

SRB Association 2022 Digital Show

Opening remarks: These digital competitions are a wonderful way of bringing together cows who would not normally compete and we get to see cows in their working clothes, with less detailed preparation than occurs at shows. The downside is that the judge can only use the information presented and seeing the cows in real life might change the placings. The stage of lactation and time since last milking are two variables which could alter placings if I have not discerned them correctly.

My decisions have tried to reward those cows which I believe will have the greatest chance of long lives with the highest levels of productivity. The decisions also try to highlight cows which display strength in areas which have shown negative directions in recent times- in all breeds. Particularly, the two related traits of rump angle and loin strength, also sweep of rib. But these things must be in addition to good dairy character, durable udders, sound feet and legs, the ability to regain condition after the lactation peak and good muzzels. I understand that Australia is the only country to include muzzle width as a classification trait and we believe this is important because it denotes the ability to eat voraciously, to breath freely and to stabilise body temperature. Locomotion score is a trait I noted for general improvement, if the cows presented are a genuine representation of the breed, the issue can be traced to thurl placement in many cases.

1. Kvigklass and Junior Champions (Maiden Heifers, 6 entries) I have tried to look through the differing ages and body condition to see the inner qualities of these maiden heifers.
 - 1st place and Junior Champion: 190 Princess displays lovely dairy character, a clean, bright, alert head with soft skin all over. I find her to have good width, foot angle and correct leg set. A correct heifer who is placed over second because her better shoulder structure, balance between fore and rear rib and superior rump structure.
 - 2nd place and Reserve Junior Champion: 1940 Rosa places second because of dairy character and her width, but she does not walk as effortlessly as the Junior Champion. Reserve and Honourable Mention are similar styled heifers, but the reserve displays more dairy character.
 - 3rd place and Junior Honourable Mention: 1768 Lilija while this heifer displays a little more body condition and strength than the reserve, her quality of bone still indicates good dairy character. She has good sweep of rib and good foot angle. She is placed over fourth because of superior loin strength and width.

- 4th 1951 Kronros the dairy character continues with the fourth heifer, who also shows good sweep of rib, a clean head and good foot angle. Her superior shoulder structure and length of neck places her ahead of fifth.
- 5th 1767 Rogas displays good loin strength and body width, with excellent body condition, which are the very traits which place her above number six.
- 6th 1234 Luva displays a lot of refinement, soft skin and is well grown. But she does not compete with the powerful heifers above.

2. Forstakalvare (First Calf cows, 4 entries)

- 1st 1427 Bronara- This well presented young cow possesses a lovely open muzzle and head with plenty of dairy character. She has correct foot angle and leg set, showing easy walking style. Her shoulders fit snugly into her body which displays good first rib. Her udder is well attached and displays good texture. She does concede a couple of points to the second placegetter in the area of topline strength, rump angle and rear udder height.
- 2nd 402 Dolly- Second placed cow has a strong topline, carries good body condition and has a good clear eye. She moves freely, with good rump and foot angles, although I would like to see her shoulders fit more easily into her frame. She is superior to the third placed cow with her rear udder height, udder texture and udder capacity.
- 3rd 395 Malin- Third cow has a similar style to the second and is possibly a little better through the shoulder and foot angle. She has good udder fore attachment and is placed over the fourth cow because of her better loin strength, sweep of rib, balanced udder and muzzle width.
- 4th 390 Stava- Fourth Place cow shows a clean neck and good foot angle, but is not helped by her presentation.

3. Andrakalvare (Second Calf Cows, 5 entries)

- 1st 1545 Ragnhild, the quality of the udder and the free action of this cows legs places her at the top of the class. Her udder depth is excellent, as are her fore and rear attachments and udder texture. She has good rump angle at the back and a good muzzle at the front. She beats the second cow with her dairy character and smooth fore udder, although second has better teat placement.
- 2nd 1610 Beda, this more powerful cow has good udder width and height, parallel rear legs and a strong topline. It is the shallowness of her udder that puts her ahead of the next placed cow.
- 3rd 815 Helen, this is a lovely dairy cow whose quality begins at her muzzle, her characterful head and continues through her wide body, rump, good leg set and foot angle, all of which allow her to move so freely. She also has a very soft textured udder. This cow looks as if she is capable of a lot of milk.
- 4th 770 Roma, unfortunately the photography for this cow is not so flattering, putting her at a disadvantage. She shows lovely soft dairy character, correct feet and legs, good width and well textured udder.
- 5th 1017, the fifth placed cow exhibits good foot angle and a bright disposition, but does not show the exemplary dairy character of the cows above her, nor their comfortable movement actions.

