

Four of a Kind – The Queens of Budjon

One of the most impressive hands in a card game, four-of-a-kind, is not easy to come by. But when those four are queens, it is even more uncommon and exceptional. For Budjon Farms of Lomira, WI the hand they were dealt for the 2005 show season will be one they will never forget.

What do Desire, Griffen, Eileen and Anisa have in common? They were all named Grand Champion at a national show in 2005 and they all call Budjon Farms home! To appreciate the makings of a champion it is important to know the story behind the cow. Holstein World had the opportunity to visit with John, Tom & Kelli Cull, along with their partners, about the four queens from their herd that have captured the attention of dairy enthusiasts around the world.

Queen of Hearts – Desire

“A quality that she has had since she was a calf, Desire truly has heart!” Tom said. As a young heifer, Desire seriously injured her right front shoulder to the

point that the leg may never be fully utilized. Patience certainly turned out to be her virtue. With all that she has accomplished so far and all she has overcome, Desire fits into her crown as the Queen of Hearts quite well.

The Culls’ partner on Desire, Jeremy Nitz, entered her life when she was a spring yearling. Jeremy had grown up on a dairy farm and then started working for Rickert Bros. Dairy just north of Fond du Lac, WI. “One spring day Jeremy came with the Rickerts’ to visit the farm. He made the decision to purchase some animals and picked out three that day – one was Desire,” remembers Tom. After the local district show, Jeremy took Desire home. After about a month, Jeremy contacted the Culls’ about caring for Desire and the decision was made that she would go back to Budjon to be raised. “At this point, Desire was looking like a special heifer. An agreement was reached that if we took care of her and she calved in looking good, we would like the first opportunity to become partners with Jeremy,” Tom said.

As a 2-Year-Old, unbeknownst to her owners, Desire unfortunately absorbed her calf and was pasture bred. Instead of calving early in the summer, she calved just prior to World Dairy Expo. She looked exciting so the decision was made by the Culls’ to become partners with Jeremy. At Expo she placed 16th, continued to develop and went on to be 3rd at the Royal. Desire calved as Junior 3-Year-Old the Thursday before Expo and experienced problems due to a phosphorus deficiency. After floating her in a tank Friday & Saturday, they decided to take her to show where she

would be best cared for. Desire was IV’ed the week of the show and they assumed she would not be shown. “But then, Thursday before the show, she turned a corner and looked different. It was like she knew it was ‘game time’ and she needed to get with the program,” Jeremy recalls. For 9 days fresh, Desire looked great and placed 4th in class and was Nominated All-American. Just before the WI State Show in 2004, disappointment came again when they realized Desire’s tail had been stepped off while out on pasture. “It was so unfortunate because her tail was one you could have ‘modeled’ a fake tail after!” Kelli & Tom agreed. At this point, she had been fresh a year but still looked the part to win the 4-Year-Old class and was named Res. Sr. Champion.

The struggles and difficulties with Desire came again when she calved this year as a 5-Year-Old. After having twins, and not releasing the second set of cleanings, Desire continued to be low in phosphorus and calcium and developed pneumonia. Just prior to exhibiting her at the WI State Show in July, Desire was IV’ed twice daily to keep her from becoming ketotic and possibly getting a DA. Just over three weeks fresh, Judge Teixeira named her Grand Champion of the show. “After the show, she kept getting better and really took off with her unbelievable appetite and her uncanny love to go to the shows. It’s like she knew this was possibly her year!” Jeremy shared.

Desire’s leadsman in the ring this year was Tom. “It was very fulfilling and rewarding to lead her this year. It can be a hard decision to choose who would be able to compliment the cow the best but I felt familiar with her and that I would not be jeopardizing her chances of success too much,” Tom said. Now, Unanimous All-American and the People’s Choice Award winner, Desire has done for the Culls & partner Jeremy Nitz, what they could have only dreamt of and provided them with one of the highest honors in the Holstein breed.



BUDJON REDMARKER DESIRE EX-94
Redmarker x EX-92 Triple-A Danee
3-6 365 39,042 4.5 1,743 2.8 1,110

In 2005...

People’s Choice Award & Unanimous All-American
5-Year-Old

Grand Champion & Reserve Supreme Champion
World Dairy Expo

Grand Champion Wisconsin State Show & All-Wisconsin
5-Year-Old

Two sons, Budjon-Nitzy Diesel-ET*RC & Budjon-Nitzy Demolish-ET at ABS/St. Jacobs
VG-89 Exhibit sister due with her third calf in June
Several Durham sisters due Spring 2006

Queen of Diamonds – Griffen

“Griffen is definitely the twinkle in our eye and of those who know and admire her. She is a cow that portrays sophistication at all times,” Kelli shared. Just like that certain person you know that always looks great with their hair done, make-up on and dressed to kill, Griffen is ready to go at all times.



LLOLYN JUDE GRIFFEN EX-92

In 2005...

