

# Rohrer's Oaks tops MD Southdown competition

**BY PAT KAUFFMAN QUARRYVILLE** — Gerald Rohrer, 14 year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rohrer, R1 Quarryville, has a lot to be proud of this week. The young man exhibited both the Grand Champion Southdown Ram and Ewe at the Maryland State Fair

open competition Tuesday and was named Premier Exhibitor.

While exhibiting a total of seven animals, Gerald garnered seven first placings, one in each of the following categories: yearling ram, yearling ewe, pair of yearling ewes, senior

ewe lamb, junior ewe lamb, and Southdown flock.

Gerald's sister, Barbara, 9, took three animals to the fair and brought home first place honors in the pair of junior ewe lambs class. She also received third placings in the yearling ewe and junior ewe lambs categories.

Their mom, Anne, is obviously proud of the achievements, but quick to credit their Lancaster 4-H leader, Clyde Brubaker, with teaching the children the tricks of the business of showing.

Anne explained that the family started the kids' flock of 30 sheep with the Southdown breed because they are mild mannered and "known for their carcasses." She said that the breed is an older breed and used to be the most popular breed in the area 25 years ago.

Gerald said that this will be the last year of competition for his champion ram. Robert, his dad, explained that the same ram which took the Grand Championship at Timonium also took Champion Ram honors at the Keystone Livestock Expo last fall.

Robert said that the family started out with 2 ewe lambs about 4 years ago. This is the fourth year of 4-H work for Gerald, and Barbara's second year. All thirty animals are owned by the children.

The kids obviously enjoy their work with the animals, but point out that it is indeed work. Anne said the two youngsters spent two days washing the ten animal show string. Gerald, she said,

spent 4½ hours grooming his champion ewe.

Anne contributed the labor to make 5 more sheep blankets to help preserve the animals' coats.

How does a young man of 14 win top honors in his breed in open competition at the Maryland State Fair? Both parents agreed that a lot has to do with the instruction the children have received at the 4-H meetings. And they concede they've tried to purchase quality animals. Both also said that since this is the first year the Lancaster sheep club has been separate from the beef club, they feel the sheep club members are gathering more information.

But Anne sums up the family's feelings on the 4-H projects when she says "you get out of 4-H what you put into it." It's obvious from talking to this family that they put a lot of love and pride into work with their Rohrer's Oaks flock.



Barbara, 9, and Gerald Rohrer, 14, are shown with Gerald's Premier Exhibitor banner and his grand champion Southdown ram. Rohrer animals swept the open Southdown competition Tuesday at Maryland State Fair.

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