

Beam's hogs 'fight' way to Berks championship

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN
LEESPORT — Nelson Beam's entries literally took on all comers at the Berks County FFA Market Hog Show on Wednesday.

And in more ways than one. First of all, the 18-year-old Twin Valley graduate's entries took both the grand and reserve championships among the 94 hogs in the show.

Also, when they were in the ring at the Leesport Auction, extra personnel were kept busy with the boards, whips and canes separating them from other hogs.

When judge Rod Gilbert, livestock superintendent at Delaware Valley College, picked Beam's 225-pound Duroc-X as the grand champion, he made mention that "it wasn't just because it's a good fighter."

"It's the kind of market hog that we're looking for today and will hang up well on the rail," he explained.

But each time the red hog nipped an ear and another squeal erupted, it caught the attention of everyone at ringside.

The reserve grand champion, also shown by Beam, who is in his first year in animal production studies at the Berks Campus of Penn State, was a purebred Yorkshire.

At the evening sale, both the two top entries were bought by Hatfield Packing. Beam ended up with \$1602.00 to put toward his studies.

The grand champion brought \$4.30 a pound and the reserve \$2.70 a pound. The grand came out of the 225-pound class and the reserve out of the 235-pound category.

In all, the 94 head tipped the scales at 19,913 pounds and brought the youthful exhibitors a total of \$11,890.91. Average price including the champ was 60 cents a pound.

It was a repeat performance for Beam at the countywide show, which also had entries from Northern Lebanon and Blue Mountain high schools. He took the grand championship last year when he showed for the first time. He is the son of Omar and Ruth Beam, of R2 Elverson.

Actually, the battles his hogs were staging in the ring were with entries of a neighbor. The competing hogs had been penned side-by-side the night before the show.

Beam explained he did something a bit different this year.

"Last year, I had to hold the hogs back," he explained.

"But this year, I had younger ones and really pushed them toward the end. And about a week before the show, I started walking them."

Beam also took the runnerup spot in senior showmanship and third in the fitting.

The senior showmanship champion was Scott Stoltzfus, of Twin Valley, and the fitting champ was Marjorie Faust.

In the junior category, Rod Stoltzfus, also of Twin Valley, won the fitting and Charles Seidel, of Hamburg, took the junior showmanship.

Class placings in the show include:

Junior Fitting
1. Rod Stoltzfus, Twin Valley 2. Troy Adam, Kutztown 3. Mark Rohrbach, Hamburg 4. Pauline Noss, Conrad Weiser 5. Bruce Light, Northern Lebanon

Junior Showing
1. Charles Seidel, Hamburg 2. Rod Stoltzfus, Twin Valley 3. Troy Adam, Kutztown 4. Bruce Light, Northern Lebanon 5. Pauline Noss, Conrad Weiser

Senior Fitting
1. Scott Stoltzfus, Twin Valley 2. Nelson Beam, Twin Valley 3. Marjorie Faust, Kutztown 4. Diane Stoltzfus, Twin Valley 5. Alan Rohrbach, Hamburg

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A double-barrled winner, Nelson Beam, of Twin Valley, is shown with both the grand champion and the reserve grand champion of the Berks County FFA Market Hog Show. The Duroc-X grand champ came out of the 225-pound class and the Yorkshire reserve was from the 230-pound class. Beam was also last year's top winner.



Senior champions include Marjorie Faust, of Kutztown, in fitting contest and Scott Stoltzfus, of Twin Valley, in showing.



Junior champions include Rod Stoltzfus, left, of Twin Valley, in fitting competition and Charles Seidel, of Hamburg, in showmanship.

It's not easy being a little guy in a big ring with big pigs

Four-year-old Jason Wisser was the most "future" of the participants in the Berks County FFA Market Hog Show on Wednesday.

He was in the ring several times with cane in hand, including the super heavyweight class, in which the hogs outweighed him by more than five times. But he stuck right in there despite being

dwarfed by the other exhibitors and just about being able to look over the backs of some of the hogs.

With this head start, Jason, son of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Wisser, of New Tripoli, is sure to be a top showman and exhibitor when he reaches FFA age.

The suggested captions are just our version of what might have been going through his youthful mind during the show.



Now, let's see, which one of these is mine?



If you can do better you get in here.



Wow, now she's hiding behind the post.



C'mon do your stuff. Here comes da judge.