

Reading Dairy Show Highlights Local Herds

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READING (Berks Co.) — Holsteins and Jerseys were the dominant dairy breeds exhibited at the Reading Fair Wednesday.

The Reading Fair is held at the rear of the Fairgrounds Mall shopping plaza north of Reading city, along Rt. 222. A medium-sized fair, the agricultural shows are comprised mostly of entries from local animal enthusiasts.

There were 49 exhibitors registered for the Holstein dairy show and 15 registered for the Jersey breed show. No one showed Milking Shorthorns and a brother and sister duo showed Guernseys. Five exhibitors showed Ayrshires and five showed Brown Swiss.

Except for several top placings, the owners of the winning animals were registered in both the open and youth shows.

Despite the low number of exhibitors in most of the colored breeds, the Holstein and Jersey shows and several classes in the other breeds provided some level of competition for premium money and awards and gave show judge Leroy Plance, Wellsboro, a challenge in placing animals, he said.

Plance, a Holstein breeder with more than 30 home bred Excellents to his credit, milks an average herd of 40 cows and currently has a dozen Excellents in the herd. He judged both the Holsteins and colored breeds.

While giving reasons, Plance expressed his preference for a sturdy front end with good body depth, rib, leg support, a level and wide dairy rear, and overall type correctness, while some judges will overlook structural flaws in favor of strong udder aspects and teat placement.

Plance was also very frank in his comments, stating bluntly that cer-

tain cattle were over or under conditioned, which ones were in need of hoof trimming, etc.

His choice of grand champion Holstein was a 3-year-old daughter of Mel-Est Valiant Irose Melvin, owned by Stacy Geist, of Mertztown, "Ro-Ru Melvin Noel," born Dec. 15, 1988.

In the open division, the reserve grand champion to Geist's "Noel" was David and Rhonda Pool's dry 4-year-old "Ridgedale UHRA Beauty."

In the youth division, the reserve grand champion was Michael Davis's 3-year-old "Caw Croft Stewart Star," which was also second in that age class to "Noel."

The junior champion of the Holsteins was an intermediate heifer calf, "Cor-Phil Royal Macey," owned by Jessica Luckenbill.

The reserve junior open champion in open division was a junior yearling, "Fantasyland Star Ivory," sired by Hanover Hill Starbuck, and owned by David and Ronda Pool.

A Blackstar daughter, Eric-Dew Blackstar Dana-ET, owned by Erica Davis was second in the junior yearling class to Pool's "Ivory," and reserve junior champion in the youth division.

In the Ayrshire breed, an intermediate heifer calf outshone older junior-aged heifers to win the title of junior champion. The calf was "S&M Ayr Reliabilities Rebecca," owned by Jill Vail, of Myerstown.

Jill's brother Jed Vail showed the reserve junior champion, Karlyn Tally Ho Avery, a junior yearling.

Jed's junior 2-year-old, "Karyln R. Command's Keeley," took the senior and grand champion title's however. "Keeley" also had the best udder of the Ayrshire show, which Plance said he admired, but questioned the depth of the floor in relation to the hock for the age of the cow. The udder, large and well-connected seemed almost too large overall in proportion to the rest of the animal.

The reserve senior and grand champion was 3-year-old "Spotted Betsy Ross," show by Chris Blatt, of Robesonia. She had the second best udder.

In the Brown Swiss breed, 10 animals were shown with Jason and Randy Balthaser, of Bernville showing the grand and reserve grand champion animals, respectively. Randy also showed the junior champion. Derrick Hix, of Mohrsville, showed the reserve junior champion.

Amy and Daniel Hollenbach, of Bernville, showed eight Guernseys. Daniel's senior 2-year-old, "Lebanon Valley Boris Tina," was named senior and grand champion, while Amy's junior 2-year-old, "Blue Mountain View King Molly," was reserve senior and grand champion.

Both of Amy's junior calves, "Blue Mt. View Carey," and "Blue Mt. Vew Mariah," were junior and reserve junior champions, respectively.

For the second year in a row, well-known Jersey breeder Mildred Seeds, from Downingtown, and her pair of sister Jerseys took the Jersey titles at Reading.

The pair of 3-year-old, full-sister cows, continued their championship tour of local fair shows by taking the senior and reserve senior and grand and reserve grand titles at the Reading show.



From the left, Mildred Seeds holds the halter of her reserve grand champion Jersey, while Russell Subject helps out with Seeds' grand champion.



From the left, Ronda Pool holds the halter of her reserve grand champion Holstein, while Stacy Geist holds the halter of her grand champion.



From the left, Randy Balthaser holds the halter and rosette for his reserve grand champion Brown Swiss, while brother Jason holds the halter of his grand champion.



This day old calf almost became the youngest calf to be shown at the Reading Fair, perhaps any dairy show, in the dam and daughter competition of the Jersey breed. Owned by Mildred Seeds, the mother and daughter were not permitted to compete because the calf had not been entered in any other competition. Well-known Jersey breeder and shower Mildred Seeds apparently likes to start working with her show cattle early.



From the left, Chris Blatt holds the halter of his reserve grand champion Ayrshire, while Jed Vail holds the halter of his grand champion.



From the left, Amy Hollenbach holds the halter of the reserve grand champion Guernsey, while brother Daniel holds the halter of his grand champion.

Seeds' animals are not only well-known for winning, but also for their show-ring appearance — she allows the horns on her cattle to grow and uniquely uses brass chain and lockettes to show off the esthetic color qualities of the Jersey breed.

However, the win reversed the order in which the two Jersey cows were placed during the Allentown Fair last month. At this fair, "Top-O-Hill (TOH) Admiral Valentine" caught the judge's eye for first place honors, while placing sister "Tina," in reserve status.

The "bloom" condition of the udder during the show was cited by the judges at Allentown and Reading as being the determining factor in placing the sister animals. They two were placed that was also in taking best and second best udder

of the show.

The pair of Jersey sisters are products of crosses between dam TOH Silver Beacon and sire Bridon Master Admiral-ET. In addition to these recent wins, they have also captured titles at Kimberton, Cecil County in Maryland, and at Schuylkill County.

In the youth division of the show, Ben Hendricks, from Phoenixville showed the senior and grand champion Jersey, while Susan Curtis showed the reserve grand in the youth. Curtis's intermediate calf was also the open and youth junior champion.

Jessica Haag's 3-year-old took reserve senior champion in the youth division.

Seeds' senior heifer calf took home the open class reserve junior championship, while Jessica