



Better than Beginner's Luck

A first-time NJAS exhibitor's dream to win the showmanship contest came true this year.

by Ali Luetz, Angus Communications

Showmanship is consistently one of the toughest competitions at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). Only two juniors from each state are selected to compete in the National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest, and they get only one shot at it. The once-in-a-lifetime opportunity means the pressure is on.

Kansas comes out on top

This year, Kansas juniors took home the top honors. Madison Loschke of Kingsdown, Kan., was named top showman and Cale Hinrichsen of Westmoreland, Kan., took home reserve.

"It's something that you lay in bed and dream about," Loschke says. "Showmanship is the crème de la crème in my family."

For Loschke, the competition was extra special. It was her first time

exhibiting at the NJAS, though she'd spent years watching ringside.

"For my whole life, I've seen this contest, and it's been my goal to win it," Loschke says. "I came and worked for a family last year and made a point to watch this contest because I knew I wanted to participate this year."

Loschke and Hinrichsen made their home state of Kansas proud, continuing a tradition of excellence.

"A few years ago, both the kids from Kansas made finals, and they were first and second," Loschke says. "So I guess it's the Kansas curse because the other Kansas showman was second today."

Though Loschke calls it the "Kansas curse," it sounds more like a blessing.

Heated competition

The journey to earning one of the coveted silver bowls, awarded

to the top five showmen, begins in each contestant's home state, where two juniors are selected as representatives. Then, at the 2018 NJAS, selected junior members head to the ring to compete for the title of champion showman. The preliminary round consisted of four heats on Thursday, July 12, where the top 15 showmen were selected.

It was tough competition during the finals on Friday, July 13, and juniors left it all in the ring. Every year, the top showman at the NJAS is honored with the Dean Hurlbut Award, named after the man who organized the first showmanship competition in 1967.

"For years, I've strived to win this cup," Loschke says. "It's a dream come true."

Jessica Radcliffe, Weston, Wis.; John Griswold, Stillwater, Okla.; and

Dan Kiesewetter, Farmington, Ill.; evaluated the juniors on their skills while handling an animal, ability to follow instructions, and evidence of courtesy and sportsmanship in the show ring. All judges participated in the National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest during their time as junior members.

Radcliffe was looking for showmen and women who came to win.

“Today I would say was tough,” she says. “I know what they’re feeling, and I’ve been in their shoes. It definitely came down to little things and deciphering them. You really had to show that you wanted



Madison Loschke, Kingsdown, Kan., (left) won first place showmanship honors, receiving the prestigious Dean Hurlbut Award in the 2018 National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest hosted in conjunction with the National Junior Angus Show. Presenting the Silver Revere bowl are Leslie Mindemann (center), American Angus Auxiliary president, and Dean Hurlbut (right). The top five winners also received a monetary award from the Ham James Memorial Fund.

to win the title of national showman out here.”

As a past winner of the competition in 2012, Radcliffe knows a thing or two about good showmanship skills. She also served on the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) from 2013-15 and was honored to get the phone call to come judge showmanship at the 2018 NJAS.

“Being the 50th National Junior Angus Show and having it come back to Wisconsin is an honor, because I started my show career with the National Junior Angus Show in Wisconsin,” she says. “Coming back to help evaluate these kids is extra special this year.”



Top 15 Showmen at NJAS

Following champion showman Madison Loschke in the National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest top five showmen were: Cale Hinrichsen, Westmoreland, Kan.; Lucas Winesfki, Wyoming, Ill.; Jera Pipkin, Republic, Mo.; and John Henderson, East Troy, Wis.

The National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest brings together the breed’s top young showmen and it is considered an honor to be among those competing. Above, the top 15 finalists in the 2018 National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest are (from left) Ryan Callahan, Edmond, Okla.; Haley Greiman, Perry, Iowa; Emily Piland, Rescue, Calif.; Hannah Cox, Staunton, Va.; John Henderson, East Troy, Wis., fifth; Cale Hinrichsen, Westmoreland, Kan., second; Sydnee Gerken, Cashion, Okla.; Brody Fitzgerald, West Grove, Pa.; Lucas Wisnefski, Wyoming, Ill., third; Savannah Brauning, Finksburg, Md.; Erica Snook, Caldwell, Ohio; Jera Pipkin, Republic, Mo., fourth; Taylor Duckett, Tipton, Iowa; Hailie Conley, Belleville, Ontario, Can.; and Madison Loschke, Kingsdown, Kan., first.