

# National Range Judging Contest

Angela S. Williams

Earlier this year I received a special request from Mark Moseley to attend the 1997 National Range Judging Contest Awards Ceremony in Oklahoma City, OK and present an award on behalf of the Society. The winners of the High Point Individual, Team and Coach in both the 4-H and FFA categories are presented an SRM jacket acknowledging their award. I graciously accepted as any good Director would do. Besides for years I have spent days out in the blistering heat, torrential downpours and chigger infested fields assisting with the actual contest. This was my first opportunity to not only hear the results but to see and/or participate in the awards banquet.

The evening of the banquet I arrived at the Fairgrounds to enter an open building which seemed as large as a football field to find it packed with a sea of "Blue Jackets", frayed Coaches, smiling parents and sponsors. As I stood at the podium and looked over the masses to introduce the Society, its mission, the award, etc., I found that it was a very humbling experience.

This last year there were over 900 students that participated in the contests from all reaches of the continental USA. I commended them for all their efforts and their tremendous commitment. Every individual who received a jacket was as proud of that award as they were of their trophy. Students

and parents alike expressed their appreciation to the Society as well as commenting on wanting to become members. Some of the students had attended Range Youth Camps in their area and some have even attended local and national SRM meetings.

I saw before me the future . . . and it was a beautiful sight of intelligence and enthusiasm. I cannot express the pride I felt as an SRM member and a Range professional.

I truly believe that this activity within the Society is one of our best kept secrets. The presentation of this award is an effective tool for increasing our visibility, for promoting and recruiting members, for enhancement of our High School and student programs and most of all for sustaining a highly qualified resource base of potential range professionals.

Mark Moseley has informed me that the special account to pay for the purchase of these jackets is running dry. The funds that were used came from donations from Sections within the Society, which means that your Section will probably be receiving another request for contributions. This solicitation benefits all members of the Society. I encourage each Section to give this full consideration and priority. I can only say that I want to thank the Society for without serving them I would have missed out on one of the most memorable experiences of my career.



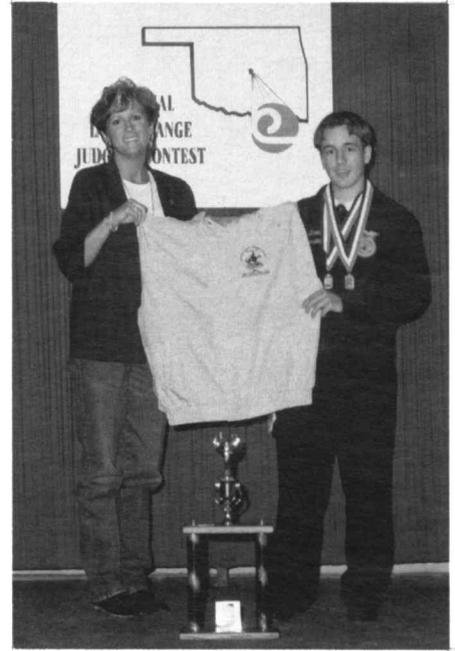
Kendall 4-H, Kendall Co, Texas—High Point Team. Team Members, Jessica Rose, J.T. Stehling, Lori Beth Moldenhauer, Brandon Rusch, Coach, Robin Gilles and Bob Bailey.



High Point Individual, 4-H: Travis Waiser, Milam Co., Texas with Angela Williams



*Menard FFA, Menard Co, Texas—High Point Team. Team Members, Kelly Jennings, David Anderson, Marshal Bridges, Coach, Ernie Eckert.*



*High Point Individual, FFA, Jason Barnes, Gans. OK and Angela Williams*

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