



# ALL COWBOY & ARENA CHAMPIONS

## HALL OF FAME



## Dean "OD" Anderson

ACACHOF Founder and Director

Bullrider— Rodeo Cowboy Biographer/Rodeo Historian



O. D. (DEAN) Anderson was born and raised at Hubbard, Texas and graduated from high school there in 1956. His parents were Odis Weldon and Sybil Vosburg Anderson. His father had his fill of cotton, slopping the hogs, feeding and milking the cows as a lad, and he decided to become a butcher and groceryman. Dean's mother died when he was five, and his dad then married Dorothy Garrett who raised him as

her own son. He had two sisters Sharon Jean (first husband was Paul Barnett (deceased)) wife of Doug McCann, Nancy Gail (wife of Bob Smith), two brothers, Jimmy Charles (wife is Kathy), and Robert Scott (wife is Donna).

O.D.'s great-grandfather, Charles F. Vosburg, came to Texas from Illinios in the late 1800s on a train and landed at Tehuacana, near Mexia, Texas. From there he hitched a ride in a wagon to Mt. Calm, Texas where he had relatives who put him up for a period. He was a horseman, stockman-farmer and was well known for his horse and mule breaking, training, and trading. Anderson's other great grandfather, Tommy Varde-man, was also a farmer-stockman and his decendants came through the Cumberland



Pass with Daniel Boone. People would ask ‘Uncle Tommy’ (as he was called by many) why aren’t you buying land and accumulating money as everyone else is doing? His stock answer was always, “I’m saving and accumulating for my home in heaven.” Anderson’s paternal grandfather, Jim Anderson, married Clara, one of Mr. Vardeman’s daughters, and Jim was also a cattleman/farmer and was a country cattle buyer and cow trader. O.D’s great grandfather on the paternal side was Walter Scott Anderson whose folks came to Texas from Mississippi. Some of both sides of the families fought in the Civil War. Dean’s mother Sybil’s parents were C. W. and Alpha Rogers Vosburg. His great grandparents on the maternal side were Andrew (Andy) and Ova ( Wilhite) Rogers. Mr. Andy was an extensive cotton farmer and cotton futures trader—until the market crash of the 30’s hit. Most all of Anderson’s forebears including aunts, uncles, great uncles and aunts were all Godly people who hardly ever missed church. Those aunts and uncles were: Alfred and Rosezine Hammer (Dean’s 1st car, a 1941 Ford sedan, was partially paid for by choppin’ and hoeing cotton at \$5.00 a day for them), W.C. and Mary Knox Anderson, Mary Etta (Neek) and Abner Adair, Glen and Jean Anderson, James and Barbara Anderson, Bennie and Sonny Hughes, and Margaret (died very young). Also he spent many youthful, carefree days roaming the creeks and woods with cousins Thomas Walker and John Preston Vickery and was always staying with their families: Those families were Oval and Lois Walker and John and Mamie Vickery. The Walker’s children were: Thomas (wife Charlene), Glenda (husband Gerald), and Judy (husband Buster); the Vickery’s children were Barbara (husband Don), and Johnny (wife Pat). This Godly heritage played a big part in shaping his values in life even though for almost thirty



nine years he went his own rebellious way. Dean’s mother Dorothy who raised him were parent’s Robert Lee (Whitey) and Sammie B. (Bumpus) Garrett. Lee was a farmer-stockman and also trained and broke horses—all of his life. Lee’s parents were John W. and Lenora (McClung) Garrett. John W. came to Texas from Alabama and settled around the Malone area. John W. was a lay preacher and farmer. Lenora broke horses and was fatally hurt while breaking a horse. (More

details of the Garrett family is elsewhere in this book.) Sammie's parents were Hicks Murphy and Elizabeth Taylor Bumpus who were farmers in the Italy, Texas area. Hicks came from Murfreesboro, Tennessee to the Italy area.

Most of Anderson's relatives had farms and/or stock farms, cattle and horses, and he loved getting to visit them, ride the horses and work and drive the horse and mule teams. His granddad, C. W. Vosburg was a farmer-stockman and horse and mule trainer and taught Dean how to handle horses/mules.

In those days during the late- forties and early fifties many farmers in those rural areas still used mules to farm with. His granddad C. W. had bought a row crop Oliver 70 but he continued using mules for many years. (C.W. Vosburg had gotten sick and couldn't plow his cotton and so grandson O.D. volunteered to plow it. C.W. had given O.D. limited training on the tractor. O.D. was probably about 12 or 13 at the time and really thought he had done a great job until about harvest time and grandpa ended up having a very bad crop. Little Anderson asked why the crop was bad and grandpa responded kinda tongue-in-cheek that somehow the plants had just disappeared from the rows. Now Little Anderson was pretty naive, but he wasn't that naive! All got a laugh out of that one but Anderson does believe that it was the last time grandpa ever got sick again-at least during plowing season!

