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Nickels wins 25th anniversary of intercollegiate dairy cattle judging contest held in Viroqua

WAUPUN, Sept. 18, 2018 – East Central/Select Sires, based in Waupun and serving southern Wisconsin, hosted the 25th anniversary of the Accelerated Genetics and East Central/Select Sires Intercollegiate Dairy Cattle Judging Contest in Viroqua, Wis., during the Vernon County Fair on Sept. 16, 2018.

Dawson Nickels, University of Wisconsin-Madison Team Cardinal, took home high individual overall, and the rest of his team joined him for high team overall. High individuals for reasons included Dawson Nickels, first place; Avery Kotlarczyk, second, University of Wisconsin-Platteville; and Brooke Brantner, third, University of Wisconsin-River Falls. UW-Madison Team Cardinal won for reasons.

Breed category winners were announced for Guernsey, Holstein, Jersey, and milking shorthorn. Emma Gwidt, UW-Madison Team Cardinal, won Guernsey high individual, and Brooke Brantner, UW-River Falls, won Holstein high individual. Dawson Nickels stood on top for the Jersey breed, and Ryann Allison, Kansas State University, achieved high individual for milking shorthorn. UW-Madison Team Cardinal won high team for the Guernsey, Holstein, and Jersey breeds; the University of Minnesota-St. Paul took home the title for milking shorthorn.

Twelve different colleges from throughout the United States were represented at the contest, with some bringing multiple teams. Those attending for the 25th year included Iowa State University, University of Minnesota-St. Paul, and University of Madison. Other colleges attending this year's event: California Polytechnic State University, Fox Valley Technical College, Kansas State University, North Dakota State University, Northeast Iowa Community College, Oklahoma State University, South Dakota State University of Wisconsin-Platteville, and University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Official judges were Cassie Endres, Waunakee, Wis.; Mike Donnelly, Sioux Falls, S.D.; Dan Sivisend, Waukon, Iowa; Janet Keller, Oregon, Wis.; and Jennifer Clark, La Crosse, Wis. "Twenty-five years ago, today, I competed in the very first of this contest in Viroqua. I was either second or third," noted Clark. "I have served as an official for this event since then, but was honored to do so, again, for the 25th anniversary."

Vernon County dairy youth lead cattle for the contest and were judged on their showmanship ability. First place in the junior division was Brock Hoskins, followed by Eric Torgerson and Gracie Wagemester. Grant Fremstad won the senior division. Hope Petersheim and Karly Anderson were second and third, respectively. The Dave Larson Memorial Showmanship Winner was Gabe Engh.

Event sponsors included East Central/Select Sires; the Accelerated Genetics brand from Select Sires, Inc.; Activon/Effercept® SG Teat Dip; American Guernsey Association; American Jersey Cattle Association; American Milking Shorthorn Society; Chart industries Inc.; Form-A-Feed Inc.; Holstein USA; James W. Crowley Fund; Lake Prairie Marketing Group with Julie Steffeny; Star Blends; UdderTech®; and the Vernon County Agricultural Society.

The planning committee was comprised of a variety of employees from East Central/Select Sires and Select Sires Inc.: Jim Galstad, Roger Hanson (retired employee), Dori Lichty, Dane Thompson, Dr. David Brown, Jerome Meyer, Angie Nelson, Amanda Solverson, Dr. Katie Speller, Jill Strangstalien, Marci Walker, Rick Williams, Kayla Wright, and Cole Mark and Carla Stetzer from NorthStar Cooperative.

East Central/Select Sires is a professional-, artificial-breeding cooperative serving dairy and livestock producers in southern Wisconsin. As a member owner of Select Sires located near Plain City, Ohio, East Central/Select Sires helps make up the largest A.I. cooperative in the world. They provide highly fertile semen as well as excellence in service and programs to achieve the basic objective of supplying livestock breeders with America's best genetics at a reasonable price.

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Picture 1: Dawson Nickels, Watertown, Wis., University of Wisconsin-Madison Team Cardinal, won high individual overall at the recent 25th anniversary Accelerated Genetics and East Central/Select Sires Intercollegiate Dairy Cattle Judging Contest in Viroqua, Wis.

Picture 2: University of Wisconsin-Madison Team Cardinal won high team overall. Pictured left to right: Brandon Biese, Emma Gwidt, Lindsay Sarbacker, Dawson Nickels, and Coach Trent Olson.