

101 RANCH WILD WEST

Plans by: Raymond Heim Photos by: Don Smith
History from Don Smith and Excerpts from
Pictorial History of the American Circus

Following along with the recent interest in the Wild West Shows, Construction Avenue this issue brings you complete lot layout and detailed arena plans for the 101 Ranch Wild West Show. Also included are some photos and history of the 101 Ranch Wild West Show and the Col. Tim McCoy Show.

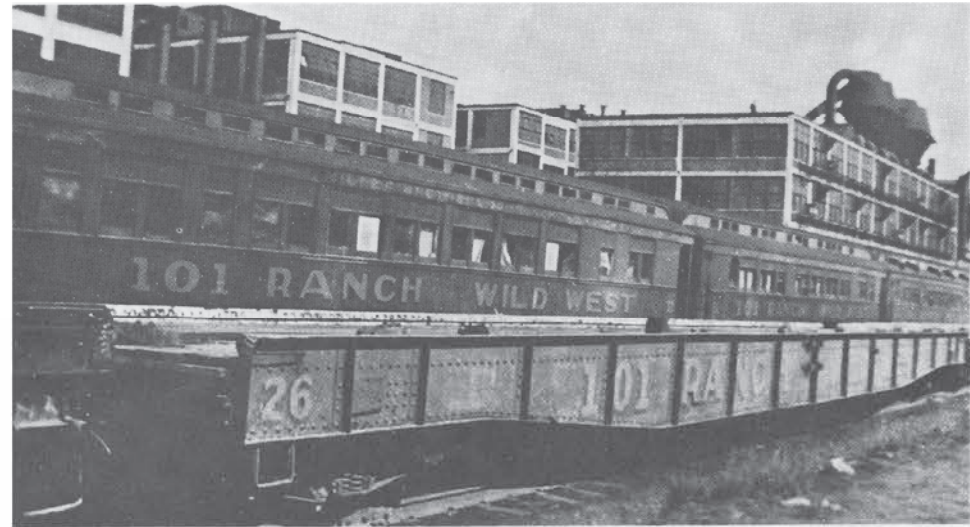
Your L.C.W. editor wants to thank Mr. Raymond Helm, C.M.B. No. 156 of Milwaukee, Wisconsin for the fine set of detailed plans. You will note that action dimensions are shown on the plans for easy reference. However, the plans are also scaled as shown to enlarge on close detailed sections of the plans. From these plans the model builder can build to any scale he wishes by using the actual working measurements.

The photos and brief history along with some interesting notes were furnished by Mr. Don Smith, C.M.B. No. 114 of Detroit, Michigan, along with excerpts from the Pictorial History of the American Circus by John and Alice Durant.

The photos of the 101 Ranch Wild West Show were taken in Detroit, Michigan during the 1931 Season, while the Tim McCoy photos were taken in Washington, D.C. in 1938.

It is interesting to note that both of these shows (the last of their kind) went broke in Washington, D. C. The Tim McCoy Show was sold at auction, direct from the train shown in photos in this article, while the 101 Ranch Wild West Show sold only enough equipment to get the remaining cars and wagons back to the Ranch in Oklahoma. Several years ago in a conversation with Mrs. Margerette Miller, Don relates being told that Jess Adkins came down to the Ranch when they were building up the Cole Show in 1935 and picked out all of the best conditioned wagons. Mrs. Miller was then advised by Mr. Adkins to burn the rest of the equipment. However, it is not known whether this was done. At this time the Parade Wagons had already been placed in the Frontier Museum, from where they were eventually moved to Baraboo.

There were various other Wild West Shows which toured the country throughout the history of the American circus. The following is a brief run-down on these shows.



Flats and coaches of the 101 Ranch Wild West Circus shown here on the East side lot siding, Detroit, Michigan, during 1931 season. [Photo from Don Smith collection]

BUD E. ANDERSON SHOWS

This show was known as Bud’s Wild West, having its start about 1922. During 1927 the show, now known as a circus, gave up wagons and went to trucks. In 193& the name was changed to Seal Bros. Circus. During the 1950 season, going under the name of Bud E. Anderson’s Jungle Oddities Circus, the owner was killed in a truck accident. After two years of operation by his son, the show was discontinued.

