

Suffolks sweep the boards at Balmoral 2009

THE young generation of Suffolk breeders swept all before them at Balmoral Show last week with Downpatrick exhibitor Norman Robinson scooping the Northern Bank sponsored RUAS Interbreed Championship.

On Thursday Robinson's outstanding Glenho Gurka-bred ewe was selected the best of the Suffolks before the supremely conformed female - a half sister of the 48,000gns Strathisla Dylan Thomas - saw off stiff competition from rival breeds to capture the top honour.

It was the thrilling climax to a hugely successful show for the Suffolk breed with Robinson and fellow Downpatrick breeder, Mark Priestley clinching the interbreed pairs before teaming up with Pat Greaney, shepherd of the Tom Bailey flock, to complete a remarkable hat-trick by winning the Group of Three.

While the champagne corks were popping in the Suffolk fold on Friday, judge Michael Weaver had been tasked with the unenviable job of selecting the respective class winners 24 hours earlier.

William Montgomery clinched the first honour of the day by winning the ram class before Mark Priestley's shearling ram emerged victorious from his class.

Onlookers then got the first glimpse of Norman Robinson's exceptional ewe in the judging paddock as Tom Bailey and Mark Priestley scooped first prize in the respective shearling ewe and ram lamb classes.

There was further success for the Bailey flock in the ewe lamb class while Priestley captured the pairs and triples before a thrilled Robinson enjoyed his moment in the sun by winning the overall Suffolk championship.



RUAS interbreed champion presented by Norman Robinson. Included is judge Michael Weaver.



Mark Priestley secured Group of Three honour.



Priestley's winning pair.



William Montgomery presented the winner in the aged ram class.



Pat Greaney brought forward the pick of the ewe lambs.