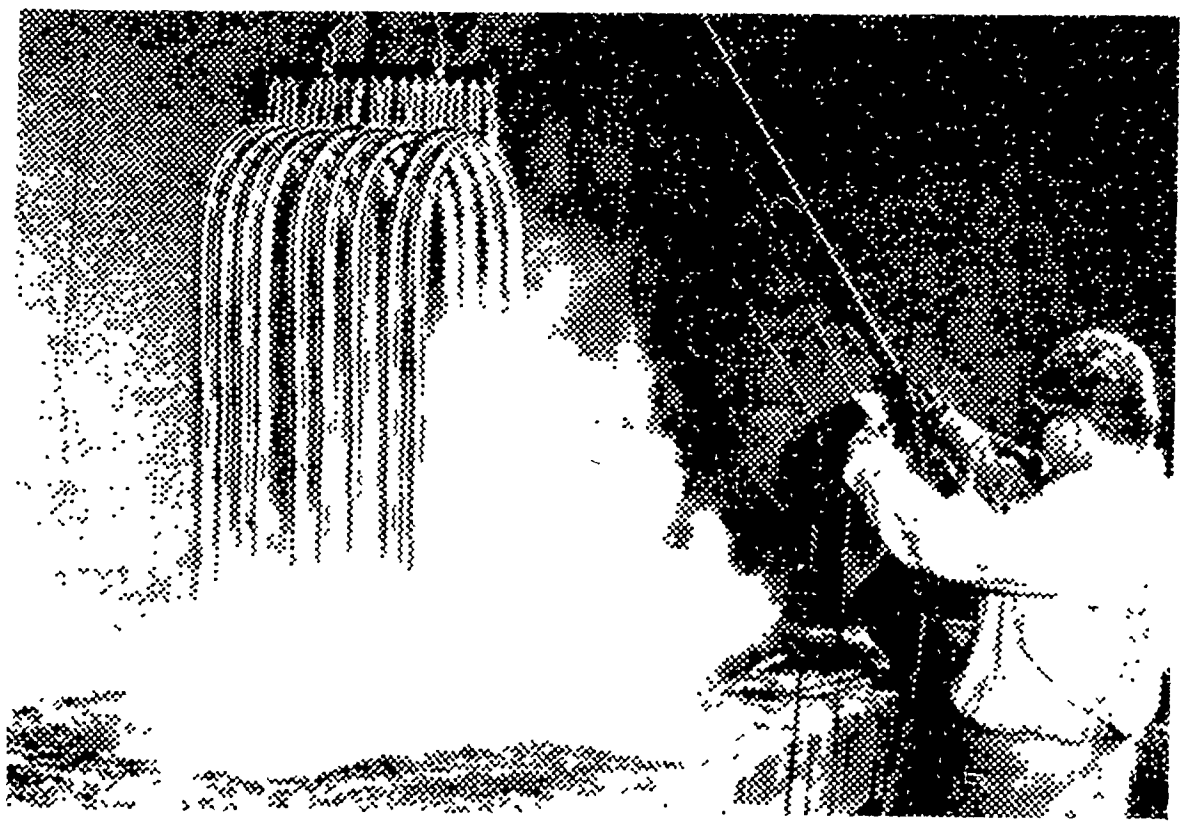

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