BUFFALO BILL WILD WEST SHOW

One of the better known Wild West Shows, the Buffalo Bill Wild West, was founded in 1883 by William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody and others. This show moved by rail from its beginning and often played long stands such as the Chicago World’s Fair. In 1887 the show toured England and performed for Queen Victoria. By 1895 Cody ran into mobility and partner problems and at this point Cody and James A. Bailey became partners. Following Bailey’s death, Pawnee Bill secured Bailey’s share of the show and the title became the Buffalo Bill Wild West and Pawnee Bill Great Far East Show, touring from 1907 through 1913, when the show folded.

FRANK JAMES & COLE YOUNGER HISTORIC WILD WEST

This show operated during 1903 under a revised name of Buckskin Bill Wild West Show. During this time the outlaws James and Younger were on the show.

BUCK JONES WILD WEST SHOW

Operated during 1929 by cowboy movie star, Buck Jones, the show never completed the season.

KEN MAYNARD WILD WEST SHOW

This show as Buck Jones was built for movie star Ken Maynard in 1936 but due to lack of finances never got beyond its winter quarter town in California, where several weekend performances were given.

COL. TIM MCCOY WILD WEST SHOW

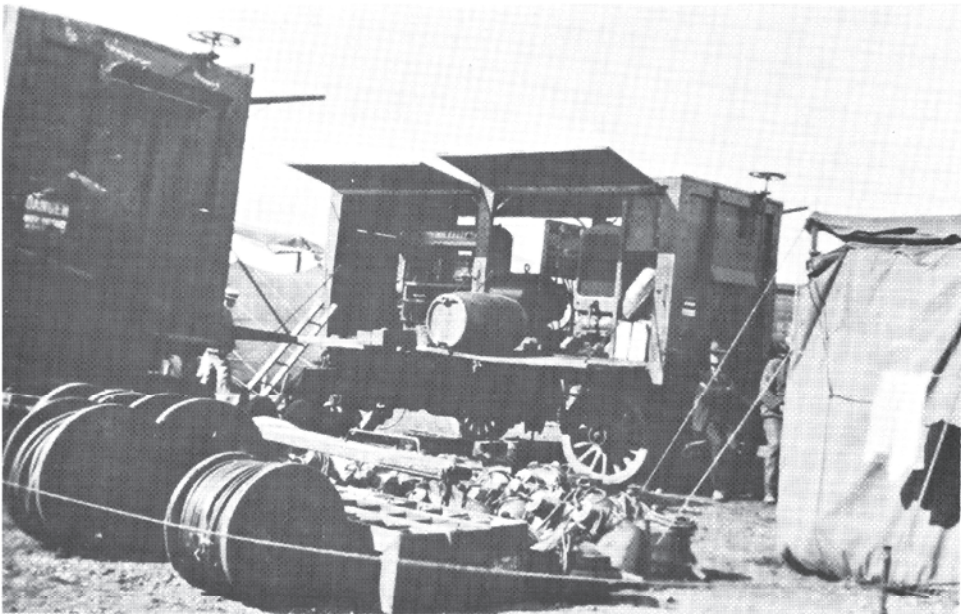
Our second construction avenue wild west show is that of Col. Tim McCoy. Built in 1938, this show collapsed after less than one month’s operation. However, it was notable as the last major wild west show to troupe after the style of the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show.

