

Sally's a Success!

By Nancy C. Bode

The press, the public, and everyone who worked at the zoo impatiently awaited her appearance. The celebrity in question was indeed an important personage, no other than Sally, the Black Rhinoceros, in fact the first rhinoceros of any kind to be shown at the San Diego zoo.

Sally's initial day at the zoo was unsuccessful, socially speaking, as a poor dress rehearsal for a stage play. But as superstition has it that a bad dress rehearsal presages future success, so did Sally's first-day antisocial tendencies mean nothing more than that she would be a smash hit in successive performances.

Early on the morning of Sally's arrival, zoo employees, at least any of them who could think up even the slimsiest excuse to be there, lined the fence along the new rhinoceros enclosure awaiting a glimpse of the famed young African lady. She was not to be seen anywhere. The report went down the line—yes, she had arrived, and yes, she was in fine shape. We peered across the spacious pen into the shadowy recesses of her duplex apartment. Dimly in the background we could discern something moving. In the foreground were the keepers—wheedling, cajoling, and coaxing, but apparently to no avail. Sally would not come out, and she made it exasperatingly plain that she had a mind of her own. Her favorite foods were proffered and accepted—as long as the food was brought to her; but nary a step would she venture if the food were held a few feet away.

Occasionally we on the outside of the pen were tantalized by the appearance in silhouette of a squatish muzzle, two nubby horns, or a funnel shaped ear. But the bulk of Sally remained in the crate to which it had become so accustomed on the forty-three days of travel from Mombasa, Africa.

We thought up various reasons for her reluctance and tried to fathom the mind of a she-rhino. But all we could hear from Sally were a few timid squeals of protest. If she were holding back her dramatic entrance for some reason, what could it be? If this were just her idea of coquetry, she had carried womanly whims and a prima donna temperamentality too far. Whatever the reason, her reluctance was colossal, so colossal in

fact that she held out on us for one entire day.

The explanation was far less dramatic than we had conjured up in our impatience. The simple truth was that this reputedly dangerous game animal, this 1000 pounds of rhino, was just plain shy. This was a strange new world which confronted her beyond the familiar walls of her shipping crate, and her nearsightedness made caution the rule of the day. The Unknown was understandably suspect.

The following day, however, our waiting proved well worthwhile. She had decided that her new quarters didn't look so strange after all—her one day of reluctance was a thing of the past. No longer shy, Sally emerged in all her rhinocerous glory.

That a rhinoceros could look innocent is a statement that might well be disputed, but that is exactly how Sally does appear. After all, she is only a youngster of two, and the young of any species, even a rhino, has a babyish look about it. Like any child she is playful, usually when least expected. She may be seen standing in the middle of her pen speculatively surveying the crowd, possibly chewing on the end of a branch or a palm frond—the picture of calmness. Or she may sedately begin an ambling stroll in an exploratory, placid manner, her gait at once ponderous and mincing. Then suddenly with no warning something—it might be no more than the sight of her own shadow—possesses her, and she is off, hurtling through the small gateway that joins the duplex yards. Back and forth she charges at an astonishing speed for one of her weight and proportions. As abruptly as it began the charge is over, and once again she stands twitching a fringed ear or frisking the ridiculously small, tasseled tail.

Each of Sally's ears seems capable of being propelled independently of the other, and one may be cocked forward, while the other is directed backward, or by some miracle of synchronization both may perk straight up as she detects some interesting sound that requires total concentration. A rhino must depend mostly upon the senses of hearing and smell to warn it of possible danger, for its eyesight is exceedingly poor. However, those senses which Sally can use are apparently very keen—her keeper may

be at some distance, but she can tell when he is approaching and follows him around on her side of the concrete barrier as he circles on the outside. She is a responsive animal and goes right over to Keeper Gabe Davis as he talks to her. She loves to have him scratch her head or pat her.

For that schoolgirl complexion and a bit of healthful exercise, Sally recommends a daily mud bath. Nothing makes her happier than to have the keeper turn the hose on her. She faces the full force of the water head on, letting it drench her ears, horns, mouth, and open eyes. Pretending indifference, she turns around, only to sit down deliberately in the muddiest part of the wallow. Gradually she abandons herself to the full enjoyment of the moment. To Sally, rolling over on her back with her feet lazily waving in mid air, this is bliss!

The only activity which can exceed wallowing in the mud for

sheer enjoyment is. Sally's table extraordinarily fastid her size and bulk: her gay and care the mud wallow. hensile, finger-like the name Hook-lip tends itself to push one way or the o picks up the mor: it neatly, only a noise marring her matter of quantity ever, dainty is not In the morning fourths of a buck —carrots, potatoes ples—along with bran and oats. Tl noon, she puts couple of flakes time, Sally may ha figure! Meanwhile on her—in admira first rhino. Like is all perfection.

The Cover

All ages and sizes—such is the status quo of the Uganda Giraffe exhibit. Lofty, Jr., depicted on the cover, is the youngest and smallest of four, so what the well dressed giraffe family will wear, from babyhood on up, is currently well illustrated.

