



Press Release

27th April 2018

Cattle competition gets fierce at Royal Bath & West Show

Fiercely competitive and always one of the most popular aspects of country shows, the beef classes at this year's Royal Bath & West Show are set to raise the bar.

Competitors will already be getting animal preparations under way, putting every effort into impressing the judges. So it's vital that those judges presiding over the 4,500 entries are top class, says head of shows Alan Lyons.

The extremely experienced and reliable hands of Roger Pascoe will take over the judging reins in the Any Other Native Beef Breed category this year. Roger – who lives in Marazion, west Cornwall - has been showing cattle for 60 years and knows more than a thing or two about cattle. "I have shown a number of cattle breeds and horses," he says. On top of this, he has judged at the Royal Welsh Show, Monmouthshire Show and previously at the Royal Bath & West.

Roger is almost unique in that he is a freelance showman. Not having his own cattle or farm – though his father previously had South Devons – he trains and shows cattle on behalf of other farmers. He has had a number of successes across the country and has taken cattle as far as Perth in Scotland.

It can be hard comparing different breeds of cattle, so when judging, Roger is looking for balance right through the animal. "Conformation is everything and I want to see the breed characteristics of each breed present. If it doesn't look like that breed should, then it probably won't pass on the typical breed characteristics to its offspring," he explains. "If exhibitors have a good animal and it's well fed, then they are 90% of the way there."

He suggests that exhibitors should start getting animals ready for show as early as they can. "If you're chasing to get ready, things can happen and get in the way. Ours are all halter broken and ready for the summer now. Spend time with the animals, learn how it thinks and find each one's quirks."

Judging the South Devons this year is Oliver Rounsevell. Though a younger judge than Roger, Oliver is by no means inexperienced and has already judged several events this year. Farming 550 acres at High Gate Farm, Lostwithiel, Cornwall, he has 80 pedigree South Devon cows with followers that are either finished for beef or sold for breeding. His family have had a pedigree South Devon herd since 1930 and Oliver has both shown and judged the breed.

"I have done several local and national shows and have just judged the spring bull sale at Exeter, and have previously judged the South Devon National herd competition." He is also on the South Devon Herd Book Society council and has seen a number of his own success in the National Herd competition.

When judging at the Royal Bath & West, Oliver will be looking for a strong and big framed animal. “It has to have good breed characteristics and as the largest native beef breed I want to see this stature. They are very docile animals which is the main reason farmers are swapping to them, so I want docility and ease of handling.”

He thinks that the Show is a great way of advertising the breed to the public and has seen the past 14 years do wonders for South Devons. “The breed has spread throughout the country and as far afield as the USA, Australia and New Zealand. Showing is really about getting the breed seen by the general public.”

- The Royal Bath & West Show will be held on 30 May – 2 June. Tickets are available from the website: <http://www.bathandwest.com/royal-bath-and-west-show/visitors/tickets> or by calling 0844 776 6777.

For further information or media enquiries contact Olivia Cooper on 01392 840009 or e-mail olivia@agri-hub.co.uk.

About the Royal Bath & West of England Society

The Society was founded in 1777 in Bath by a group of philanthropists led by Edmund Rack. We are a registered charity organisation (Registered Charity Number 1039397). The Society was formed with the aims of encouraging agriculture, arts, manufacture and commerce.

Our charitable activities provide:

- Agriculture, veterinary, educational and art scholarships
- Technical events and Seminars
- Practical farming advice and conferences
- Countryside Education
- Diversification advice for farmers
- Education for children
- A market place for countryside products

As the Society approaches its 240th year it continues to deliver a wonderful mix of established traditional exhibits through to the latest energy technology and contemporary entertainment.

The entertainment and features around the 242-acre site ensure enjoyment for every member of the family and include attractions that are spectacular to watch, educational, inspirational, “hands on” or just plain fun.

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