Exactly 100 years after Oklahoma A&M captured its first national livestock judging championship in 1925, the 2025 Oklahoma State team stood atop the National Collegiate Livestock Judging Contest. The victory secured the program's 24th national championship, extending OSU's record as the winningest collegiate livestock judging program in the country.

The team's historic season also earned the support of livestock enthusiasts nationwide, who voted Oklahoma State the 2025 Best of the Barns Senior College Livestock Judging Team. After collecting 10 team championships and numerous individual honors, the Cowboys' Best of the Barns title provided one more fitting recognition for a year defined by depth, consistency and an ability to deliver when the stakes were highest.



The team's success extended beyond the championship banner. Kolton Lake of Laramie, Wyoming, was named High Individual Overall, becoming the 18th contestant in Oklahoma State history to earn the national individual title. Dax DeLozier of Adair, Oklahoma, followed in third overall, Connor Pell of Adair placed 11th, Chyann Emerson of Tuttle finished 17th and Preston Rhode of Carlock, Illinois, placed 18th.

Placing five contestants among the top 18 provided a fitting snapshot of the group's greatest strength. Oklahoma State was not defined by one exceptional performance. Its success came from a deep roster of competitors who contributed throughout the year.



The 2025 team included Jonwyn Ayres of Powers, Oregon; Sheridan Chaney of Keymar, Maryland; DeLozier; Emerson; Brady Hopkins of LaSalle, Colorado; Zander Ivey of Bloomington, Ohio; Lake; Blake Long of Adair; Pell; Rhode; Jackson Tarrance of Welling, Oklahoma; Grayson Tedrow of Quincy, Illinois; and Kelsey Theis of Leavenworth, Kansas.

Together, those students built a championship season one contest at a time. Oklahoma State opened its campaign by winning the Griswold Cattle Judging Contest before earning Reserve Champion honors at Cattlemen's Congress. Ayres led OSU in Oklahoma City with a fourth-place individual finish, while Rhode placed ninth.

The team then traveled to Denver, where it finished second at the National Western Stock Show and won the National Western Stock Show Carload Contest. Ayres again placed fourth, while Pell finished 10th overall in the collegiate contest. DeLozier and Emerson each placed sixth in the carload competition, and Long finished 10th.



Those early results established Oklahoma State as one of the strongest and deepest teams in the country. The Cowboys placed third at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo before winning the Dixie National. Pell led Oklahoma State at Dixie as the High Individual Overall. Ayres placed second, Emerson fifth, Long sixth, Lake ninth and DeLozier 10th, giving OSU six individuals inside the top 10. Oklahoma State followed the Dixie National victory with a second-place finish at the San Antonio Livestock Exposition. Tarrance finished third individually, while Pell placed ninth.

The spring portion of the schedule concluded with another championship at the Houston Livestock Show. DeLozier finished second overall, Lake was ninth, and Ayres placed fourth. By the end of the spring season, the Cowboys had already collected multiple team titles and demonstrated that different members could lead the way at any contest. The Cowboys won

Stockman's Sort, where Rhode claimed the High Individual Overall title. DeLozier placed third and Pell finished fourth. They followed that performance by winning the National Barrow Show, with Pell earning the individual championship and DeLozier placing fourth.



At the World Beef Expo, Oklahoma State again earned the High Team Overall title. Rhode won the individual contest, Pell finished second and DeLozier placed fourth. The team continued its successful run at the Tulsa State Fair, earning another championship. Pell led the Cowboys in fourth overall, followed by Chaney in sixth and DeLozier in ninth.



The fall results showed that Oklahoma State could win in different settings and with different members leading the team. Lake, DeLozier, Pell, Rhode, Ayres and others collected major individual honors throughout the year, while the full roster supplied the depth necessary to remain competitive through a demanding schedule. At the American Royal, Oklahoma State placed third as a team. Pell won the American Royal individual contest, while Rhode placed 10th. Although the team did not capture the overall title, the contest provided another valuable test before the final stretch of the season.



The Cowboys responded by winning the Mid-American contest. Emerson placed fourth, Pell fifth, Lake eighth and Rhode second. The victory gave OSU additional momentum as the team turned its attention toward Louisville. They saved their strongest performance for the contest that mattered most.

The national victory completed Oklahoma State's return to the top following a Reserve National Championship finish in 2024. The near miss gave the next group a clear goal and a renewed sense of purpose. The 2025 team responded by putting another bronze bull in the trophy case. The championship was the fourth earned under head coach Dr. Parker Henley, whose teams also captured national titles in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Since taking over the program, Henley has continued the standard established by generations of Oklahoma State coaches and contestants.



The final record illustrates the group's remarkable consistency. Oklahoma State won the Griswold Cattle Judging Contest, National Western Stock Show Carload Contest, Dixie National, Houston Livestock Show, Stockman's Sort, National Barrow Show, World Beef Expo, Tulsa State Fair, Mid-American and NAILE. The Cowboys also placed second at Cattlemen's Congress, the National Western Stock Show and the San Antonio Livestock Exposition, and third at Fort Worth and the American Royal. Ten team championships across one season would be an impressive accomplishment for any program. For Oklahoma State, the final victory gave those results a place in history.



The 2025 team added its name to that lineage while establishing a legacy of its own. One hundred years separated Oklahoma State's first national championship from its 24th. The livestock changed. The contests evolved. Generations of coaches and students passed through the program. The standard remained. In 1925, Oklahoma A&M began a championship tradition. In 2025, a new group of Cowboys carried it forward—one decision, one set of reasons and one bronze bull at a time.