

The show world: unlimited benefits

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When I was about 14 years old I informed my mother that I would like to rodeo! I had been riding for a couple of years and really had gotten pretty good at it. So...I felt I was ready for speed! My mom did not panic; she actually came up with a very clever answer. She said "ok...after you show at least 1 year in halter and western pleasure" She added "I would like you to do this just for the discipline."

I showed that 1st year, and the 2nd, and the 3rd. I loved it so much that I showed until I was out of high school. I never went back to rodeo, guess my mother knew what she was doing. During my

show career my mother and I build a bond during what can sometimes be "the tough teen years". I later spent a few years training horses for others and even helped other kids get started. I have very fond memories of my show years. Now my son shows lambs and rabbits. Different animals but same principals.

The world of showing animals is a wonderful thing. There are so many things to learn by doing this. You start with selection; you have to look at confirmation and balance. Next comes the feeding and general care, by doing this the child learns responsibility. Then comes training! In order to train an animal you have to have patience, and everyone knows NO ONE is born with that! You are building an athlete, and learning to take care of your own body also, through nutrition and exercise. Last is show day. This is where your selection, care, exercise and training are rewarded. This is where all your hard work is rewarded. You don't have to go out there and win; there are many other rewards that come with just walking into the show ring. When you watch kids in the show ring you are seeing kids that are overcoming shyness, look, they are in front of a crowd and enjoying it! You're seeing kids who answer the judge's questions with a smile, think of the benefits during a job interview.

Now, let's look back again *before* the show. They've learned budgeting and money management by selecting the best animal they can with the amount of money they have to spend. They've learned how to build an athlete, a lot like human athletes do, the kids have to manage everything that goes into their "athlete", too much of this or not enough of that and their show animal is not going to develop to the best of their potential. The bonding in the family is priceless! We have taken trips, and seen things we may have never seen any other way. We work together and everyone has their job to do. We love to laugh about different things that have happened along the way.

Here's a little note that hangs in our barn and I give a copy to all of our first time showers:

So you want to be a CHAMPION
"Champions don't become champions in the ring..."



*they are merely recognized there. If you want to
see where someone develops into a champion
look at their daily routine”*

Lesson to learn: If you don't ready yourself for success at home, you will never see it in the ring. If you see people who are constantly champions, yes look at their animals, yes look at their showing style and ability, but also ask them about the one thing that is never recognized or seen in the show ring.....their daily routine – that's where they become champions – author unknown