MILLER BROS. 101 RANCH WILD WEST SHOW

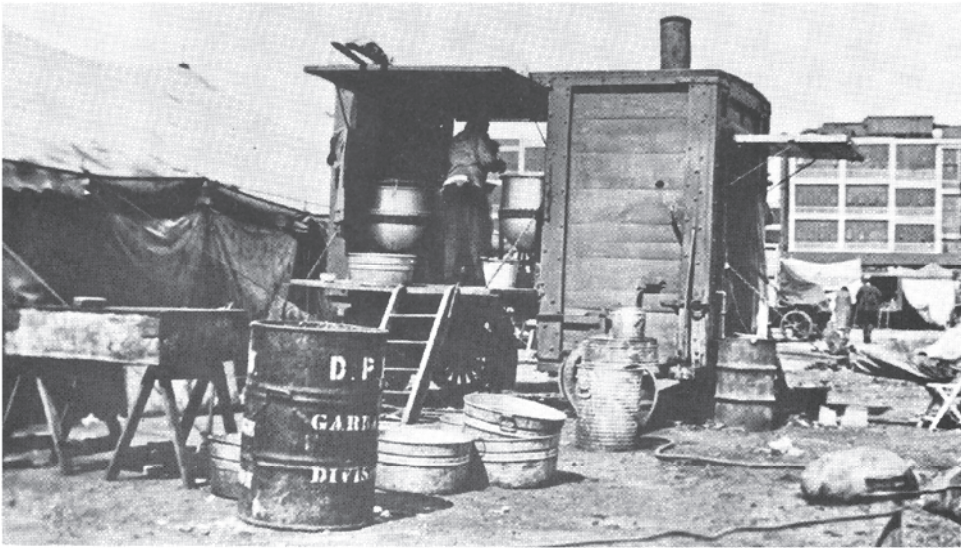
This show was formed in 1908 when Edward Arlington, circus-man and the Millers, Oklahoma ranchers joined forces with a 16-car show that grew out of a wild west show put on the previous year by Miller cowboys at the Jamestown Exposition. It grew and continued through 1915, when it featured Jess Willard, boxing champion. In 1916 it was called Buffalo Bill and 101 Ranch Wild West, and Buffalo Bill was among the performers. Arlington bought out the Millers at the end of the season, and with Willard opened it as the Buffalo Bill Wild West and Jess Willard Show in 1917. Buffalo Bill had died. Willard bought the show and it folded. In 1925 the Millers re-entered the business with a 30-car wild west show under the 101 Ranch name. It folded in 1931. The title was revived on a small show in 1945-46.

OTHER SHOWS

Several other shows using Wild West titles were Sam B. Dill Circus and Tom Mix Wild West in 1931 and 1935, the Pawnee Bill Wild West which toured in the 1890’s, and the Young Buffalo Bill Wild West Show during 1916. There were probably others but this will give you a little idea of some of the Wild West Shows of the past.



Light plant wagon and equipment of the 101 Wild West Show of 1931 season. Detroit, Michigan [Photo from Don Smith collection]



101 Ranch Wild West Show cookhouse wagon 1931 season. Detroit, Michigan. This wagon was later used on the Cole Bros. Circus [Photo from Don Smith collection]

