



## Around THE WORLD

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*DeRon Heldermon*

**D**o you ever get the feeling modern day America is promoting mediocrity? It seems like I am hearing more and more talk about parity, leveling the playing field and that everyone should be rewarded for simply participating.

In many of the grade schools today, they don't want the kids to have tryouts for certain activities because somebody will have to lose. In some of my boys first baseball games, nobody wanted to keep score. I'm all for encouraging kids and letting them have fun, but I also believe they need to learn there is going to be a winner and a loser and those who do the best are rewarded the most.

Isn't that part of life? Those who work the hardest to achieve excellence get the rewards and those who don't suffer the consequences. How realistic is it to think a kid will grow up to be an adult without every having experienced the disappointment of losing? It's been my experience that losing sometimes provides the best motivation.

Winning, losing and the competition it creates applies to about everything I can think of in life—especially the

seedstock business. You should look at your breeding program in much the same way. It is a competition to breed and raise superior cattle, and in this game, the reward is dollars. Like with any competition, the ones who put out the most effort and have the best game plan will be the ones who come out on top.

It has been obvious to me this fall there is a bigger spread in price between the really good cattle and the mediocre ones. Given this trend, I don't think now is the time to get lax and start believing average is good enough, because at the sales I've been to, buyers haven't been rewarding the producers who consign average cattle.

I think now is the time to welcome the challenge head-on and do the things you need to do to make sure your cattle and your program come out on top.

Improvement only comes from competition. Today is the day to start figuring out how you are going to win the game. **LW**