His hometown, Hubbard, had a large rodeo and homecoming during the forties and early fifties and when the annual rodeo came to town each year, Dean and his buddies loved to sit close to the chute gates so they could be right at the action. Dean had a great desire even while very young to get on the bulls but his parents wouldn't allow it; however the desire never left him. In 1953 the sponsors quit having the rodeo and Dean and his fellow Ag students helped tear down the old arena. Other desires entered his life and he followed those for several years, joining the Army, working, getting his first cattle in 1958, and working towards a college education. Anderson played all sports in high school with football being his favorite and did well in that sport his senior year. He was fortunate to play on the championship football team that was the first Hubbard team to ever get to go to Regional.

Anderson attended Tarleton State College, Navarro Junior, and finally graduated from Texas Tech University in 1965 with a B.S. in Animal Science.

In 1959 after getting out of the Army, he learned of several

former friends and especially one schoolmate, Brad Henley, who had started riding bulls. Brad was the first person to start riding bulls from around Hubbard for around ten years. Before that Bates Savage, Weldon Hughes, Buck Wilson, and Deane Cry were the only ones remembered. He saw Brad one weekend and Brad asked him to go to a rodeo where Brad was up in the bullriding. Dean went with Brad and asked if he would help him 'learn the ropes' and Brad agreed.

It wasn't long after that that Dean entered his first bull-riding at Cowbell Arena in Mansfield, Texas (circa 59-60). He drew a big ole high-horned fighting Brahma bull that could almost reach his and helper, Dexter Peacock's hands as they tried to string the bull. Dexter married Anderson's cousin Joyce and he was the only person he could get to go with him to Mansfield that weekend. Dean didn't make it very far but as the ole saying goes, 'he was hooked'. Dexter was one of the 'fighting Peacocks' from Ft. Worth and they would fight a 'circle saw'. He was a boxing champ and had to fight everyone in Hubbard City when he moved there during his senior year, including; Dudley Castellaw and Dubby McClinton, both of them were the ones you had to beat-talk is he outboxed them both. But when it came to stringing the bull, I believe and he later admitted it that he was 'scared stiff'.

Dean had an uncle James Allen (Amos) Anderson who always took a liking to him and was helping him constantly, giving him fencing and ranching jobs so as to pay his way through college. While his uncle Amos may not have liked the idea of his riding bulls he decided to help him all he could. Dean and friends naturally had to set up one of those old barrels with four ropes attached (that would kill you). He and buddies B.R. Vardeman, Brad Henley, brothers Scott and Jim, Douglas Crain, Jim Conner, Butch Johnson and many others would pitch in and try to 'kill' each other on it. Well they all decided they needed a real live arena, roping and bucking chute with live bulls 'to really play this game'. So Uncle Amos furnished the land and materials and all pitched in and built the new arena.

Everything is fresh, new, and ready so they hold their first bullriding. James has a young brimmer bull about three years old and about 1100lbs and a few cows. Dean's cousin John Preston Vickery hears about this first buckout and (never been on a bull but could ride a horse real well) challenges everyone that he can ride anything we got. Everyone giggles and laughs and they put him

on this completely green Brahman bull. They rig Vickery up, he nods, they open the chute gate and out runs the 'bad' bull. Flanked and all, the bull just runs, makes a turn to the right, never slows down and runs clean through the brand new fence. As the bull hits the fence, Johnny P. grabs the top cable, holds on as the bull continues on through the fence and is in a suspended hold for a moment or two, both legs astraddled the hole in the brand new fence. Everyone got a big laugh-from then on they just roped at the pens. The wire was just to light to hold bulls.

The O.D. (Dean) hadn't been riding the bulls very long before his two first cousins, Mike and Greg, sons of uncle James and Barbara Jean (Blount) Anderson, decided they wanted to 'ride bulls' also. Of course Uncle



Amos grew up on his dad Jim's farms so it was just a natural for kids to ride whatever they could find to get on-including their dad's milk cows. Mike and Greg kept bugging Uncle James and Dean to ride a bull so one day they went to James' pens and penned some calves that weighed about 300 lbs. The boys were about (guessing) six and nine years old at the time +or-. They rigged them up in a straight working chute, told them to take a holt and opened the front gate. That ground was hard as concrete and they both hit about as hard as concrete. That ended their bull riding career but went to college on scholarships where Mike played baseball at SMU and Greg played football at TCU. (I don't think their mother Barbara knew about that bull riding incident until years later.)