4. Tredjekalvare (Third Calf Cows, 3 entries)

- 1st 1593 Sara, is the most balanced cow in the class, the floor of her udder is above her hocks, she has good dairy bone, correct feet and legs, with good teat placement. Her great youthfulness is where she places over the second cow, although I will concede the second cow is stronger in the loin.
- 2nd 717 Ribba, displays good dairy character and appears as if she has produced a lot of milk through that soft udder. Her sweep of rib, head and muzzle are admirable, but she does not compete with the foot angle, udder depth and balance of the first cow.
- 3rd 1033 Bonan, shows youthfulness and shallow udder like the first cow, but loses to the second placed cow on udder texture and rear leg set. However, she does have good foot angle.

5. Fjardekalvare (Fourth Calf Cows, 2 entries)

This class of two cows I find difficult to separate. While they are different styles of cows, both exhibit good dairy bone, both are good through the body traits and both walk freely, with good feet and legs. It appears that Blomma is more recently milked and possibly further into lactation and therefore could show a less desirable udder depth at critical times.

- 1st 942 Tora, displays a great potential for a long productive life, with better udder conformation, particularly texture and fore attachment. But she appears to have one light quarter and is not as strong in the loin when she walks.
- 2nd 1346 Blomma, is a very close second place with her balanced udder and strong loin.

6. Femtekalvare och Aldre (Fifth and Older Calved Cows, 4 entries). It is always a pleasure to admire the mature cow class, the cows which have endured life's challenges and would not be here except their fortitude has won the respect of their owners.

- 1st 717 Helen, on her fifth lactation, this lovely clean dairy cow shows wonderful youthfulness, a strong loin, good rump angle, a well textured udder, good teat placement and all with good body condition.
- 2nd 668 Erika, on her sixth lactation this cow gives away some youthfulness to the class winner, but shows great ability to produce milk efficiently. At the front is a great muzzle and head, a smooth fitting shoulder, good fore udder attachment and texture. She is just let down by the wear in her udder.
- 3rd 1190 Lilja, third place cow is another year older on her ninth lactation and while she shows great youthfulness and locomotion, she does not show the rump angle, loin strength, depth of rib and teat placement of the younger cow above her. However, she is stronger than the fourth placed cow in the areas of rump angle, fore rib and general capacity.
- 4th 757 Frida, in fourth place again shows youthfulness, a high rear udder, clean bone and good sweep of rib, leg set, udder texture and fore attachment.

Champion Udder: 1427 Bronara, is my selection for best udder. It is unusual for me to award this prize to such a young cow, when there are older matrons with proven track records also contesting for this award. In making this decision I do concede that she appears to be pictured with her udder milked out, but I can see evidence that the rear quarters would fill well up her thighs with good width and she displays strong fore attachment. Her texture is very good, as are the teat placements and as you would expect, good shallowness in such a young cow.

Senior Champion Cow: 717 Helen, reflecting on my comments from the Aged Cow class, this cow's real age is hidden by her youthful appearance and in appraising conformation, the goal is for cows who will effortlessly produce large quantities of milk for many lactations. This cow exhibits these qualities, which I believe make her champion of this competition and place her above the reserve cow who shows that she has produced well in her lifetime.

Reserve Senior Champion Cow: 668 Erika, while I concede that this reserve cow is showing some wear, she has outlived many of her herd contemporaries and produced significant quantities of milk during that time. She is a little more correct in her shoulder setting than the champion, but both have similar fore rib capacity. One of the images of the Reserve show the floor of her udder to still be level with her hock. She exhibits wonderful dairy character and great ability to consume forage. She also shows a strong loin and even rump angle, which are the traits which place her above the honourable mention cow.

Honourable Mention Senior Cow: 1427 Bronara is also my best udder winner and she shows very much promise. However she does not yet have the proof of her abilities on display like the Champion and Reserve. She is superior to other contenders for this award because of her topline, her superior fore udder and teat placement, plus very good feet and legs.

Closing comments. It has been an honour and pleasure to judge this digital show. Thank you to all who took time out from their daily routine to capture images of their cows and it would be a great thing to be able to see how these cows and their offspring look in the coming years.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. D. Hamilton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Graeme Hamilton.