

January 2015 Newsletter

"Being a champion is more than just about having banners to hang on your wall or buckles to wear. Being a champion is overcoming all adversity, working your butt off when no one is looking, late nights and early mornings in the barn, dedication, and never giving up. If you want to be a champion, first you have to have the heart and mindset of a champion."

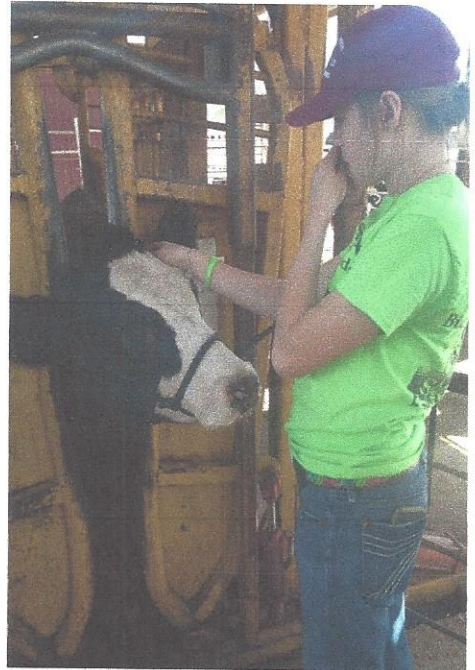
The last month has been a true testament to what the calf scramble is all about. I've been at the top, bottom, and anywhere in between, but I have continue to further my knowledge and learn more than I ever thought I could. After using the rest of my summer, or "offseason", as a time to continue to enhance our skills in and out of the show ring, we finally hit the road again to see if we could find ourselves at the top of a show. On Friday, January 2nd, Belle and I were able to make our way to the Foster FFA Progress Show to showcase our skills once again. After an extremely long day of getting Belle ready, setting up stalls, clipping her hair, and trying to feed her the perfect amount of feed to make her look good that night, it was finally time to get back in the show ring. As soon as we walked in, I realized that the class we were in was extremely deep and competitive. Belle's first show ring appearance in a few months went off without a hitch. The judge put us in fourth behind three extremely good heifers, and I could not have asked for more. Later that night, it was time to go into the ring that matters the most in my mind, showmanship. My teammate and I walked into the ring and she stayed "stuck" like glue. Quickly, Belle and I found ourselves in the top three show man in the class, and then the top two. Now this is extremely exciting, but the best part was the fact my best friend and fellow calf



scramble participant was standing right next to us in the top two. After much deliberating, Belle and I were pulled for second and Kaitlyn was named Champion Showman. I can tell you without a doubt that this was the most exhilarating moment of my entire show career. To my luck, the weekend wasn't over. On Saturday, Belle and I returned back to show in the ring once again at the B.F. Terry FFA Progress Show. For Belle and I, the day turned up similar results, perhaps even better. For the most part, our competition stayed that same in our class, however we moved up a placing in the stiff competition and walked away with a third place ribbon. Showmanship once again proved to be a treat for Belle and myself. I thought Friday night's results had been a bit of a fluke, maybe just luck, however, the results were the exact same as the previous night. Kaitlyn and I were named to the top two for the second show and a row, with Belle and I being Reserve. I can honestly tell you, there is nothing more

humbling than what took place that weekend, all competition aside, being able to not just shake your competitor's hand, but be able to call them your best friend and make it known with an infamous hug.

After returning home from the shows and spending a few days at home, we made a trip to the vet to prepare for the major stock shows. This included worming medication, wart vaccines, health papers and to double check the all so important tattoos in the ear. All of this would allow us to go into our first major shows together at the best of health.



In my previous newsletters, I explained the importance of getting Belle bred on time. After talking with my breeder, we decided to leave her at home all while displaying a different heifer at the Fort Worth Stock Show. This couldn't have been planned any better because in the days preceding my departure to Fort Worth Belle came into a natural heat. With this event came a quick trip to my breeder in Yoakum so that Belle could be artificially inseminated with the bull "CSCX Bandwagon," while I was off showing in Fort Worth. Generally I'm a bit nervous leaving Belle's daily care in someone else's hand while I'm away but knowing she was in the hands of Brian Knezek with Knezek Simbrah Simmental Ranch, I was at ease knowing she would have the best of care. As I sit here typing this last newsletter I can't promise you that Belle is 100% bred because I won't be able to confirm that until her next heat cycle in 13-16 days or until I can get a blood test after 60 days but Brian's exact words were "Belle's AI went perfect" and that's enough to reassure me she will stick like the last FOUR he has bred.

Feed Program:

(twice a day)

*Show Chow (Excel) – 12
pounds*

Beet Pulp – 3 pounds

Depth Charge – 1 pound

*Vita Charge Stress Tub –
Free Choice*

Coastal Hay – 4-5 Flakes

Pasture Grazing – As Desired

As I conclude this last newsletter I hope that you have enjoyed reading about the progress, failures and triumphs that this scramble project has brought me and my family. With my hard work and dedication it has made an impact on my younger siblings to also begin showing and raising breeding heifers. They may have to wait few years before they are able to experience the scramble program but to see them excited about the cattle industry is exciting. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to not only raise a breeding heifer but to help me discover that the agricultural industry is where I belong. Your indirect influence through the scramble program has allowed me to form new networks with people that have the same drive, dedication and hard work; make new friendship and create memories that I will be able to pass along to my children and grandchildren just as my parents have done with me.