Grand Champion All-American Jersey Show
Reserve Grand Champion World Dairy Expo
AI and embryo interest
9/05 Giprat Belles Connection daughter sells as Lot #1 in the Oblong Valley Celebration Sale on June 4th, 2006.

Whether it is in the barn or in the show ring, Griffen always holds her head high and carries herself with exceptional poise and grace.

To date, Griffen is the highest selling Jersey in public auction when she sold for \$80,000 at the Field of Dreams sale in June 2005 to Peter Vail. A fourth generation EX, Griffen was bred by the Llolyn herd in Ontario, Canada. She sold in the Sale of Stars as a senior calf and was purchased by Mike & Cheryl Deaver. She was then sold to Louie Cozzitorto of Oregon and began her amazing show career - first in her class, grand or reserve champion at every show she has exhibited in. Griffen was purchased at the All-American Show by Norm Nabholz, Mike & Julie Duckett and Dr. Scott Armbrust, the owners who consigned her to the Field of Dreams of sale.

Griffen became the responsibility of Budjon when she calved September 13th. Tom shared, “Peter had the opportunity to come visit the farm prior to Griffen calving. He felt she would be well cared for here and liked the idea that she would be close to Madison soon after calving.” The Culls’ partnership with Peter is unique because they acquired a part interest when she came to the farm. Decisions about mating and showing are all made with Peter. “This partnership is especially unique because of the distance between us and Peter but we communicate well and try to make the best decisions for Griffen,” Tom said.

Calving just ten days prior to Expo and five days over due, Griffen had a heifer calf and recovered well but then went ketotic. She was IV’ed twice a day but did not like the needles. “Griffen went into such a rage she almost cut off John’s finger! She did cut the back of her right ear on the headlock, so stitches had to be put in. We then decided to put a permanent catheter into her neck, relieving the agony of having to stick her every time we needed to give her fluids,” Kelli remembered. Unfortunately, Griffen developed a DA from the ketosis. Their hopes for her to show at Expo were extremely diminished. “The phone call to Peter was a tough one. How do you tell the man that spent this amount of money and had entrusted this very special cow in our hands that he would not be able to show her at Madison?” Kelli recalls. Understanding the situation, Peter was very calm and the decision was made to take Griffen to Expo with the crew to get the best care.

The day before the show, Tom, Peter, Kelli and Joel Kietzman all talked about how well Griffen was doing since the surgery. Although she had developed some air under her skin from the surgery, she had gained her rib back, definition to her ribs, was milking well and really looked like she wanted to show. The group decision was made to put her on the bagging schedule and hope for the best! Taking the stitches out that morning from both her ear and on her side, but leaving the catheter in, Griffen went against all odds. Their jockey on Griffen, Gene “Bambi” Henderson, led Griffen to the title of Reserve Grand Champion of the show. “Bambi has this amazing style about his showmanship. That’s why he was the logical choice to show Griffen both at Madison and at Louisville,” Kelli & Tom agreed.

Queen of Spades – Eileen

Eileen is the rock star of the group, with fans all over the world. “People come to the farm or see her at a show and they want to know everything about her...everything about her daughters, our plans to show her, breed her or flush her. They want their pictures taken with her like a fan club; it’s really cool from an owner’s perspective!” Tom shared. Partner Joel Keitzman agreed and went on to say that, “Eileen is the type of cow you can always depend on to deliver. She is a cow that truly defines the meaning of being ‘solid as a rock.’” Much like her dam, Krull Broker Elegance,

the Culls’ shared that Eileen is the kind of cow that takes care of herself and is extremely smart, the queen of character and stability.

When you look at the big, powerful EX-96 Broker, you might think that she would cross well with bulls transmitting dairyness. Not the case with Elegance. She actually breeds refinement and femininity. Therefore, bulls such as Linjet, Encore, Stardust and Dundee work great because of their strength, width and power. Tom said, “People ask us all of the time, ‘What’s the best mating from Elegance?’ and without a doubt I would say that the best have been Linjet or Encore.” Eileen sorts to the top of their favorite daughters from Elegance because of her udder. The well-attached fore udder with veins everywhere and the high, wide rear udder really catch your eye.

The decision to flush Eileen this lactation was made early on so they knew they needed to show her in the spring in order to possibly receive an All-American nomination this year. Eileen was 11 months fresh and looked the part to be named Grand Champion of the Midwest Spring Show. A bonus for Budjon-JK that day was that her Storm daughter, Budjon-JK Storm Emily, was named Intermediate Champion.

Kietzman has been asked to lead many animals in various shows based not only on who he is and what he has accomplished, but his great ability and strength to hold heads high. “Watching Joel lead Eileen is like watching two ballroom dancers, it’s like they know each other’s next move!” commented Kelli.

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BUDJON-JK LINJET EILEEN-ET EX-96 93-MS
Linjet x EX-96 Elegance
5-6 365 44,703 3.7 1,647 3.1 1,383

In 2005...