101 Wild West Show
Lot Layout

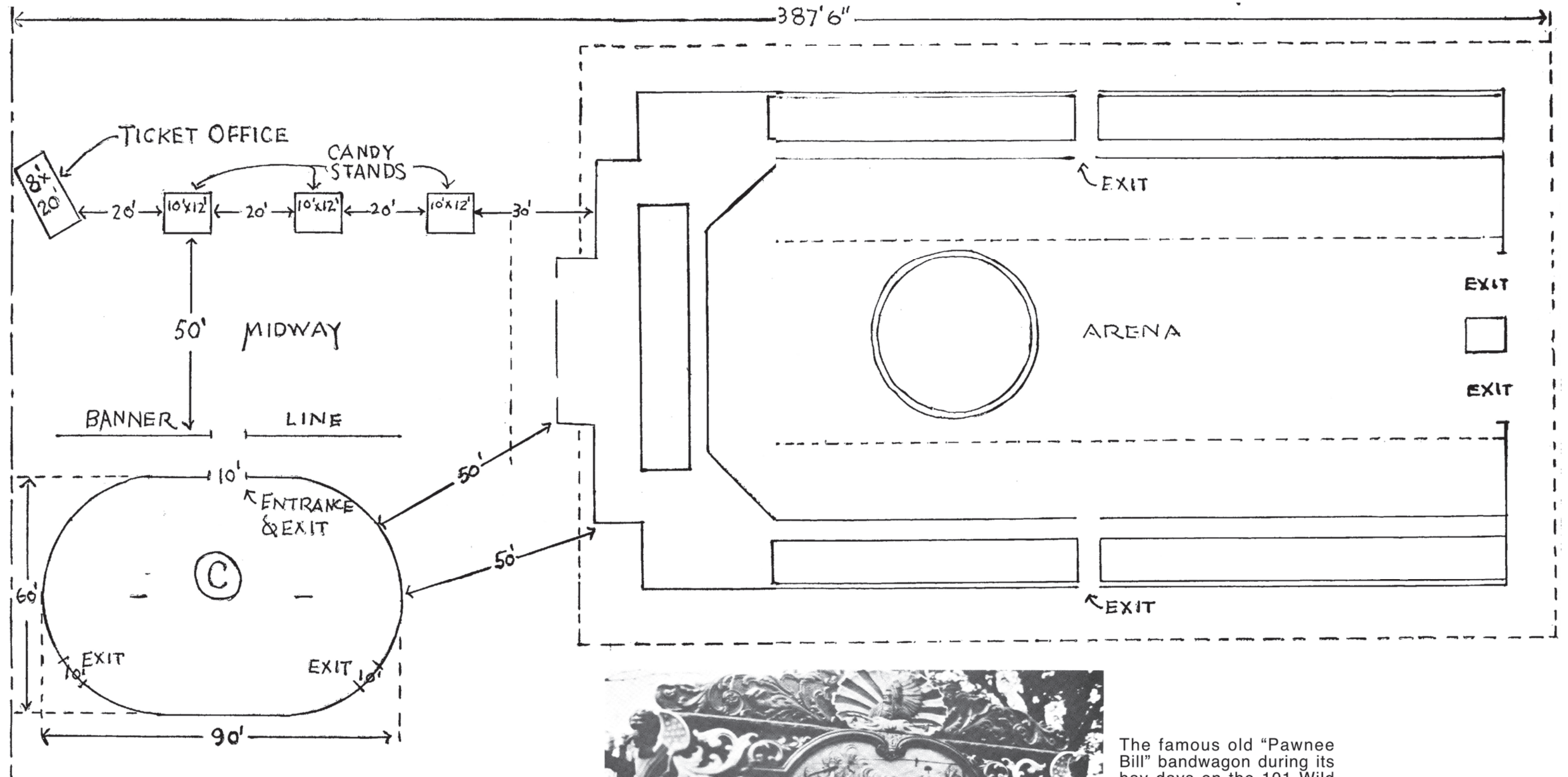
DATE: 1930s SCALE: Variable SCANNED & REVISED: 02/18/2011 Pg 1 of 5

Circus Model Builders

Drawn By
Raymond Helm, CMB #156

DRAWING NUMBER
#0193

LOCATION OF CANDY STANDS, TICKET OFFICE, SIDE SHOW, ETC. IN RELATION TO MAIN CANOPY



The famous old "Pawnee Bill" bandwagon during its hey days on the 101 Wild West Show, 1931 season. [Photo from Don Smith collection]

