



Déjà vu in dairy ring at Skipton

Malcolm and Robert Swires, of Haverah Park, Beckwithshaw, swooped yet again to bag their fourth consecutive and a record 11th Craven Dairy Auction championship at February's show at Skipton Auction Mart. (Mon, Feb 22)

A newly calven heifer giving 31 litres was the latest title winner from the prolific Whinhill Holstein Friesian commercial herd of the father-and-son dairy farmers. She is a daughter of the Swires' stock dairy bull, Myersdale Principal, who has also been responsible for past Skipton champions and was bred by Geoff Spence, Northallerton.

The victor progressed to achieve top price in the sales ring when knocked down for £2,300 to regular buyer Geoff Bleazard, Ribchester. The Swires also exhibited the second prize newly calven cow, which joined T & M Green, Wigan, for £1,860.

The second prize newly calven heifer from Stephen Coates, Baildon, also became the second highest price of the day at £2,000 when catching the eye of show judge Shaun Sowray, of Bishop Thornton, Harrogate.

The first prize newly calven cow and reserve show champion from Keith Downs, Milner Field, Bingley, was a £1,810 acquisition by Wick Williams, Nantwich, while another productive heifer from Edward Fort, Silsden, made £1,980 to Aubrey Greenhalgh, Preston.

A consignment of eight in-calf heifers from South Yorkshire vendors A Dickinson & Son, Thurlstone, sold to a high of £1,540 and averaged £1,369. Newly calven heifers averaged £1,612, newly calven cows £1,409, in-calf heifers £1,369, in-calf cows £1,130, with maiden heifers selling to £580.

Main show sponsor was BOCM Pauls, Bamber Bridge, with the company's Keith Colley presenting the BOCM Pauls Dairy Cup to the champion. Co-sponsors were Yorkshire Bank and Farmers & Mercantile.

New calf show success

BOCM Pauls also sponsored a new Monday monthly calf show to support demand for premium quality calves at Skipton. The company is donating a total of £1,600 in prize money over the year for both the dairy and calf shows.

The inaugural champion was a four-and-a-half-week-old Genus Fertility Plus British Blue bull calf shown by Peter Sowray, brother of Craven Dairy Auction judge Shaun. The family trades as A Sowray & Sons at Bowes Green Farm, Bishop Thornton.

The youthful victor sold for £365 to Chris Broadley, of Kirkby Malzeard, Ripon, who bought a total of seven calves at the show, among them five prize winners.

He also acquired the reserve champion British Blue bull calf from David Leeming, Burnt Yates, Harrogate, at £335, along with two further Sowray youngsters, the first and second prize Limousin bull calves, at £335 and £315 respectively.

Mr Broadley, 69, a retired farmer, purchases calves and brings them on for about a year on his 75 acres, before resale. "I like to keep my hand in and only buy quality calves to rear and sell on," he said.

Top price in show at £388 fell to a Limousin-cross bull calf from D and P Spence & Sons, Silsden Moor, acquired by show co-judge Tony Binns, of Clint, Harrogate, who also paid £385 for another Limousin bull calf shown by Paul and Janet Bolland, Airton.

Skipton Auction Mart general manager Jeremy Eaton said the new show gave more focus for both vendors and buyers, whose efforts were rewarded with an increased presence at the ringside and very good trade.

Calf prices and averages: Limousin bulls to £388 (£315), heifers to £320 (£236). British Blue bulls to £365 (£313), heifers to £302 (£283). Angus bulls to £345 (£248), heifers to £220 (£160). Blonde heifers to £302. Black & white bulls to £235 (£108)



The Craven Dairy Auction February champion with, from left, judge Shaun Sowray, BOCM Pauls' Keith Colley, exhibitor Robert Swires, his sister Libby Simpson, Linda Davy, Farmers & Mercantile, and Yorkshire Bank's north-west agribusiness manager Chris Shepherd.



Keith Downs with his Craven Dairy Auction February reserve champion cow.



Peter Sowray with his inaugural monthly calves show champion, joined by co-judge Tony Binns and BOCM Pauls' Keith Colley.