



Schmidt Crowned National Polled Hereford Queen



Who wouldn't be smiling? It's not every day you get to be queen! Amber Schmidt accepts the "crown" from Cassie Bacon prior to the selection of the grand champion polled Hereford bull.

A leader, volunteer and Hereford promoter, Amber Schmidt of Pipestone, Minn., has been crowned the 2007 National Polled Hereford Queen.

Amber competed against nine other state queens for the 33rd national title, which was announced prior to the selection of the grand champion polled Hereford bull Jan. 13 at the National Western Stock Show in Denver (NWSS).

The queen program is administered by the National Organization of Polled Herefords (NOP). Donors and sponsors, some of which have been with the queen program since its inception in 1974, allow it to continue and flourish.

Candidates are evaluated on their Hereford involvement, behavior, attitude, appearance and interaction with producers, as well as on their resumes and interviews, explains program chair Dianne Peebles.

"I can see a love for the breed and enthusiasm in our new queen, Amber," Dianne says. "She has a beautiful smile and always a positive attitude. She has grown up in the breed and will be a great ambassador for polled Herefords."

Amber will represent the breed and its breeders at shows, sales and other events throughout the U.S. "This is the perfect opportunity to give back," she says, referencing the opportunities she's had because of her Hereford involvement.

A member of the Minnesota Junior Hereford Breeders (MJHB) for 13 years, Amber has proudly exhibited her Herefords in not only Minnesota, but also North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. She shared this experience in the showring and her knowledge of the breed with other Minnesota juniors as a MJHB director for six years. She and her older sister, Jenna, are now organizing the first Midwest Classic Show to be held in Pipestone in July. The sisters hope the event will be approved as a regional junior Hereford show.

"It is because of my family that

I have such a love for the breed," Amber says. Her employment throughout the years has consisted of working with her parents, John and Joyce, and Jenna on their registered Hereford ranch and grain farm near Pipestone.

Amber also keeps busy with school and community leadership activities. This year, she is president of the Pipestone County 4-H Leaders Council and her local 4-H club, and vice president of the FFA chapter and National Honor Society at Pipestone Area High School.

While it seems there would be no openings in her schedule, Amber still finds time to volunteer. Among many of the projects she helps with is Ag Awareness Days, where she explains to fourth grade students without agricultural backgrounds the significance of beef products in their daily lives. Amber has also been trained as a peer helper. In this capacity, she meets with a struggling child once a week to help foster a positive, trusting relationship.

Amber is a senior at Pipestone Area High School and is also taking general courses at Minnesota West Technical and Community College. After this year, she plans to attend a four-year college to major in animal science and to eventually pursue a career in veterinary medicine.



Amber enjoyed her coronation with family members (l to r): John (father), Jenna (sister) and Joyce (mother) Schmidt.

Katlin Mulvaney,

Opelika, Ala., was named first runner-up and Miss Congeniality. Katlin's career in the Hereford business began with a bottle baby named Boopie. A gift from her grandfather, this calf triggered a lasting love for the breed. Today Katlin's herd includes almost 20 head of registered Herefords. "God has enriched my life with so many opportunities

and blessings that could have only come from my roots in the Hereford breed,” she says.

Katlin has shared her knowledge of the cattle industry with other youth as president of the Alabama Junior Hereford Association and the Alabama Junior Cattlemen’s Association. She has also been extremely active in 4-H, serving on the Alabama State 4-H Council and the National 4-H Leadership Team. Appropriately, she now works as an undergraduate assistant with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. In this position she assists regional Extension agents in establishing 4-H youth development programs.

An agricultural communications sophomore at Auburn University (AU), Katlin is involved in a number of collegiate activities. She has served as secretary of the Agriculture Council and also vice president of the Sigma Alpha Women-In-Agriculture Sorority. She’s also active as an Agriculture Ambassador, and in Block & Bridle, Collegiate 4-H, the Alabama Young Farmers Federation and AU College Republicans.

Katlin also enjoys serving as the puppet director for Providence Baptist Church.

Kelliann Blazek, Bangor, Wis., was selected as the second runner-up. Kelliann served as the Wisconsin Junior Hereford Association princess in 2005 and queen and reporter in ’06. Her first registered Hereford heifer was the result of a loan she applied for and received from the NOP. “Currently my beef herd has grown to 15 cattle, with a combination of polled Herefords, Shorthorns and Normandes,” Kelliann says. “I have bought, raised, bred, shown and sold polled Herefords for eight years to obtain my herd’s status; to me, that is an accomplishment in itself.”

In middle school, Kelliann became heavily involved in 4-H



Hereford royalty honored at the 2007 National Western Stock Show (l to r) are: Cassie Bacon, Prairie Grove, Ark., 2006 National Polled Hereford Queen; Amber Schmidt, Pipestone, Minn., 2007 National Polled Hereford Queen; Katlin Mulvaney, Opelika, Ala., first runner-up and Miss Congeniality; and Kelliann Blazek, Bangor, Wis., second runner-up.

and FFA. She explains that livestock judging was one of the most valuable activities of her FFA career, as she’s been able to use the evaluation skills she learned to select cattle for her program. In these organizations, she also built leadership skills, serving as Bangor FFA vice president, secretary and treasurer, as well as the La Crosse County Youth Leaders president and vice president.

Kelliann works as a student assistant in the vice chancellor/provost office at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, where she is a 4.0 freshman student majoring in English. Due to the credits Kelliann gained from taking college courses in high school, she will obtain junior status after this semester. She also is an editor and writer for a campus newspaper titled *The Racquet*. **HW**



Hereford royalty assisted in the showing throughout the week in Denver. Queens from 10 states vied for the title of National Polled Hereford Queen.