

Veteran, Rookie Share 4-H District Beef Honors

BY JACK HUBLEY

NEW HOLLAND — For Brian Hess, campaigning his steer at last weekend's Southeast District 4-H Beef Show represented his last shot at a 4-H championship. For Melanie Messick, the show represented the beginning of yet another Messick beef show career in keeping with the Dauphin County family's winning tradition.

Quality was deep and the competition was stiff at last Saturday's show held at New Holland Sales Stables. Serving as judge was Penn State Extension meat specialist Bill Henning, who waded through the 53 entries from Lancaster, Chester and Dauphin Counties and slapped an Angus-Chianina exhibited by Conestoga's Brian Hess for grand champion honors.

This was the final 4-H go-round for 19-year-old Hess, the president of Lancaster County's Red Rose Baby Beef Club. Henning's decision was the silver lining in the cloud that hovered over the

veteran exhibitor the day before when his steer weighed in over the State Farm Show limit at the Lancaster County 4-H Beef Roundup.

The county roundup had been the qualifying round for Farm Show, and Hess was both surprised and disappointed when his steer tipped the scales at 1,360 pounds, only 10 pounds over the Farm Show limit. "I didn't think he was as heavy as he was," Hess confessed at the district show.

Following a 24-hour crash diet, the steer weighed in at a trim 1,315 for the district event. Nevertheless, "I didn't have my hopes up too high," Hess noted.

The victory was particularly sweet for the Penn Manor graduate, who pointed out that this was the first time he entered the district event and the first time he'd topped a show at the county level or above.

For Hess's entry, life had come full circle. The exhibitor purchased his steer at the sales stable one

year ago at the District 4-H/FFA Club Calf Sale that follows the show each year. The calf was bred by Don Walters of York County.

The son of Abram and Jamie Hess, Brian currently works for a landscaping firm and resides on the family's hog farm.

Like Hess's steer, the reserve champion had also been on a weight reduction program. The steer's owner, nine-year-old Melanie Messick, noted that her entry, named Amos, weighted 35 pounds more only the day before. The first-year 4-H'er was definitely on a roll, taking reserve honors in Dauphin County's roundup on Friday, then doing likewise at the district show the next day.

The daughter of Thane and Judy Messick of Middletown, Melanie was Dauphin County's only entry in a field that included 10 steers from Chester County and 42 from Lancaster County. Her steer was homebred at Messick Farms out of a Chianina bull and an Angus cow.

An enthusiastic young 4-H'er, Melanie says she plans to be back in the showing next year. "My brother was in it last year and this year, and I guess I just wanted to be what he was in," she beamed.

4-H Market Sale

Willie the Butcher from Stauffers of Kissel Hill shouldered out the competition for the top steer and both the champion and reserve lambs that sold in the junior market sale following the district show. The lambs that sold were shown in Lancaster County's 4-H Woolies Roundup that had taken place a week earlier.

Brian Hess sold his 1,315-pound district champion steer to Willie for \$1.41 per pound. The reserve champion shown by Melanie Messick went to Hamilton Bank when Darvin Boyd offered the final

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Brian Hess wrapped up his show career by winning the Southeast District 4-H Beef Show last Saturday. Show judge Dr. Bill Henning holds trophy.



Nine-year-old Melanie Messick came away with reserve honors. Her steer was Dauphin County's only entry.



District Showmanship winners were (from left) Diane Musser, intermediate; Ken Walker, senior; Brad Linton, junior. Walker was named champion showman.

Frey Repeats Lancaster Co. 4-H Beef Championship

BY JACK HUBLEY

NEW HOLLAND — After winning his class at the Northeast Region Chianina Field Day and placing second in class at the Solanco Fair, Fritz Frey's Angus-Chianina steer put it all together at Lancaster County's 4-H Beef Roundup last Friday, Nov. 14.

Although this was his second county roundup win, it was the first time the 19-year-old Quarryville cattleman got a chance to be in on the action. Last year Brian Hess showed Frey's steer to top honors while Frey was busy showing cattle at the North American International Livestock Expo in Louisville, Kentucky.

Frey now has his sights set on the State Farm Show in January.

By that time, he figures, his steer should be in peak show condition. "I think he's right on schedule," Frey said.

Staying "right on schedule" for the state's premier livestock event in January is no simple task, Frey points out. Since Farm Show comes late in the show season, exhibitors need to choose a young calf that won't be over-finished by showtime.

Frey did just that when he selected a July calf from Jerry Adamson of Rocking J Farm, Cody, Wyoming. Although he normally chooses his show prospects from the herd at the family's Twin Oaks Farm, the cupboard was bare this time. "Our calves are born from March to

early May," he said, adding that summer is a difficult calving time because of the heat and parasite problems.

Nevertheless, a summer-born calf is the way to go for Farm Show. "Otherwise you have to feed them real slow and they just won't be quite as fresh (for the show)."

A veteran showman, Frey plans to make a career of the beef business. He currently manages the showstring and does other farm work at Twin Oaks for his parents, Fred and June Frey. But even with plenty of experience under his belt, he's not counting on a win in January. "There's going to be a super bunch of steers (at Farm Show) from Lancaster County this year," he smiles.

Another one of those competitive Lancaster County entries will be "Lone Hope," an Angus-Chi cross owned by Nichole High. High's steer was selected for reserve county honors by show judge Dr. Erskine Cash, a professor of animal science at Penn State.

High bought her 1,285-pound winner from Ray Weaver of Stewarts Draft, Virginia, at a sale held at the Keystone International Livestock Expo last year.

The daughter of Larry High and Shirley Burris of Lititz, Nichole showed two steers this year, including "Long Shot," a purebred Angus that was reserve champion at the New Holland Fair. Last Friday's reserve trophy with Lone Hope was High's fifth reserve title of the season.

High is also hoping that her calf's July 20 birthday will work to his advantage by Farm Show time. "He's a real young calf," she points out. Including Fritz Frey and Nichole High, 16 exhibitors were chosen to represent Lancaster County in Farm Show beef competition. The list includes

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For the second year in a row Fritz Frey took top honors in the Lancaster County 4-H Beef Roundup.



Nichole High took the reserve title with her steer named Lone Hope.



Lancaster Farming has traditionally presented a \$300 check to the reserve champion showman in Lancaster County's 4-H roundup. This year Editor Everett Newswanger presented the award to Jay Hess of Conestoga.