

Small Animal Round Robin puts skills to test

BY VINCENT OSUNA
Staff Writer

IMPERIAL — Throughout her five years as a Star Route 4-H member, Clara Walker never thought winning first place in the annual Small Animal Round Robin competition would be a possibility.

Nevertheless, Walker was able to win her first Junior 4-H first place ribbon Tuesday night during the competition at the California Mid-Winter Fair & Fiesta.

"I was just so excited," Walker, 11, said. "Out of all those people, I never would've thought that I would've got first."

The showmanship competition included both 4-H and FFA members.

Members rotated around six stations. Each station contained a different animal that judges questioned exhibitors about.

Participants also

showcased how well they could handle or walk each of the animals, which included pygmy goats, rabbits, caviae, poultry, waterfowl and dogs.

For Walker, mastering the dog station was the most difficult.

"I couldn't get a lot of the dog parts right, I was so confused," she said. "4-H has really taught me to be confident even when you're nervous. You gotta act confident and just keep smiling. So tonight, I just relied on being confident in every station."

Throughout his nearly six year of participation in the Round Robin competition, Matthew Printy, 17, had done it all — except win first place showing both as an FFA member and as a 4-H member.

That changed this year for the El Centro FFA and Star Route 4-H member.

"I'm not gonna say it

was a surprise, because I did expect to do well, but it was a real surprise getting first in both," Printy, 17, said.

Printy has been a 4-H member since sixth grade, and an FFA member for the past three years.

As he's set to graduate from Southwest High School this year on a football scholarship, Printy said he will miss his friends and the bonds they created throughout his time showing at the fair.

"It's just one week — we get a little bit of time to just mess around and do our favorite hobbies here," Printy said. "It's a pretty great experience, especially just showing animals, going to round robin, being with your friends competing, having that little bit of friendly rivalry. It's just great. I love all of it. I'm going to miss it."

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Clara Walker, of Star Route 4-H, (middle) smiles after receiving the Junior 4-H first place ribbon during the Small Stock Round Robin competition held Tuesday night at the California Mid-Winter Fair & Fiesta in Imperial. PHOTO VINCENT OSUNA



El Centro FFA members Malei Tipton (right) and Diana Lugo showcase their rabbit showmanship skills to a judge during the Small Stock Round Robin competition held Tuesday night at the California Mid-Winter Fair & Fiesta in Imperial. PHOTO VINCENT OSUNA



Matthew Printy, 17, of El Centro FFA, gives a thumbs-up after winning first place during the Small Stock Round Robin competition held Tuesday night at the California Mid-Winter Fair & Fiesta in Imperial. PHOTO VINCENT OSUNA

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Small Stock Round

Robin winners

Junior 4-H

1st Clara Walker, Star
Route 4-H

2nd Bella Abatti, Mt.

Signal 4-H

3rd Emma Walker,
Star Route 4-H

4th Addison Hol-
brook, SW Valley 4-H

5th Mykenzie Wright,
Mt. Signal 4-H

6th Carmina Pendley,
Star Route 4-H

7th Sofia Irungaray,
Verde 4-H

8th Dalilah Quintero,
Mt. Signal 4-H

Senior 4-H

1st Matthew Printy,
Star Route 4-H

2nd Keeley Poloni,
Holtville 4-H

3rd Jacob Sanchez,
SW Valley 4-H

4th Benjamin Ar-
royave, Star Route 4-H

5th Robin Juarez,
Verde 4-H

6th Meghan Printy,
Westmorland 4-H

7th Seth Cruz, West-
morland 4-H

FFA

1st Matthew Printy, El
Centro FFA

2nd Malei Tipton, El
Centro FFA

3rd Angelina Ramirez,
Imperial FFA

4th Lauryn Lazarcik,
El Centro FFA

5th Kailah Alvarez, El
Centro FFA

6th Mary Abatti, El
Centro FFA

7th Krystal Alvarez, El
Centro FFA

8th Diana Lugo, El
Centro FFA