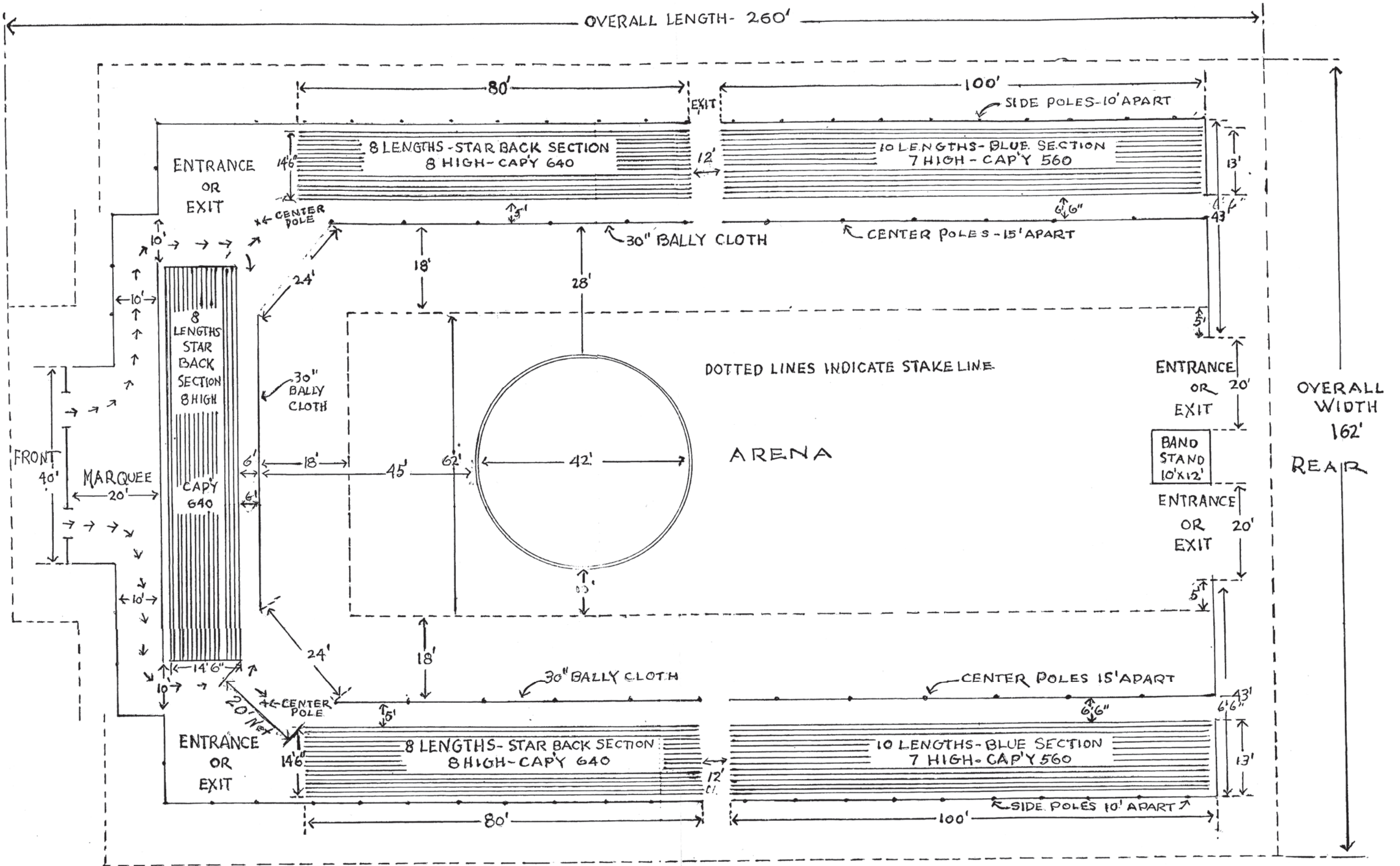
101 Wild West Show Lot Layout

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SCALE: 1" = 25'

