

PRESS RELEASE

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Showing Success for Sheep Young Handlers

THE next generation of sheep exhibitors put their best foot forward at Balmoral Show on Saturday morning, with over 50 remarkable young handlers taking part in this year's competition.

Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) board member Joe Stewart said, "On behalf of LMC, I wish to take this opportunity to commend all the young people who took part in this year's sheep young handlers competition class. The enthusiasm of these young handlers and their in-depth knowledge of their breeds was remarkable."

The popular sheep young handlers event, sponsored by the LMC was split into two age categories, 8–11 year olds and 12-14 year olds. First into the ring was the younger of the two age groups. With an increased number of entries this year, the job of placing these young handlers was no mean feat. This task was placed in the capable hands of local judge Rachel Megarrell from Londonderry. Mrs Megarrell made her way around the ring speaking with each young handler and considering how they handled their animal. After careful consideration Mrs Megarrell announced Sarah Wilson as champion. Taking reserve champion in the 8-11 class was Noah Taylor.

A bumper entry was also received to the 12-14 year old competition class. The young handlers led their animals confidently into the showing and again judge Rachel Megarrell made her way around. After some deliberation it was Isabella Taylor taking the champion rosette followed by Lucy Wells as reserve champion.

The champion and reserve young handlers from each class then made their way back into the ring, each hoping to clench the overall champion and reserve titles. The four-strong line up aptly exhibited their animals and proved knowledgeable about their breeds. As anticipation around the ring grew, Mrs Megarrell stepped forward to announce Sarah Wilson as overall champion and Isabella Taylor as overall reserve champion.

LMC chief executive Ian Stevenson extended the Commission's thanks to all those involved in planning and co-ordinating the event. He said, "LMC was delighted to provide sponsorship for this event. We wish to take this opportunity to thank the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society (RUAS) for facilitating this competition, Mrs Megarrell, for giving of her time and expertise to judge the competition and finally, all young handlers; events like this would not be possible without their enthusiasm to showcase the very best of our local livestock."

ENDS

Photo captions

001 – 8-11 year old sheep young handler champion Sarah Wilson pictured with LMC board member Joe Stewart and judge Rachel Megarrell

002 – 12-14 year old sheep young handler champion Isabella Taylor pictured with LMC board member Joe Stewart and judge Rachel Megarrell

003 – Overall sheep young handler champion Sarah Wilson (left) and reserve champion Isabella Taylor (right) pictured with LMC board member Joe Stewart and judge Rachel Megarrell

Notes to Editor

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