



The VIEW FROM HERE

Kyle Haley

By the end of the week several spectators at this year's National Junior Limousin Show & Congress were jokingly referring to the event as "The Year of The Pair." Reason being, the National Junior Grand Champion Owned Female, the National Junior Grand Champion Lim-Flex Female and the National Junior Grand Champion Bred-and-Owned Purebred Female were all cow-calf pairs. And they were all exhibited by different juniors.

Over the year's I have always jokingly asked the question, "Why would anyone want to show a cow-calf pair?"

Granted, they are almost always more work and trouble than showing an open or bred heifer, but my real reason for asking the question is selfish—I really don't like taking photos of pairs. Think about it. Eight feet, four ears, two showman, a tired cow and a calf that wants to nurse is a recipe for a rodeo at the backdrop. To say that pairs test my patience would be an understatement.

Truth is, I'm proud of the juniors and their parents who show cow-calf pairs. To me it is not only a true testament of hard work and dedication on the part of the exhibitor, it showcases what the beef business is all about. Show heifers of any breed are notorious for not wanting to breed or stay bred, so bringing a pair to the ring proves the inherit fertility of that female.

Many people in and around the breed have often referred to Limousin females as the best kept secret in the cow business. I for one don't like the phrase "best kept secret" because to me, that simply means we haven't done a good enough job promoting the Limousin female to the rest of the world.

Few would argue that a key ingredient to growing any beef cattle breed is increasing bull sales to commercial cattlemen. Depending upon the producer, there are a myriad of reasons to buy a bull of a certain breed, but I guarantee you, more often than not, maternal traits are figured into the equation.

Over the years we have all heard the critics bemoan the failings of a Limousin female from a maternal standpoint, especially in the commercial cow-calf sector. Those of us in Limousin circles also know great strides have been made in terms of lowering the age of puberty, breed back, milking ability, etc.

We all have Limousin females that stack up against the best in the industry when it comes to weaning a big, strapping calf every 365 days. We just need more of them and we need to do a better job spreading the word to the rest of the industry.

I, for one, am for anything that proves the maternal merit of Limousin and Limousin-influenced females. So congratulations to all the pair exhibitors at this year's Junior Nationals. Keep up the great work.

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