Reserve All-American Aged Cow
Grand Champion Midwest Spring National
Champion Bred & Owned Midwest Spring National
Budjon-JK Storm Emily-ET VG-89 2-yrs & Res. All-American Sr. 2-Year-Old
Budjon-JK Stormatic East-ET is milking but not yet scored
Champion daughter sold in the 2005 World Classic Sale for \$51,000
Another champion daughter was born 9/05

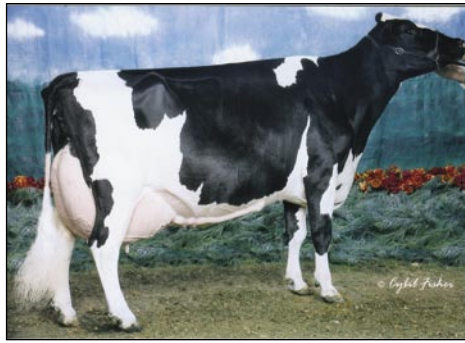
“Because Eileen is such a head strong individual, she needs that little extra arm strength to make her look her best.”

Queen of Clubs - Anisa

“A cow that you don’t want to meet in a dark alley, Anisa fits the title of the Queen of Clubs to a tee!” John states. “She has caused more trouble at our farm than any other - the instigator of many ‘feuds’ that happen at the Budjon playground.” But Anisa does make calving look like a cakewalk. Her last two calvings have been sets of twins! The Culls’ agreed that “Anisa has a very unique personality, it’s almost like she is part human. Her demeanor and her actions seem as if she’s in charge, not us.”

Anisa, born and raised at Budjon Farms, represents the type of pedigree and individual they strive to breed. Her dam, an EX-91 Eagle, then an EX Sexation, were great cows to breed from. Browndale Stardust’s front-end strength, width, well-attached udders with an emphasis on rear udder height and width, along with sound feet & legs, were positive additions to the herd. Anisa’s first experience in the ring came as a Senior 3-Year-Old when she was 13th at the Royal.

“Being that she was two years between calvings, we were concerned about Anisa losing weight after she calved. But at two months fresh, Anisa was milking 165 lbs/day and those worries were gone,” shared John. The biggest fret with Anisa has always been her toe length and her foot shape, she does



BUDJON STARDUST ANISA EX-95 95-M5
Stardust x EX-91 Eagle
7-5 365 44,128 4.7 2,077 3.1 1,357

In 2005...
Reserve All-American 125,000-Lb. Cow
2nd 125,000-Lb. World Dairy Expo
Grand Champion Mideast Fall National
Champion Bred & Owned Mideast Fall National
Embryos marketed domestically and internationally
Budjon Integrity Ally-ET VG-85 2nd calf
Budjon Stormatic Allison-ET VG-87 1st calf
Three Encore young cows bred back to calve
Three Durham and Two Champion open heifers

not like having her feet trimmed. “We were extremely pleased with how Anisa looked at Expo and Louisville and are honored for her to be Reserve All-American 125,000-Lb. Cow.” Kelli got the nod to be on Anisa’s halter this year because Anisa had mellowed with age and Kelli had the advantages of working with her at home. “Kelli has watched Anisa show many times and knew what to expect from her in the ring and what she needed to do to make her look her best,” Tom said.


The Next Round

“The 2006 show season started the


week after we returned home from Expo and Louisville,” Tom said. The Culls’ decided to try and breed back both Eileen and Desire, unfortunately that did not happen. They plan to have Eileen fresh again in March 2007 and for Desire to calve that spring. Griffen is being flushed and will be bred back to calve in June 2007. The decision to breed Anisa for June 2007 will be made later this year. So, for 2006, the Culls’ and their partners have decided that all four champions will be in their flush program with hopes of making more embryos and producing offspring from these elite individuals.

The stories of Desire, Griffen, Eileen and Anisa may be unique to each cow but their achievements are all a part of the Budjon story. As cattle exhibitors, it is understood that with extreme happiness and success there also comes disappointment and sadness. The awards do not come easy and the cows need our help to achieve their greatest potential. Each of these four champions have a story that shares what it really takes to get them ready for the ring. Tom and Kelli shared, “When you see us on the sidelines or in the ring with tears in our eyes or sobbing like babies, it’s not only because we are happy, but also because there are so many emotions involved with these cows. They become a part of your family and every decision you make to help them reach their potential depends on you. The pressure you put on yourself is enormous, but there is no reward as great or as fulfilling as having Grand at any of these shows, especially Expo!” ■

THIS EPISODE



Hey, listen...I'm stressed out big time. I just calved and Mister Dairyman here is frustrated because he thinks I'm anorexic.



ALRIGHT!

No more therapist bills!

MOMMA

YUM!
I could eat this all day!

BESSIE AND THE DAIRYMAN SEE A THERAPIST

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