Dean started in earnest hitting all of the rodeos around central Texas and continued riding bulls in that area until he broke his ankle in the fall of 1961 and started to Texas Tech in spring of 1962. As soon as the ankle healed he started competing at the Saturday night rodeo at Auffs rodeo and continued competing there while attending Texas Tech. In the summers he made the central Texas circuits and traveled with Dan Willis several different times. (Dan was up at Athens and also the only bullfighter/clown there. He said,"Dean if I hang up to 'Little Stranger', just step in and throw this old pair of chaps in his face and that'll break his spin enough to knock me loose." Now Dean didn't like the idea at all but sure enough the bull spun and Dan hung up. Dean finally did as



Dan had commanded and the bull threw him loose which certainly relieved Dean.) “In those bull riding days I wouldn’t have thought of fighting bulls but now I will work real close trying to get a good photograph and/or get in front of a bull to divert his attention off of a fallen or hung up rider,” quotes the Dean.

Dean Anderson continued riding bulls in the central Texas areas in the summers and the open rodeos in and around Lubbock during the college semesters and traveling to the NIRA shows in Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. He was hurt real bad on ‘Blond Dynamite’, bareback horse of Alsbaugh’s but got married two weeks later to his wonderful wife Carolyn Whittle and that pretty well ended his bullriding career-much to his wife’s relief.

One of his most memorable bullriding events was winning the championship honors at Mexia in 1963. It was bittersweet as his friend, Brad Henley, who had helped him get started drew ‘Ole Yeller’ (of the Logan Huffman string of top bulls) and Brad broke his neck on him on the Friday night performance. Anderson drew ‘Ole Yeller’ for Saturday night and rode him for the bullriding crown at that rodeo. Anderson also drew ‘Ole Yeller’ the next week at Davilla, Texas and won second on him at a one-header. That broken neck of Brad’s pretty well ended his career.

Anderson started ‘trying to date’ Carolyn in the fall of 1963. She won the girls goat tying at the Tech Rodeo one year. She went home to her parent’s ranch in Rocksprings, Texas during spring break. While there, it was Angora shearing time. To practice, she caught and tied every goat for the shearers at one ranch they leased.

Before long they were engaged to be married on May 28, 1964. She liked that ‘bull-rider’—but didn’t like him getting on them at all. She still thinks “It’s just a bunch of bull”.

All of the NIRA region that Texas Tech was in used RCA producer Walt Alsbaugh’s stock. Dean’s name is on the Trophy that the Texas Tech NIRA team won circa 1964 for their region. He kinda doubts whether any of those bulls that he got on over the years knew if they were ‘amateurs’ or not!

O.D.(Dean) Anderson’s goal to write a book on bullriders and rodeo contestants is being fulfilled, and he is now doing biographies on rodeo hands of the past to the present. He uses the format and vehicle of the newspaper he and his wife Carolyn own and publish to produce and set the stories.

While his competition in the bullriding event was cut short

by injuries and didn't span too many years, he has always loved the sport and has helped and encouraged any youth interested enough to 'give it a try'. He has trained youth to ride and proved bulls for many years, and is still doing so.

Anderson has been a real estate broker for over twenty years, insurance agent for many years, in the cattle business all of his life and an order buyer for over twenty years, and 'guesses he'll buy and sell cattle and bulls-till he dies'. Anderson bought his first 'springing heifer' as an FFA project when he was about 15, sold her and the calf about a year later to make the down payment on his first auto which was a 1941 Ford sedan. He and wife Carolyn also have a hunting ranch.

O.D.(Dean) Anderson's philosophy of life is to put God first in your life and all else works for your good-eventually! He is thankful to God for his daughters and their families, William and Marcella Epperson and Rob and Julie Welker-grandsons Asa Scott Welker, Virgil Allen and Wendell Brown Epperson and granddaughter Caroline Adele Welker and any others that 'come along'. William was a team roper during college days at Sul Ross and afterward area rodeo. He was also on the Ranch Rodeo Team that won the San Angelo Invitational Ranch Rodeo in 1992 and 1993. He continues to use those roping skills in his ranching career. Marcella and William raise Corriente steers and other ranch stock plus have a regular and exotic hunting operation. Julie is an associate professor at Howard Payne University in Brownwood, and Rob is Director of Business Intelligence at Wes-Tex Printing in Brownwood.