

# World champion auctioneer started at age 10



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BRUSH, Colo. - The world reserve and runner-up world livestock auctioneer champions had just been announced. Terry Elson turned to his wife, Judy, and said, "Well, it's over—let's go," and started putting on his jacket. Within seconds he was sitting again, stunned.

It was hardly over. Elson was named the 1979 world champion. He was one of a record-breaking 100 contestants who competed in the 1979 World Livestock Auctioneer Championship held here at Livestock Exchange, Inc., June 16.

At the age of 22, it may seem like Elson's auctioneering career is just beginning, but that's far from the truth. He's been auctioneering for more than half his life, having attended an Iowa auctioneering school at the age of 10, sent there by his parents from his Curtis, Neb., home.

"I think I was the youngest

one there," said Elson. "I was the youngest ever to go that I know of. There might have been some younger since then, but at least at the time, I was the youngest."

Elson can't remember wanting to be anything but an auctioneer. "Ever since they sent me to that school...once I got started, then that was all I wanted to do. I was still in high school when I first started selling at the market. I'd get out of school on sale days—that's the only job I've ever had.

He entered the Championship for the first time in Calgary, Alberta in 1977 and snagged the title of co-champion of the central region. "Right out of that contest I got a job offer from South Dakota and a chance to get away from home...I was only 20 and the guy called me on the phone and didn't know how old I was. When I got up there, he found out."

A former member of the Future Farmers of America who once shared a demonstration project that made it to the state level, Elson comes from a farm and ranch operation. His parents once ran the livestock market in his home town.

After his job with the South Dakota market, he now sells livestock for the market which sponsored him in the contest, Tri-State Livestock Commission Co. in McCook, Neb.

In addition to being the youngest in his auction school, he now has the recognition of being the youngest in the championship's history to win the world title.

And on top of those "firsts", he was the first recipient of the World Champion Ring, valued at over \$1,000. Still stunned, he was handed the keys to a pick-up truck, inscribed,

"1979 World Livestock Auctioneer Champion." He'll use the truck during his reign this year.

When asked how he felt he performed the day of the competition, he said, "I thought I had done as good as I could do. I didn't know if that was good enough, but I gave it all I had."

A lot of doors should be opening up for a young man who has accomplished so much. But, he's looking over the situation and said it hasn't changed anything for him, "not yet, anyway...I'll keep on going the way I have."

The annual Championship is sponsored by Livestock Marketing Association, Kansas City, Mo., and conducted by a subsidiary company, Livestock Market Digest, Inc., to focus on the professionalism of the auctioneer in livestock merchandising.

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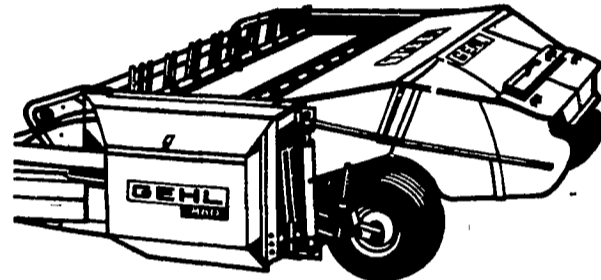
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