Annual Angola Prison Rodeo

Authorities at the sprawling 18,000-acre Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola are making preparations to accommodate an invasion of thousands of rodeo fans.

The occasion is the Annual Angola Prison Rodeo, which is the prison’s biggest event and open to the general public. The rodeo is held each Sunday during the month of October, and has become a major attraction in the state.

Since the rodeo opened to the public in 1968, the prison has experienced the phenomena of seeing thousands of rodeo goers, many traveling long distances, annually make their way to the prison to spend a Sunday afternoon watching one of the South’s most unique and spectacular of sports - ship, urban prisoners trying their hand at being “cowboys”, without any practice and usually without ever having ridden a horse or bull before.

All of the normal hair-raising events that go with ordinary rodeos are featured but many are Angola inventions, and those that are not still have some kind of Angola twist to them. "With Angola being Angola, the only thing to expect is the unexpected," says Rodeo Chairman Warden Frank Blackburn. There will also be music provided by inmate bands, cow-girls from around the state competing in barrell-racing contests, drill performances by posses from various Sheriff’s Departments, and a host of other events.

The Angola Prison Rodeo is a joint cooperative endeavor between inmates and employees of the Louisiana State Penitentiary and the Department of Corrections. All proceeds from ticket sales go to the Inmate Welfare Fund, an account which covers expenses for mov-