

ALL COWBOY & ARENA CHAMPIONS HALL OF FAME

Ron Degonia

Rodeo Clown / Bullfighter



As I began my rodeo career in 1964, I had the passion and desire to become a bull rider, but after hanging up for a while on my very first bull, I was sent to the hospital, thinking about what went wrong and there must be a better way. I developed even a stronger curiosity for bull riding and continued riding for 4 years. Then one day, I arrived at a rodeo to find out the clown had been injured on the rout and didn't show. Several bull riders looked at me and decided I was the new clown/bullfighter. Giving it a try and expecting the worst, I found that I

absolutely loved it!

As much as I loved bulls, I found I had a knack for entertaining people and training animals. My truck was loaded with animal acts ranging from sheep dogs & monkeys to skunks & ducks to a black bear, African lion & ocelots. Some producers would make me a headliner attraction in advertising for their rodeo.

In 1975, I was chosen to train a Red Stage for 5 Hartford Insurance commercials. Even though it went extremely well, it just wasn't rodeo!

After that, I was chosen for the first prison rodeo in the state of



Mississippi at Parchman Mississippi, which was an all-invitational rodeo.

My career in rodeo extended 17 years and afforded me to perform in 22 states throughout the Midwest. As much as I loved the sport, in 1981, I decided to sit back and watch. I never lost my love for rodeo and the great people that now carry the Midwest. As much as I loved the sport, in 1981 , I decided to sit back and watch. I never lost my love for rodeo and the great people that now carry the torch.

After my rodeo career ended in 1981, my Lord and Savior decided, since I enjoyed getting up in front of people, that I might make a pastor and evangelist. I have now been preaching for 26 years.