

Spectator "Bucks" Tradition

By Alice Hall
San Bernardino, Calif.

INTRODUCTION: When Los Angeles County Fair offered classes and premiums for Pygmy bucks up to the age of 2, as well as for does of all ages, I was dubious. I have remained dubious for six years about smelly, amorous little bucks at a fair full of spectators. I was especially doubtful when the exhibitors of large breeds of goats requested that Pygmies be shown with other livestock--not goats in case one of the raunchy little guys escaped. So what? Pygmy crosses

are cute!

SCENE: Los Angeles County Fair, 1985--doubts fled!

"Where are the big goats?" a handsome middle-aged man demanded of me as I fluffed the straw in my Pygmy pens.

"They will come in Wednesday," I explained.

"Darn!" expostulated the man. "I love the smell the big bucks leave on the does, and these little guys don't smell that way."

"Oh, yes they do!" I defended.

"Here, smell my little yearling," I offered as I changed pens and lifted Wee Bear in my arms.

"Ahhhh," the man sighed on the exhale. "May I hold him?"

Mentally my mouth was agape and I scratched my head as that unique spectator cradled my 40+ pound buck against him and made satisfied sounds while running his nose back and forth in Wee Bear's unclipped coat.

"Thanks a lot," he sighed as he put the buck down. "I love that smell."

POSTLUDE: Now I've exhibited at shows and fairs--Nubians, Saanens, Pygmies--since 1962, and I thought I'd seen and heard everything spectators could possibly come up with. But the buck-loving spectator was entirely unique.

Perhaps little bucks do have a place at the fair after all. Perhaps not everyone involved with goats wants to change their image.