

A BRIEF CHRONICLE OF THE RUNNING OF THE BULLS

With thanks in part to Luis del Campo and our friends at Sanfermin.com

There have been 16 deaths associated with the modern history of the running of the bulls beginning in 1910 with the death of a young man from Falces (Navarra) who had been injured on July 7, 1910, the first encierro of the fiesta, but who did not succumb to his injuries until mid-January 1911. Although 16 fatalities in 105 years amounts to a small percentage compared to the number of runners in any one encierro (more people die every day falling in their bathrooms), they are also only a fraction of the number of serious injuries that occur during a typical encierro.

Averages can be misleading, but in the last 35 years there have been a total of 262 goings requiring hospitalization (an average of one per day during the 8 days of the encierro), along with nearly 1200 serious injuries requiring more than a band-aid. A host of other minor injuries have averaged 32 per day over that same period, keeping the medical teams along the route busy.

A goring doesn't happen during every encierro, but, as in 2004, Jandilla bulls managed to gore eight runners while seriously injuring ten others in one run. On July 10, 2009, a Jandilla bull named "Capuchino" caused the death of the 16th person to die during the encierros, Daniel Jimeno, a young man from Alcalá de Henares (and Pamplona), at the end of Telefónica. And just last year another Jandilla bull gored three runners during the first, and one of the fastest, encierros on record. The breed will be returning this year.

In 1988 a Cebada Gago bull named "Doloroso II" managed to gore six runners along the route, with the Cebada Gago bulls adding seven more gorings to their record set in 1999. The Torrestrella bulls managed six goings during their encierro in 2001, matching what they did in 1994.

On July 12, 2007, a bull named "Universal", from the Marqués de Domecq breed, gored six runners, beginning on Santo Domingo, severely goring a Pamplonica in front of the city hall before catching two American brothers as they ran down Estafeta (forgetting to look behind them as they ran together). Then there was the runner from Mexico that he caught trying to hide in a doorway. Finally, it caught up with a Norwegian trying to climb the fence on Telefónica, goring him in the back of the knee to finish his day.

The Miura bulls, the largest, and some of the quickest fighting bulls, gored five runners during their 2009 appearance.

“The only safe place during the encierro is on the other side of the barricade”.

Javier Solano RTVE

Come for the adventure run with the bulls!

Or watch from the safety of our balconies.

Packages available for the opening days of the fiesta!



Here is a chronicle of the 16 tragic events in the modern history of the running of the bulls in Pamplona:

July 10, 2009

Daniel Jimeno Romero, a 27 year-old veteran runner from Alcalá de Henares (Madrid) who's family lives in Pamplona, was killed by a Jandilla bull named “Capuchino” when he became trapped on the ground in the crowd of runners crushed up along the barricades at the end of Telefónica. The bull had separated from the herd in the Town Hall Square, goring another runner on Calle Mercaderes before covering the rest of the route alone, which is always troublesome. In Telefónica it charged into a group of runners, its left horn mortally wounding Daniel Jimeno, who had fallen, and was sitting on the ground, trapped by the crowd, unable to escape under the barricade in time.

July 8, 2003

Fermín Etxeberria Irañeta, a 63 year-old native of Pamplona-Iruñea died on September 24 without regaining consciousness from an injury he suffered after being struck in the back of the head from behind by a Cebada Gago bull while running along Mercaderes. Fermín had been running with the bulls since he was fourteen years old, having never been seriously injured in all those years. Sadly, we saw it happen that morning on the street below our balcony.

July 13, 1995

Matthew Peter Tasio, a 22 year-old American from Illinois, doing a summer abroad after graduating from college, decided he would go to Pamplona to run with the bulls, knowing nothing about the encierro, or its inherent dangers. Having met up with others after arriving on the 12th, he stayed up all night partying. The next morning found Peter waiting in Plaza Consistorial, the Town Hall Square, near the top of Santo Domingo, one of the most dangerous places to be, even for a veteran runner. After being knocked to the ground by the madly rushing crowd, he struggled to regain his feet just as the Torrestrella bull "Castellano", at 575 kilos, ripped into him at full speed. The horrific goring was mortal. The medical team was unable to do anything as the horn had torn out his aorta, causing massive loss of blood. He was rushed to the hospital in record time but was pronounced dead within moments of admission.

Peter was the first, and so far only American to die in the running of the bulls, although there have been some close seconds, like the one on July 14, 2003, when a young American from Florida was gored and severely injured by a Torrestrella bull on Calle Estafeta. The goring was so fast that it went unnoticed until the medical team reached him.