Lofty, Jr., represents, we are sure, the epitome of high fashion for giraffe babies. His suit is, by our standards, the best fitting of them all; it is certainly the smoothest, sleekest and most free from wrinkles. The pattern of his suit is delicately delineated in shades of fawn, and hardly a fold or crinkle mars this perfection. He is as flawlessly formed as a giraffe in a china shop, petite, symmetrical, and polished—like a miniature edition of his mother, Patches, in ceramics. He seems toy-like as he drowses, sitting down with his legs folded and his head leaning against a corner of the house. But when a long tongue slowly winds around his nose to flick off a fly, the illusion caused by his figurine-like pose is broken. He can be amazingly active at other times, loping in a cavorting fashion around his mother, pulling up to a stop just in the nick of time as he nears the fence. Atop his head he wears two jaunty black tufts of stiff hair—his father, Lofty, Sr., has knobby hair-covered horns. Black stock-

ings are just the giraffes, but not Lofty, Jr., sports marks from his k

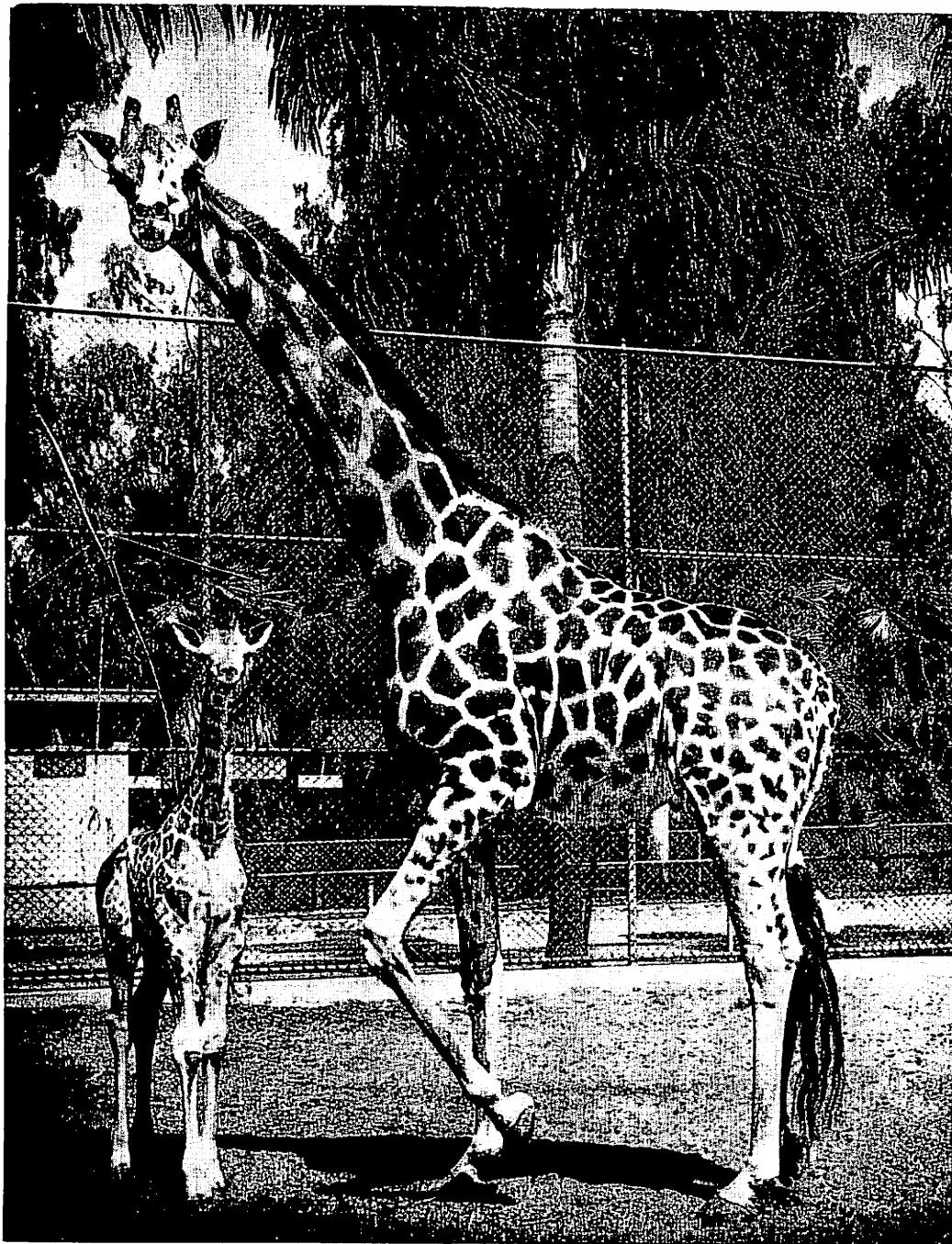
Big sister Patty ent fashion from I About two years the adolescent si clothes just don't s Her suit — perfe considered in style — hangs in fold only her long neck ing smooth from garment. It looks she were wearing from older childre This is not to say ing in grace or carriage is regal.

Color seems to individual variatio long as shades of I predominate. In I family, the color se er the older or bi, I owever, this doe in the wild, as I observed with yc dark in hue and lighter colored. I palest of all four zoo, Patty's cloth chestnut hues, and brown, while Loft spots that are so c be almost black.

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MEET PATCHES'S SIXTH AND NEWEST INFANT, LOFTY, JR.

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