

Champions are a natural for Sarah Brubaker

By DIETER KRIEG

TIMONIUM, Md. - Sarah Brubaker, 14-year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Brubaker, Lancaster, showed the grand champion market lamb here at the Eastern National Livestock Show a week ago. Afterwards she sold the 115 pound Hampshire for \$4 per pound.

The ENLS draws exhibitors from all over the eastern part of the United States and a few from west of the Mississippi River.

Miss Brubaker has had considerable success with her sheep, winning top prizes at such prestigious shows as the Pennsylvania Farm Show, the Keystone Exposition, the Eastern States Exposition, and the ENLS. Included among her trophies are a number of awards for first-place entries. Working with sheep and having a high degree of success with them almost appears to be a natural for the young Lancaster Countian.

But nothing comes from nothing.

Miss Brubaker has worked diligently for the honors she's received.

She rates exercise, fitting, and showmanship as the three most important criteria to preparing an animal for a show. She shares her program and thoughts on each topic:

"I exercise my sheep six or seven days per week for as long as three or four months before the date of the show," Miss Brubaker explained. "I run 'em over two-foot high hurdles and an oil drum for an average of 15 to 20 minutes per day. After a while they know what to do and they go pretty much by themselves."

The object is to develop an animal which shows thickness down its back, muscling, length of rump, length of loin, good muscling through the legs, and the proper amount of finish or fat.

Fitting a sheep properly is also important. Miss Brubaker makes it a point to work with her sheep for a few minutes every evening. That includes holding them, teaching them how to stand properly and training them. About a week or two before the show they're washed and trimmed all over. An immaculate coat of wool is the result. Brushing aside any idea that this may entail a good bit of work and patience just to prepare for a show which is months away, Miss Brubaker compliments her sheep by saying "They learn pretty fast, actually two or three nights of training would be enough."

Finally, there's the question of showmanship. With five years of experience as a member of the Lancaster County 4-H Beef and Sheep Club, Miss Brubaker knows how to set her sheep up properly. Her performances in the show ring prove it.

A freshman at Hempfield High School, the pretty young lady has been to the Eastern National a couple of times. She's had the grand champion market lamb at the Farm Show for three

consecutive years. "I like the sheep and I enjoy doing it," she exclaimed with a pleasant smile.

The Brubakers live on a 60-acre farm on the Harrisburg Pike, just two miles from the Park City shopping mall. Sheep have been a part of the farm for as long as Miss Brubaker can remember, and for that reason she finds it easy to work with them. According to her parents, Sarah has a way with animals.

Mrs. Brubaker, the former Dorothy Stehman of Lancaster, was an accomplished 4-H'er herself, showing several champion pens of lambs when she was in the program. Her father shows annually at the Farm Show and other major exhibitions.

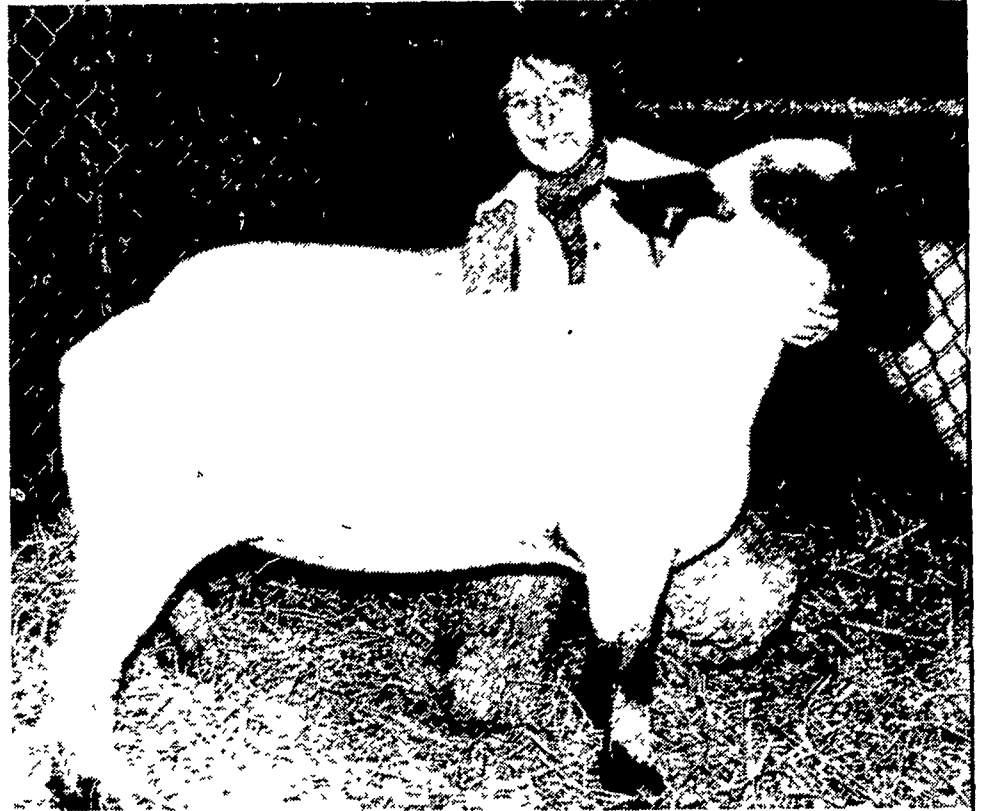
Having a champion animal is not always pleasant. "When I had my first pen of champion lambs I didn't

want to see them go," Miss Brubaker remembered. "But they have to be sold," she explained. "So there's no use crying, because they're going to go anyway."

As would be expected, the success in the show ring has created a demand for sheep

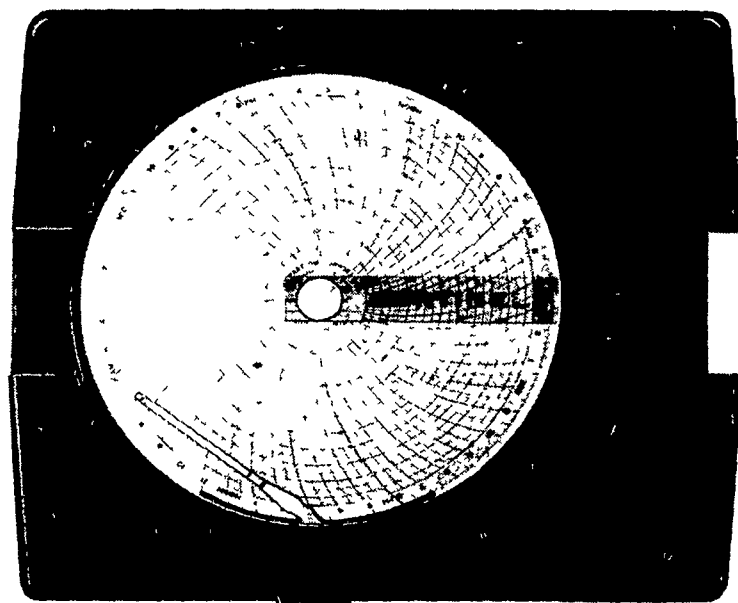
from the Brubaker farm. Some are sold to 4-H'ers in the area. While at the farm, the Brubakers' sheep are fed hay, (mostly alfalfa) some grain, and minerals. In addition, they have access to an exercise lot and grass.

"I like working with animals," Miss Brubaker replied to a question regarding her future plans. "I was brought up on a farm and I enjoy my 4-H Club work. I'd like a career which is related to animals - it wouldn't have to be sheep, but I'd try to make it be," she concluded with a broad grin and sparkling eyes.



Sarah Brubaker has been showing champion sheep for five years.

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