

They Came to Participate

Whether by plane, Interstate or county road, juniors made their way to Indianapolis to take part in the 2006 National Junior Angus Show.

by Micky Wilson & Abby White

Name: Kaitlyn George
Hometown: Dandridge, Tenn.
Age: 9

This was the first junior show for Kaitlyn. "It took us six and a half hours to get over here," she said about her trip from Tennessee to Indiana.



Kaitlyn didn't participate in any contests, but simply enjoyed being at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) all week experiencing the event. Most of

all, she says, "it's running around with all my friends and seeing all of the cattle," that she likes the best. Kaitlyn's family raises Angus cattle.

Name: Kevin Benes
Hometown: Albion, Neb.
Age: 19

Still new to the event, Kevin has been to "just a couple" NJASs. Instead of taking one of the many roads that led to Indianapolis,



Kevin flew, while his cattle went on a semi. "It didn't take me as long [to get here] as our cattle," Kevin said. "Everyone else [from Nebraska] said it was around 12

hours." Kevin participated in showmanship, the fitting contest, and showed one owned heifer.

Name: L.J. Young
Hometown: Pendleton, Ind.
Age: 11

Making one of the shorter trips from out of town, L.J. came 15 miles to help at the NJAS. "I'm working here [by helping] clean



the showing," he said of his time at the event. He got the job because he knew a volunteer helping with the show, so he decided to help, too. While he doesn't show

Angus cattle, L.J.'s family raises and exhibits show cattle. L.J. was at the NJAS all week helping clean the ring.

Names: Rebecca and Renae Tokach
Hometown: Saint Anthony, N.D.
Ages: 19 and 10, respectively

"It was over 1,000 miles and 18 hours," Rebecca said of her family's trip to Indianapolis. Rebecca participated in the showmanship, prepared public speaking,



photography and creative writing contests. Renae participated in the photography, creative writing, poster and quiz bowl contests.

While the girls didn't bring any cattle along to show, their brother, Ben, 16, brought two head to exhibit. About their history with the NJAS, Rebecca said, "I've participated in six,

and she's (Renae) been along for all of them." Rebecca started showing with her brother when she was 6 years old. "I started when I was about 5 years old," Renae



explained. "My favorite part of the National Junior Angus Show is all the friendships that you can make from all the different states. I know people from Arkansas,

California, Maryland, wherever. They are friendships that will last a lifetime," Rebecca said.

"I like the contests the best because they're fun and you compete," Renae said.

Rebecca was also voted to the NJAA Board of Directors and officially received her position on Friday night of the weeklong event. "I decided to run for the Junior Board at my first National Junior Angus Show in Des Moines, Iowa. I saw the green jackets, as they call them, walking around, and they seemed to exert a positive influence on the junior members," she said. "I decided that one day I, too, would like to influence the members of the National Junior Angus Association and be able to serve them as well."

Name: Austin Thummel
Hometown: Sheridan, Mo.
Age: 14

Hailing from the Show-Me state, Thummel traveled roughly eight hours to attend the NJAS this year. He competed in the team sales, quiz bowl, team fitting and judging contests, as well as the bred-and-owned heifer show. He liked competing in

the various contests because it's "something more to do so you're not sitting around your stall. It's something to do with a team



member ... and meet other people." Thummel first started showing Angus cattle in 2001, and attended his first NJAS in 2002 in Milwaukee, Wis.

Name: Olivia Barragree
Hometown: Absarokee, Mont.
Age: 11

Olivia's family drove 1,502 miles to get to the NJAS, traveling through Wyoming, South Dakota, Iowa and Illinois. This is her



third year to come to the show, but she has been showing cattle for five years. This year, she showed one bred-and-owned heifer. "My favorite

events are the Cook-Off contest and showing," Olivia said.

Name: Quanah Gardiner
Hometown: Ashland, Kan.
Age: 7

Quanah has been to many NJAS events to watch his older brothers show. "My brothers did okay in the show," he said.



Even though he hasn't competed at the NJAS, he said his favorite contest to watch is the Cook-Off. Quanah and his family flew to the NJAS. "We

didn't take the road," he said. "We took the airplane."

Name: Joseph Groce
Hometown: Yadkinville, N.C.
Age: 11

Joseph was in both the judging and fitting contest, although he says he enjoyed the



fitting contest more. He also showed one bred-and-owned heifer and three owned heifers. He is most proud of the fact that he was grand champion at the Dixie

Classic Fair three years in a row. Joseph traveled 595 miles to attend the NJAS, and slept for 425 of those miles.

Name: Ashley Hawkins
Hometown: Belton, S.C.
Age: 16

Ashley showed two owned heifers at the NJAS. She traveled 550 miles, mostly on



I-75, to attend. Although she enjoys showing, the Cook-Off is her favorite contest to watch. Ashley also enjoys "hanging out with friends."

Name: Justin Kennedy
Hometown: Nashville, Mich.
Age: 15

Justin enjoyed his time at the NJAS, but wishes the weather would have cooperated a little more. "Our trailer is stuck in a sinkhole," he said. "They're going to have to pull it out with a tractor." Justin



traveled 190 miles to the NJAS, mostly on I-69. The Cook-Off is his favorite contest.

Name: Justin Ruggles
Hometown: Kingston, Mich.
Age: 11

This was Justin's second year at the NJAS, and he competed in the Cook-Off, quiz bowl and team fitting contests. He said the team



fitting and Cook-Off contests were his favorites because, "I like to fit and the Cook-Off is fun." Justin traveled 350 miles to show

his owned heifer, and received 10th place. He attends approximately six shows a year in Michigan.

Name: Kevin Wessel
Hometown: Trafalger, Ind.
Age: 14

Kevin Wessel had "a lot of fun" at the NJAS; this was his first year to attend. He has been in 4-H for four years. Kevin traveled 35 miles on I-65 to attend and showed two owned heifers. "Showing and competing is just something I like to do," Kevin said. "It's fun to compete with others."

