Boston Ballet
dances de Mille

Continued from page 6)

Together and watch the "hands" show off their skill in roping, riding, branding, and throwing. Afterwards, there is usually a Saturday night dance at the ranch house with the local "womenfolk." The heroine of the story, originally danced by de Mille, is a spirited cowgirl who is not accepted by the men because she is not male, and shunned by the women because she is untidy and non-conformist. At the dance she has trouble getting a partner, but eventually a bountiful Champion Roper "hitches up" with her after she dons a dress and starts behaving like a proper female.

Although the plot was reasonably interesting, the dancing was in general amusing. The Head Wrangler, whom the Cowgirl had a crush on, was obviously arrogant. The Champion Roper, Greg Huffman of the Jeffrey Ballet, was a bit too silly; at times he carried his role virtually into slapstick. While this may have been unintentional, the Cowgirl moved too much like an elephant, and it seemed that loric attitudes would have been more appropriate. The Womenfolk were amusing—they did a superb satire of feminine flirtation techniques. Despite the dancers' flaws, the audience enjoyed their performance.

In summary, the evening was relaxing, almost soporific. This is in definite contrast to the current philosophy espoused by George Balanchine, director of the New York City Ballet, in which regards ballet as a vital, often dramatic, exciting force.