

Her Moment to Shine

JNHE Champion Senior Showman Kari Brumley, Orovada, Nev., put in years of preparation for her moment in the spotlight.

by **Christy Couch Lee**

She set her sights on the prize. She put in countless hours of hard work and dedication. And, when the time arrived — the time to shine above the competition, proving what she was made of — she did what she had set out to do: capture the award.

Kari Brumley, Orovada, Nev., was selected as the 2011 Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) champion senior showman on Wednesday, July 13. She says by putting in the work, receiving tremendous support from mentors and family, and believing in herself, her dreams became reality that night.

Showmanship is a skill Kari has excelled in since she was a peewee. She is the first National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) member to win



This 21-year-old began showing Herefords when she was 7 and hasn't missed a Hereford junior national since she attended her first JNHE in Tulsa, Okla., in 2000. And success has been a common factor in her showing experience.

In 2008 Kari captured the JNHE champion owned polled Hereford female title with BF Flirtatious 713T ET. The following winter, she entered an elite group when she and Flirtatious went on to also capture the grand champion polled Hereford female banner at the National Western Stock Show in Denver.

all four showmanship age divisions, starting with peewee in 2000, junior in 2001, intermediate in 2008 and now senior in 2011.

Herefords from the start

Kari was raised on her family's rice farm in California. The Brumley family — dad, Don; mom, Skeeter; sister, Brooke; and brother, Bryce — moved to Nevada in 2004, expanding their ranch and beginning an alfalfa and meadow grass hay operation.

She attended Modesto Junior College and is transferring to California State University in Stanislaus this fall, majoring in liberal studies.

The meaning of mentors

Kari says she believes she wouldn't have realized such incredible success without the support of her parents, siblings and many mentors. Topping that list is her sister, Brooke, with whom Kari says she works alongside every day.

"My sister and I work in the barn together, and we practice together every night before we turn out," she says. "We're always working, washing and rinsing together on a day-to-day basis."

Mark Kelley, Gorman, Texas; his sister, Robyn; and mom, Ethel, also have served as tremendous support, Kari says.

"They are definitely my biggest fans and worst critics," she says with



Kari has put in countless hours of practice — both in fitting and showing — to claim the 2011 JNHE champion senior showman title.



a smile. "They are always there — always — to help me. And they're some of my best friends."

Kelley says Kari has helped him at many shows through the years, and her personality and work ethic set her apart from many youth in the Hereford business.

"From the first time I met her and every time since, she is extremely personable and fun to be around," Kelley says. "But when it's time to get into the ring, she's all business. She has an amazing ability to focus. She's very passionate, not only about the business but about the people in the business, too."

In addition, Kari says, the entire Cornelius family with Coyote Ridge Herefords, LaSalle, Colo., have shown their support through the years, in addition to providing friendship for the Brumley family.

She says she's learned to always be willing to learn from others — especially from mentors.

"You have to be very open-minded," she says. "You're never the best. You have to go and watch and learn from everyone and stay humble. You can always learn from someone else."

And, Kelley says, Kari is also talented in helping younger members of the industry.

"Kari is a really good teacher, when it comes to helping other kids," Kelley says. "She has a good way with the kids and the cattle. She has an ability to step into a situation with them and to adapt."

One such youth she's influenced is Emilee Holt, Caldwell, Idaho. She says Kari has always been willing to lend a helping hand at the shows they attend together. And Holt especially appreciates the coaching and advice she receives from Kari, when asked.

"This year, I went to her house and she showed me what she does with their cattle to help them have good hair and work with them in the ring," Holt says.

And, Holt says, she's learned a great deal about showmanship by simply watching Kari in the ring.

"If a heifer acts up, she doesn't get worked up," Holt says. "She just walks them around and keeps going. She



The Brumley family was all smiles after Kari's win. Pictured (l to r) are Skeeter, Brooke, Kari and Don.

knows what she's doing and how to do it. I really look up to her for how well she's done with her cattle."

Standing in the spotlight

Kari believes her willingness to learn, in addition to years of practice, led her to that moment in the spotlight this year.

And what a moment it was.

She recalls fondly the minutes before she walked into the showing for the finals, as Kelley stood beside her offering some final words of encouragement.

"He told me that I have to want it — to go out and do what I know to do," she recalls. "I knew I was going to have to fight for it. In the final lineup, I was in fourth place, so I was shocked when I was selected as champion. I instantly had tears of joy."

Kari says her sister also helped prepare her for the championship that night.

"I owe it all to my sister," she says. "She let me use her heifer, Sky, and I needed her this year to make it as far as I did. I am nothing without my friends and family. Without their support, I couldn't be here or be as good as I am at what I do."

Kelley believes her passion shined the night of the championship finals — and that passion helped her claim the championship title.

"You can see her passion when she shows," Kelley says. "A judge can see when someone is focused and determined on a goal. When she gets out in the ring, she gets right to business. There is no hesitation or wasted movement, and that's what sets her apart. You can see it in her eyes and body language — she's out there to win. And she shines through every time." **HW**



Kari says her friends and family provide tremendous support at home and at ringside — with signs and cheers of encouragement.

Top tips from the winner

Kari Brumley, Orovada, Nev., was selected as the 2011 Junior National Hereford Expo champion senior showman. She offers these words of advice for young Hereford showmen.

- **Practice makes perfect.** "You can't ever practice or critique yourself enough," Kari says.
- **Make it a learning experience.** "Don't be afraid to learn from someone else," she says. "Always be open-minded and willing to see what other people have to offer. There's always someone better than you."
- **Want it to win it.** "You have to want it, and you have to have a passion," Kari says.
- **Be in the know.** "When in the showing, always be aware of your surroundings," she says. "Know where the judge is. Know where the people in front of and behind you are. Know where you are — and don't get buried."
- **Confidence. Not arrogance.** "There's a fine line between confidence and arrogance," Kari says. "You want to be confident and to know you can do it. But don't cross that line." **HW**