



# Entering a New Arena

Rachel Buzanowski, Snowshoe Cattle Co., Pompey Pillar, Mont., joined the track team at Butler Community College, El Dorado, Kan.

*Hereford juniors put their work ethic learned from ag to good use in athletics.*

by **Bridget Beran**

**A**t first, athletics and showing cattle may seem like very opposite activities. However, for several members of the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA), these two things go together perfectly.

For Locke St. John, Dry Creek Farms, Pell City, Ala., Herefords have been a part of his life since he turned 7 years old and began showing from county fair to the National Western Livestock Exposition in Denver. St. John says he's missed only one Junior National Hereford Expo since 2002.

Another activity has been a part of his life since the very beginning — baseball.

“I’ve played all my life and it’s the only sport I’ve ever played,” St. John explains. “My grandfather coached me since I was little and I’ve been playing ever since.”

Growing up, St. John kept busy caring for his family’s herd of 60 Herefords while balancing time with baseball practice. However, he says he learned some very important lessons growing up on a farm that made him a better athlete.

“Working on our farm taught me a lot about work ethic and

taking care of my responsibilities,” St. John says. “You have to do everything on the farm and make sure you have time to get all of your sports activities done too.”

After high school, St. John went on to become a pitcher at the University of South Alabama, Mobile, Ala. His time in college was cut short when he was drafted by the Detroit Tigers in 2014. He currently plays on one of their minor league teams in Florida, the Lakeland Flying Tigers. A left-handed pitcher, St. John is entering his second year in the minors.

“The game speeds up every level you move up. Baseball is a mental game and if you don’t slow yourself down, it will get you every time,” St. John says. “I’ve been pitching really well and met a lot of great guys that have helped me improve my game. But on this level there are a lot of great athletes so you have to be mentally strong.”

He’s not forgotten his Hereford background and made sure to attend as many national shows as he could throughout the off-season.

“It was great to get to catch up with all of my Hereford friends and see everyone,” St. John says. “It was the highlight of my off-season.”

### Steppingstone

For many, college sports serve as a steppingstone to the rest of their education. For Blake Lowderman, Lowderman Cattle Co., Macomb, Ill.; and Rachel Buzanowski, Snowshoe Cattle Co., Pompeys Pillar, Mont., playing sports at a junior college is an integral part of the four-year college plan.

Lowderman is a sophomore on the Black Hawk College basketball team, Moline, Ill., and intends to attend a four-year university and continue playing basketball after finishing his junior college career. A long-time member of the NJHA, Lowderman says his family has been raising Hereford cattle for more than 50 years and his background has also taught him a lot about work ethic.

“Growing up on a farm has taught me how to work hard and whatever you put into it is what you’ll get out,” Lowderman says. “I try to always give 110%, don’t give up and if I fail, learn from it so I don’t fail next time.”

For Buzanowski, her work ethic was also instilled in her from an early age. She says her background with cattle taught her how to devote herself to important things and credits her dad’s showmanship lessons with making her more coachable.

After her team took home four state titles in volleyball throughout

high school, Buzanowski was recruited to play volleyball at Butler Community College, El Dorado, Kan. While there, she also joined the track team and became a two-sport athlete. After a successful season, Buzanowski plans to remain with the track team, though she is choosing to no longer play volleyball.

“I really want to end up at Kansas State University for their awesome agriculture program but I also wasn’t quite ready to give up my sports so Butler was a good steppingstone to allow me to do

both,” Buzanowski said. “Right now sports have to come first because that’s what my scholarship is for and I’m always working to make myself better. But when I get the chance, I try to get away and take in a deep breath of livestock at some of the shows and sales in Kansas.”

Lessons learned in the barn have followed these young athletes throughout their lives and helped them perform even better. No matter the arena, field or court, Hereford juniors bring their A-game and compete to win. **HW**



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