



# Spokane National Stockshow Manager Likes a Challenge

by Jeri Lynn Gilleland

The phone is ringing, bulls bellar in the background, trailer gates clang, messages cover the bulletin board and there is a buzzing chatter of people lined up to get stall assignments. This is the pressure Spokane National Stockshow beef cattle manager Gary Kendall works under for four days every October.

"Once we get the exhibitors in the barns and their cattle are bedded down, we aren't going to have any trouble with them; but, they're going to be cranky coming off that truck," Kendall tells his staff. And Kendall should know; he's been at the end of a halter plenty of times. It's this first-hand experience as an exhibitor, plus his knack for organization, that has helped Kendall put Spokane on the cattle show circuit.

Three years ago when the Spokane National Stockshow took roots, Kendall saw a challenge in the opportunity to serve as the show's beef cattle manager. So when the show committee approached him with the offer, he said yes.

Kendall, an Angus breeder from Potlatch, Idaho, draws his energy from working with people. He is an ambassador of enthusiasm. His vigor denies exhaustion. Under his leadership the Spokane show has nearly doubled in size in just three years of existence. This year's 700 entries put the facilities and management at near capacity.

Sponsored by the Ag Bureau of the Spokane Chamber of Commerce, the show is held the first week in October at the Spokane Interstate Fairgrounds in Spokane, Wash. Starting a show of this magnitude and watching it grow each year has been a challenge indeed, admits Kendall. A successful club calf sale (an event Kendall was well schooled at staging) the first year kicked the show off on the right foot. This year, a fat calf show was added. And also added this year was a special sale, "Ladies in the Lobby." Four heifers of each breed represented at the show sold in the lobby of downtown Spokane's poshest hotel. The sale (Kendall's brainchild) was an attempt to promote the show to the city of Spokane and its urban dwellers. The sale was a success story all its own.

While the actual event lasts only four

days, Kendall is involved year round in planning and preparation. An advisory group of cattle breeders in the Pacific Northwest meet once a year, plus the Stockshow board of directors meets once a month in Spokane. Attention to details is critical.

There have been lessons learned from the first several shows and subsequent changes have been made. "We've done some rearranging in advertising and it's evident that it helped with this year's show," says Kendall.

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The challenge for Kendall has been more than the show itself. "With this cattle show manager job, plus a farming enterprise, a cattle enterprise and a kid enterprise, I have a lot of things to coordinate. I do like the challenge though," says Kendall.

Kendall accepts the challenge of his other three "enterprises" with no less enthusiasm. His farm of 480 acres is located on the Idaho-Washington border, about 90 miles south of Spokane. A 50-cow Angus herd wins more of his interest, however, than does the wheat and barley farming.

Kendall says, "I like the cattle better than the farming and it shows. We don't have a big enough operation for farming. In this country you need at least 1,000 acres to really do well."

Most of the farmland produces crops; about 80 acres of their land, plus extra rented ground, pastures the cows.

The Kendall Angus Ranch catapulted into national prominence three years ago when a heifer they raised, Kendall First Lady, claimed a successful show season. The heifer, a March 1979 daughter of Sayre Patriot was purchased for \$12,500 and roaded by Mark Richardson (now with Garney Angus, Afton, Okla.) of Sayre Farms, Phelps, N.Y., and Scott Talbott, Lexington, Ky. Talbott's

interest later sold to Deep Down Ranch, Paluxy, Texas. The heifer chalked up her big gest wins as reserve grand at the 1980 North American in Louisville and as grand champion at the 1981 National Western in Denver.

There have been other big wins and good sales for this firm, but probably none that have meant more than son Rod's winnings this past summer. Rod's heifer, Kendall Kovergirl, was grand champion in the owned division at the National Junior Angus Show in Des Moines. This April 1982 daughter of Thomas Big Shot, won her share of championships all across the nation. After the Des Moines event, she sold to Talbott.

Kendall credits the success of his cattle with a performance-tested bull purchased in 1975. The bull, Schearbrook Shoshone 290N, produced females which are the foundation of today's herd. (The mother of Kendall First Lady was a "290N" daughter which Kendall later sold for \$35,000. A "290N" daughter also produced Kendall Kovergirl and Kendall Klassifier, the \$18,250 bull that set an Inland Empire Angus Assn. sale record in March of this year.)

"We got good daughters from 290N and we have just bred A.I. to leading Angus sires since then," comments Kendall. "The 290N bull was a Pathfinder Sire and a commercial man's dream."

Kendall's start in the Angus business came after college. Although a farm boy, he had not grown up with the cattle business. At the University of Idaho he majored in agricultural economics and upon graduation returned home to lease the family farm. At his uncle's nudging, he soon found himself raising purebred blacks.

Now Kendall's three children are especially interested in the cattle business. Rod, a junior in high school, and Dale, a freshman at the University of Idaho, are practically veterans of the show ring. Ten-year-old, daughter Leeanne exhibited her first heifer this past summer.

The Spokane National Stockshow, the farming, the cattle and the kids — keeping it all coordinated is a challenge, at least. But Gary Kendall does it and does it well. AJ