July 13, 1980

José Antonio Sánchez Navascués, a 26 year-old from Cintruénigo in southern Navarra was gored by "Antioquio", a bull from the Guardiola Fantoni ranch, in the Town Hall Square after the bull slid to the ground coming up Santo Domingo, becoming separated from the rest of the herd. Reaching the top of Santo Domingo, the bull knocked aside one runner and hooked José Antonio who was running in front of his friend. The young man was dragged along by the horn for several meters before being tossed by the bull near the entrance to Calle Mercaderes. He died later that morning in the hospital.

Vicente Risco, a 29 year-old from Badajoz was killed in the bullring by the same bull, "Antioquio", being gored repeatedly despite the efforts of the runners and drovers who rushed in to help. "Antioquio" had continued his solo run after goring José Antonio, following the pack into the bullring, suddenly turning right and charging the young man.

This was one of the longest and most tragic encierros in the history of Sanfermines, lasting 10 minutes 55 seconds, and resulting in a total of 9 gorings, the death of two runners, and serious injuries to 23 others.

July 8, 1977

José Joaquín Esparza Sapasibar, a 17 year-old native of Pamplona (Txantrea), was trapped in the Callejón, the entrance to the bullring when the first "runners", those who do not actually run with the bulls, fell and began forming a human blockade across the entrance to the Plaza de Toros as one "chicken runner" fell atop another. Shouting from the spectators inside the bullring could be heard as far away as the end of Calle Estafeta by the runners leading the Miura bulls to the Callejón and into the tunnel leading into the bullring as the bodies continued to pile up with each passing second. The uproar from those in the bullring was deafening, beyond description, as panic set in.

The bulls and steers, terrified, confused and confronted by a wall of human bodies, began to clear the way, razor sharp horns digging into the mountain of bodies, tossing the injured aside as they tried to climb over the human wall. Three times the gates to the bullring were closed and reopened, allowing two of the bulls and some of the oxen to escape, but the others remained, adding to the chaos of the moment.

It all happened in six brief minutes but it seemed an eternity for those involved before the rocket finally sounded, signaling that the bulls were safely in their pens. The toll that day was one of the bloodiest in the history of the running of the bulls (an event not to be repeated until 2014). Most everyone recovered completely from their wounds with the lone exception of the young man from Pamplona.

"...When, for whatever reason it might be, the bull becomes separated from the group, the potential for danger increases a hundredfold. The bull, finding itself alone, reveals its temperament and base instincts and is not softened by the general law of psychology of the masses. It is a wild beast, crazy with fear, who responds to the least provocation with all the instinct of his breeding, with its strong and sharp horns at the ready like two upraised fists, ready to cause tragedy at any moment."

July 9, 1975

Gregorio Gorriz Sarasa, a 41 year-old veteran of the encierro from the small village of Arazuri, a few minutes west of Pamplona, became the 10th person to die in the running, mortally wounded in the Callejón by an Osborne bull named "Navarrico".

The run started badly. The pastores couldn't get the steers in tight with the bulls, and then on Mercaderes, two of the bulls had become separated from the rest of the pack and half-way up Calle Estafeta charged several of the runners, goring some of them.

Meanwhile, at the entrance to the bullring, there was a pile-up that continued to grow as more runners fell over the fallen. The bulls, seeing the way blocked, turned back and charged anything in their way. Finally turning the bulls around, the pack headed toward the tunnel leading into the bullring, staying close to the right side of the Callejón, when the bull Navarrico suddenly turned to its left and found Gregorio Gorriz.

July 12, 1974

Juan Ignacio Eraso Martiartu, having successfully run the final stage of the encierro, starting at the end of Calle Estafeta, the 18 year-old from Pamplona (Txantrea) was aware of the two bulls from the Herederos de Don Manuel Arranz ranch had become separated from the others, having seen them enter the bullring, but he was unaware that a third bull was still somewhere behind him. Entering the bullring, he tried to climb up on the fence, but turned back to walk up the tunnel as there was no free space. Entering the tunnel, he suddenly found himself face to face with "Palmello". He froze, unable to move. Other runners tried to distract the bull, but it had its sights set on the young, inexperienced runner.

July 12, 1969

Hilario Pardo Simón, the 45 year-old veteran runner from the small village of Murchante near Tudela in southern Navarra encountered trouble almost immediately. The six fighting bulls charged ahead of the steers coming out of the coral at the bottom of Santo Domino, closing in on the first line of runners within moments. The runners scattered, some pinning themselves against the wall, or having lost their balance, fell to the pavement. Others headed toward the break in the fence on their right but were followed by a Guardiola Fantoni bull named "Reprochado" who gored one runner in the stomach before immediately charging a second runner, Hilario

Pardo, who had fallen in the rush to escape the danger. The bull caught him with its right horn first, following up quickly with its left, leaving the man lying in the street, fatally injured.

