

An Aussie's Perspective

Well it is safe to say that my first month in America has been a hectic, interesting and awesome experience. So far I have touched down in eight states. So thank you to everybody involved in making the Australia / America Shorthorn exchange program happen. The friends I've already made and the amazing hospitality of all my hosts has made me feel very welcome.

After a four hour drive to Sydney, three flights and a total of 17.5 hours in the skies I finally arrived in Denver. Keeping in mind that was the first time I had ever been on a plane I was a little bit weary. I met Derek Jungels and the rest of the JSF crew who quickly introduced me to the American way of life. It was awesome to see the scale and dedication shown by exhibitors at the Denver National Western. While the direction some cattle had taken was shocking (club calves) it was also very interesting to see how lucrative the show industry had become. The Pen Shows ability to align with commercial realty was refreshing and something I really enjoyed.

From Denver I met with the Lane

Family and departed through Kansas to Jay Okla. The Lanes program aims to produce a moderate cow that excels at calving time. I was able to see some local cattle enterprises, visit a sale barn and spend a day with veterinarian Dr. Richard McCarver. They also took me gigging, and I was lucky enough to catch a sucker.

My next destination was Dr. Jim and Beverly Freed's, Double J and Jeepetta Cattle Company herd. They run around 100 Shorthorn cows on various properties throughout the Chickasha area. Some impressive cattle were present including sire Waukaru Thor 3063. I was also lucky enough to watch the Thunder beat the Timberwolves at nearby Oklahoma City before heading to Turkey Feather Ranch in Ada. From there I travelled with them to Fort Worth for the stock show and met up with WHR Shorthorns. An impressive group of Shorthorn females at Fort Worth made the judging interesting.

Montie Soules then picked me up from Fort Worth and we travelled south to NCBA in San Antonio. From cattle I have seen at shows in America I



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have become concerned the Shorthorn breeds success as show cattle, is shifting attention away from the fundamentals of producing high quality beef efficiently. Spending time with the ASA staff and board members instilled confidence back into me as it is clear positive changes are occurring to ensure Shorthorn cattle remain sought after by commercial cattlemen. The progression of multi-breed EPDs I think is a very important step towards competing commercially as a breed but also as an industry against other animal based protein products. By combining data from objective measurement into a single large database from all breeds the value of EPDs as a selection tool will inevitably be much greater. Shorthorn's involvement in this is very exciting.

Thank you again and I look forward to meeting many more Shorthorn and beef enthusiasts as I travel across North America during the next six months. 📷