

'High Noon' for man and beast



By Ron Ruggless

Cowboy hats, cowboy boots and cowboys filled the State Fairgrounds Coliseum Friday and Saturday, along with horses, calves and cows.

It was the scene of the University of Nebraska Intercollegiate Rodeo, sponsored by the UNL Rodeo Club.

About 180 contestants and more than 3,500 rodeo fans filled the auditorium for three sessions to participate in and view the rodeo. The event is one of seven this spring in the seven-state Great Plains region of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA), according to Rodeo Club officials.

City greenhorns, decked in cowboy attire, also tried their luck at rodeoing.

Cows occupied one end of the coliseum while groups of "city slicker" three-man teams held fort in the other end, awaiting the wild cow ride contest.

At the top of a flag, the "cowboys" charged the cows and the confused cows charged the "cowboys." The first team to saddle and ride the cow across the finish line was the winner.

But the cows seemed to win the contest as

losing contestants claimed, "We should have won," biting the dust because of loose saddles and balky cows.

Amid dust and dirt, genuine cowboys busted broncos and bulls and tried to escape breaking bones.

Karen Chenault, freshman dietetics major from York, was UNL's only winner in the rodeo. She took first place in the women's barrel racing competition.

"It was difficult competition," Chenault said. She added she had competed with many of the entrants before in NIRA rodeos.

"This region has always been tough, and this rodeo was no exception."

Chenault, 20, said she started riding when she was 3-years-old and has been in rodeo competition for 10 years.

She said she did fairly well in the preliminary barrel racing and felt confident of going into the finals.

Oh, and the "cowboys" in the wild cow race did "a real good job," Chenault said.

From a person who has been riding for 17 years, that had to be a compliment. . .didn't it?

Photographs by

Ted Kirk

Steve Bourcier

Kevin Bigley