July 9, 1961

Vicente Urrizola Isturiz, the 32 year-old Pamplona native, and veteran of the encierros, was waiting near the top of Santo Domingo as he had done many times over the years when the second rocket went off and the crowd below began running up the slope, one step ahead of the charging bulls from the Alvaro de Domecq ranch. His mortal wound went unnoticed at first as he lay in the street. He passed away in the hospital the next day, becoming the first fatality in 14 years.

July 10, 1947

Casimiro Heredia, a resident of Pamplona, was standing talking to some friends at the doorway to their house when the first runners came up the street ahead of the charging bulls. His last words to his friends were, "you'd better get back inside... I'll see you later." He took off running, unaware the dangerous Don Antonio Urquijo bull had become separated from the pack. Casimiro was caught in the middle of the street and lifted on the horns of the bull. "Semillero" tossed him like a rag doll to the pavement.

The crowd immediately sensed the seriousness of the wound as he lay on the ground a few meters from the menacing bull, who, in turning, noticing him again, once more charging the mortally wounded runner. Casimiro was already dead as the bull tossed him against the wall and then from side to side, before leaving him to find another victim.

Julián Zabalza, a young man from the village of Villava, a few kilometers northeast of Pamplona, had not run in the morning's encierro, but had instead been sitting the bullring with friends, watching as the bulls and runners entered through the tunnel. For some reason he decided to leave his seat in search for the Don Antonio Urquijo bull that had become separated from the others. It was a fatal mistake.

"Semillero" was a wild, raging bull who had already mortally wounded one runner along Calle Estafeta and continued charging one runner after another on its way to the Plaza de Toros. Julián, who had foolishly entered the tunnel, suddenly ran back into the bullring, followed closely by "Semillero", making the fatal mistake of turning to the right, which was favored by the bull.



July 10, 1935

Gonzalo Bustinduy y Gutierrez de la Solana, a 29 year-old originally from San Luis de Potosí, Mexico, but who was living in San Sebastián-Donostia, died that morning on the horns of the largest of the six bulls from the Doña Carmen de Federico (Murubes) ranch. The bulls were entering the final stretch, the passageway into the bullring, when suddenly some reckless youths taunted the bulls, causing the biggest one to separate from the pack, turning back toward the taunting youths. Gonzalo Bustinduy boldly stepped in front of the bull, waving his jacket like a toreador's cape in front of the bull's face, citing the bull. The young man had no idea what he was doing. Witnesses later said that he had been drinking up to the start of the encierro and was out of his mind.

The massive bull charged as Gonzalo Bustinduy fell to the ground, the horn striking a mortal blow to the ribs as it tore into him. Despite the bravery of the pastores and one "Chico de Olite", who managed to get the bull away from the wounded man. He died three days later after being moved to a hospital in San Sebastián.

July 8, 1927

Santiago Martinez Zufia was a bystander in the bullring when the bulls from the Don Celso Cruz del Castillo ranch were being led into the bullring by the oxen at the end of the encierro. One of the bulls, being teased by a man with a rod, turned violently to the right in pursuit and charged the man. Losing sight of his initial

quarry in the crowd, it charged blindly whoever happened to be in front of him, goring Santiago Martinez, lifting him up by the horns, and tossing him off only after it bent its head to the ground, the horn penetrated so deep. The 34 year-old from Pamplona struggled to his feet, only to fall mortally wounded into the arms of those who had rushed to his aid.



July 13, 1924

Esteban Domeño Laborra, a 22 year-old from the nearby village of Sangüesa suffered a severe horn wound in Telefónica, just before the Callejón, when a bull from the Conde de Santa Coloma ranch in Andalucía charged blindly into the tight crowd that had grouped together on the right side, against the barricade, in a headlong thrust, one horn finding its deadly mark. Esteban Domeño, unable to move out of the way, dropped to the ground, rigid and pale from the mortal wound that pierced his body. He passed away the following afternoon.

July 7, 1910

Francisco García Gurrea, a young man from the small village of Falces in southern Navarra was injured, trampled in a spectacular pile up of more than 100 runners at the entrance to the old bullring near what is now the Gayarre Theatre, in an encierro

with the bulls from the once famous bull raising ranch of Marqués de Villagodio of Zamora. Francisco García died several months later from an infection resulting from his injuries.

While most of the mortal injuries have occurred along the stretch from Telefónica into the bullring, you can't consider anywhere along the route safe during the encierro.