SCANNED & REVISED:
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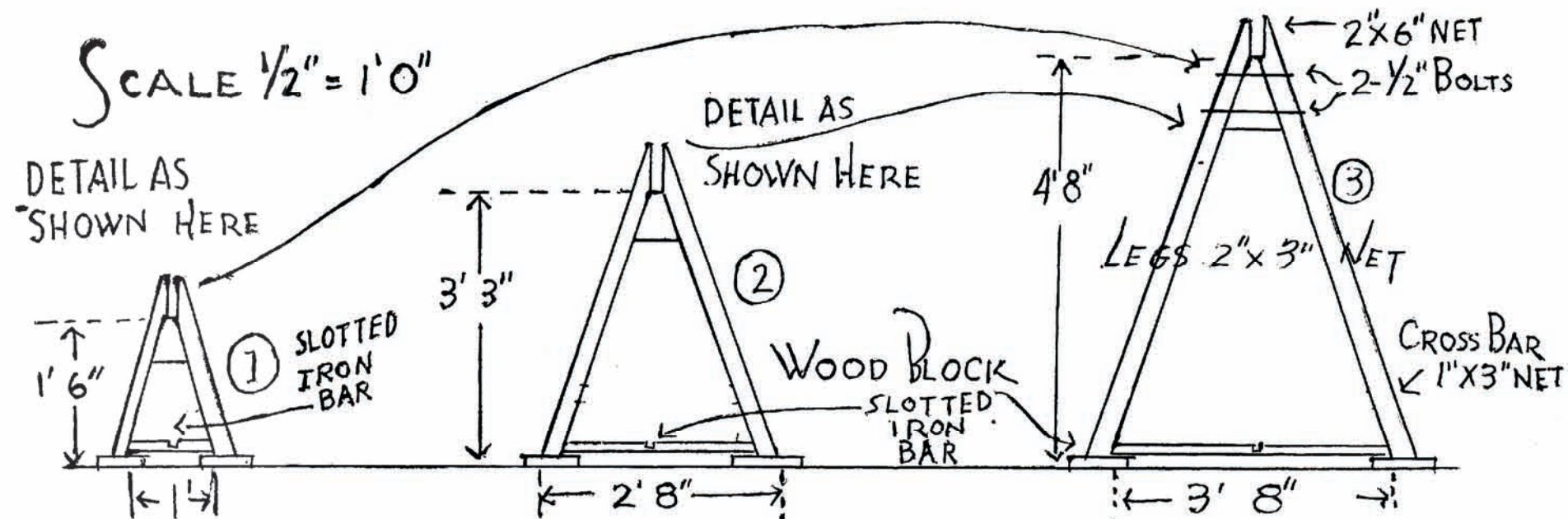
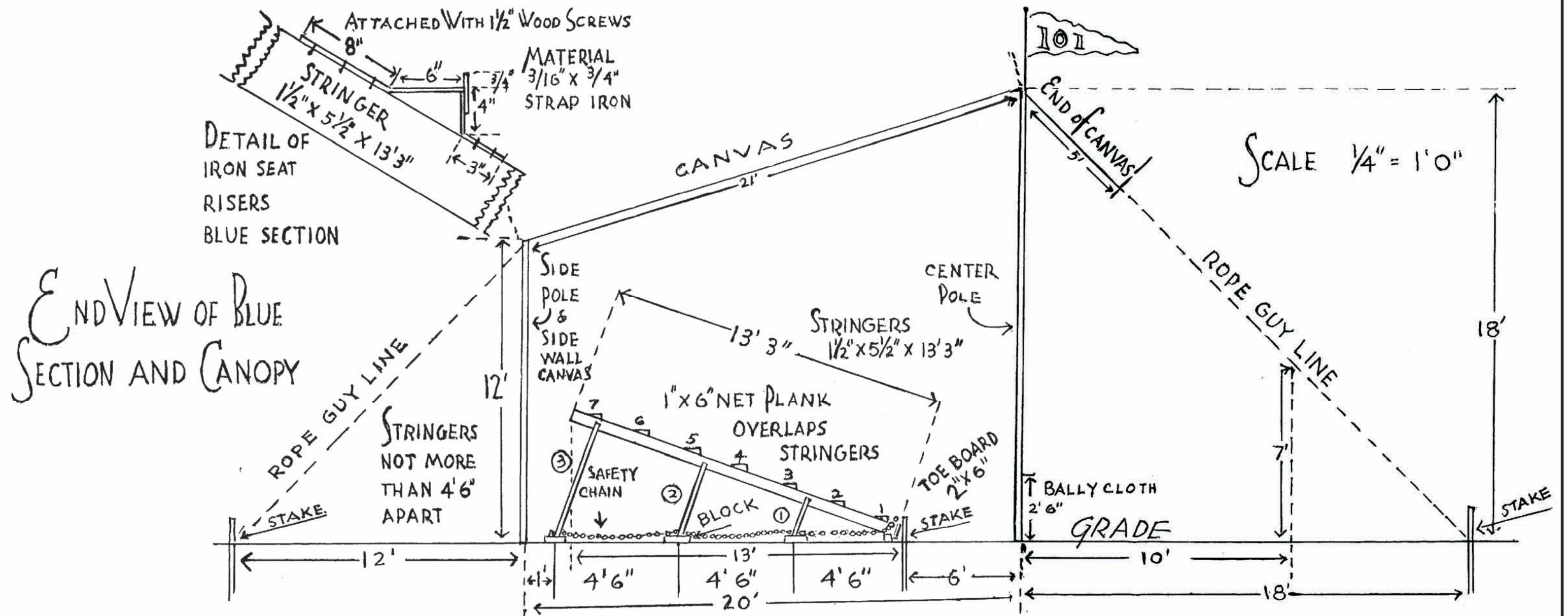
**101 Wild West Show
Lot Layout**

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SCALE: None

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02/18/2011

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HORSE AT GRAND STAND AND BLUE SECTION

101 Wild West Show
Lot Layout

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SCALE: None

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