

# 2021

# NATIONAL JUNIOR ANGUS SHOW

## Study, Study, Study

*Quiz bowl competition puts Angus and industry knowledge to the test.*

*by Jessica Wesson, editorial intern*

“Who was the first person to bring Angus bulls to America?”

A silence falls over the room as eight young people ponder the question for a mere fraction of a second, and before long several buzzers are hit. The moderator determines which buzzer was hit first and calls on the competitor.

“George Grant!”

The young National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) member was correct and just won the round for their team. All four teammates celebrate with a big group hug.

This scene is what it is like to experience the quiz bowl at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) each year. Youth from around the country, gathered in teams of four, study for weeks, even months, to prepare for this two-part event.

“The preliminary round consists of a written test with 50 questions and five bonus questions for each team

member,” says Madeline Bauer, NJAA events coordinator. “The subjects of the questions range from the American Angus Association, history, breed knowledge, BQA (Beef Quality Assurance), parts of the animal and animal health.”

The written test is a qualifier round for the second portion of the contest. The top eight teams from each age division will advance to the buzzer round.

“We create brackets where states will face off against each other,” Bauer says. “There are a series of one-on-one questions where one player from each team will have to go against each other. We also do a toss-up round, where it’s a free for all and anybody can buzz in.”

The buzzer rounds can get intense, but Bauer says she always has a plan to make sure the rules are followed and the contest is fair.

“We have a regional manager that

will sit in the room,” she says. “They are super helpful in making sure things run smoothly and steadily.”

There are three age divisions within the contest: junior, intermediate and senior. Bauer says it is one of the most popular contests.

“We usually have about 100 kids per age group compete in the written test portion,” she adds. “The contest is a way for them to test their knowledge. The NJAS centers around kids bringing cattle to show in the ring, but I think part of being a well-rounded individual is having knowledge about the animal that you are leading in the ring.”

Teams have all year to prepare for the national contest each summer. There are several strategies to make sure the team is ready to compete. Dylan Denny, a Texas native and senior NJAA member, has competed in quiz bowl for seven years.

“Each state has a study guide of





Dylan Denny (left) has competed in quiz bowl for seven years. Also pictured are senior team members from Texas: Emma Grace Nowotny, Gracie Smith and Rylie Philipello.

questions that they've collected over the years," Denny says.

Since he first competed in the event, Denny has perfected his preparation strategy. It was not always easy for him though.

"When I first started competing, I would just download the literature off of the American Angus Association's website," Denny says. "On the way to the NJAS, I would just test myself in the car ride and have my parents quiz me. Once we

finally got to nationals, my team and I would get together and practice."

Denny looks forward to competing each year to have a chance to make it to the buzzer round.

"Every year I hope and pray we make it to the buzzer round, because it's like being on a game show," he says. "You get to test your knowledge on the fly, and you get to compete directly against other states."

Maryland siblings Kyle and Alyson Schulze agree. Competing in the buzzer round excites them, and they like the engagement.

"Going in there and having to hit the buzzer before the other team is a rush," Kyle says. "When you do hit the buzzer before the other team and have the answer ready, it's such a different experience than the other contests we compete in."

The two seniors have been NJAA members since they were both 9 years old and have competed in quiz bowl a few times before. Alyson says she enjoys studying for the event.

"I'm a big studier, so I like to find the resources on the Angus website," she explains. "I like to turn them into Quizlets and have the online flashcards."

The brother and sister duo both say their experience in quiz bowl has benefited them in multiple ways. Kyle's biggest takeaway has been getting to display his knowledge of beef cattle and the Angus breed.

"Quiz bowl allows you to show everything you know from over the years," Kyle says. "It gives you learning opportunities, too."

Alyson says the science-based questions are the most helpful to her. She said she hopes her future career will be related to science somehow.

"I plan to go into a scientific or research career," Alyson says. "Answering the science-based questions helps me get ahead in my science classes, because I get to learn the basics from competing in quiz bowl and being in the cattle industry."

No matter why contestants choose to compete in quiz bowl, Bauer says they will not be disappointed if they do so. Her advice to new competitors is to keep their noses in the books and soak up as much knowledge as possible.

"Study, study, study as much as possible," Bauer says. "Ask your parents to let you help and be more involved with the cattle. Preparation throughout the summer and keeping up with the latest trends in the beef industry is huge." **AJ**

