

Supreme champ cow

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What does a 2100 pound powerhouse producing 20 tons of milk annually eat, anyway?

"Everything she wants," quips George. Well, not exactly. No alfalfa hay for this cow, or silage either. Both upset her digestive system. Instead, it's the fiber diet provided by a bale per day of clover and timothy hay, plus five feedings daily of grain and beet pulp.

One concession to this record setter is her own well-bedded, south exposed spacious pen. However, George allows that part of the reason for her accommodation is Ella's terribly aggressive nature, and her tendency to shove her massive weight around other herd mates at the feed facilities. Besides, a cow this size has trouble squeezing through the milking parlor.

"I guess that aggressiveness accounts for her success at the milk pail, though," he concedes.

Ella's on her way to leave a mark on the Holstein breeding industry, as well. Her Wapa Arlinda Conductor son is in use in Japan and a growthy December heifer calf by Bis-May Astro Jupiter is attracting visitors to the Woodbine heifer stable.

An obvious candidate for embryo transplanting, Ella has been super-ovulated and flushed twice, and flushed in normal cycles twice. In recipient dam at the farm now are four calves of either Paclamar Bootmaker or Fleetridge Monitor, and one each of Elevation Tony, Paclamar Astronaut and Roybrook Starlite. George hopes to settle Ella to either Astronaut or Starlite for the next full-term calf she'll carry.

A full sister of Ella's is waiting in the wings of the heifer barn also. Their 12-year-old dam, an Arlinda Chief daughter with 26,000 pounds of milk and 900 fat as a five-year-old, died September 1 at Marlu Farms in New Jersey.

Sunday's visitors must have been commonplace to Ella, who's received countless admiring gazes in the past few months. After battling severe heat stress during the Maryland State Fair at Timonium, Ella bounced back to defeat

fierce competition for the Grand Champion trophy at the September Harrisburg Eastern National show.

"Harrisburg's show was one of the best they've had in years," says George. "The quality of the classes was really impressive."

Barely a week later, Ella stood in the ring of the circular Madison Dairy Expo arena, proclaimed Supreme Champion over all breeds by the judging staff of the nation's most prestigious milking cattle exhibit.

In fact, judges announced that she was "the best cow that ever went through the ring" at the internationally acclaimed show, which boasted several thousand spectators from around the world.

Then, in another of the bizarre ups and downs of this cow's career, George thought for a while he might have to hitchhike home with Ella and a truckload of trophies.

The Knight's truck developed motor trouble shortly after leaving Madison. George says he "nursed" the vehicle as far as the Lathrope quarantine center near Chicago where

he knew there were facilities to house the champion. Mechanics corrected the problems and Ella traveled home, her usual hungry, high-producing self none the worse for the side trip.

Now another debate rolls around the dinner table in the Knight's spacious farmhouse. Will Ella travel to the Canadian Royal Agriculture Winter Fair in Toronto on November 18 and 19? With just a few more days to make that decision, George was weighing trucking Ella North across the border for another run at the competition, against the pressing demand a couple of hundred of acres of soybeans still standing in some of the thousand acres farmed in the Woodbine cropping program.

For the cow that won the Eastern National, was crowned "queen" of the Central show and won the Sidney Waazer traveling trophy production award there as well with her nearly 40,000 pounds of production, there are few tanbark challenges left. It's an accomplishment believed to be a first in Pennsylvania Holstein history.

The George Knight Jr. family moved to their York County farm in 1957 from Maryland, where they had a registered Guernsey operation and had actively exhibited the golden-colored

cows With the Woodbine farm came the registered black and white herd that bore that name, including the dam of the famous Mollie.

Today's herd numbers about 125 in the milking

string, with a DHIA rolling herd average of 16,000 of milk and 600 of fat.

In an office bursting with banners, pictures and trophies hangs a modest plaque dated 1941, and presented to father George

Knight, Jr., for his accomplishments in fitting. The youngsters tease that Dad pointed that out to them occasionally.

For the Knight family, that little inspiration has gone a long, long way.

Creates quality control department

ELBURN, Ill. — Curtiss Breeding Industries Inc. has announced the creation of a new department of Quality Control and Research and named Jere Mitchell, formerly Senior Research Assistant to Curtiss to head the new function.

Thomas B. Neff, president of Curtiss, said in announcing Mitchell's appointment, "It is appropriate that Jere Mitchell be our Director of Quality Control since he, more than anyone else, is responsible for the high quality of Curtiss semen."

Mitchell joined Curtiss in 1974 as a laboratory technician and has been Senior Research Assistant since 1975. He holds a bachelor's degree in Animal Science from Kansas State University and a Masters degree in reproductive physiology from Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

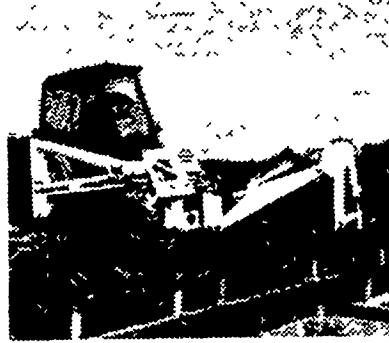
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leader in improving both dairy and beef cattle through artificial insemination since 1949, is headquartered near Elburn, Illinois.

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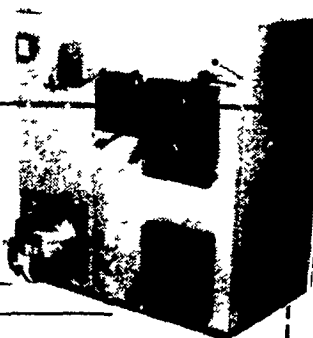
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