



RIDGWAY

Poll Merino Stud

NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 18
JULY 2020

Seasonally 2020 is shaping up to be significantly better than the previous two years. At Kulkami our cropping program was completed by the end of May following the perfect opening to the season on Anzac Day. This also resulted in excellent early pasture growth throughout May. A frosty and drier early June slowed things down, but with more moisture arriving in the middle of the month, things are now back on track. Our lambing percentages have been very good which appears to be the case for most of the country. We hope that you are all in a similar position and that this year continues to be a profitable one for everyone on the land.

Obviously, the major issue in the country and indeed the world at the moment is the Covid-19 pandemic. Fortunately for us ram sales are considered an essential service, so our sale will go ahead as planned on Monday 10th of August and we will adhere to all health guidelines that are in place at the time.

As we write this newsletter South Australia has just announced a hard border closure with Victoria. Throughout this whole pandemic we have been advised that ram sales are a sufficient reason for travel and we hope this will still be the case at the time of our sale, but we recommend interstate travellers stay up to date with all current requirements by talking to your agents and monitoring the relevant government websites. If we can help out with providing proof of reason to travel we will be more than happy to do so.

This year we are offering pre-sale inspections of our sale team by appointment. If you would like to book a time please contact Ric or Matt. We have installed a mobile phone booster to allow better coverage at the sale should you wish to buy over the phone. We are also considering live streaming our auction through Auctions Plus should interest warrant it. If this is something that interests you please contact us.



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SIRE EVALUATION TRIALS

Over the last decade we have entered five rams in Sire Evaluation Trials in both South Australia and Victoria. We feel that benchmarking our rams alongside those from other leading studs, provides us with valuable information on how our rams are performing for a range of measured and classed traits.

Our 2018 Newsletter featured an exceptional young ram, R005 who we felt was a good example of a genuine “Dual Purpose” merino. He was retained as a stud sire and we decided to enter him in the 2019 drop SA Sire Evaluation Trial, the results of which have recently been compiled and released.



Historically we have been renowned for our wool quality, and our entrants in previous trials have all performed well for both measured and classed wool traits. This trend continued in this trial with 005 being a trait leader for wool colour, dust penetration and particularly wool character, where he scored significantly better than all other entrants.

However, it was his results for the measured meat traits that we are particularly happy with. He scored well for growth, fat and eye muscle, which combined with his figures for wool, ranked him a clear leader for the Dual Purpose index and second best for all other indexes.

He was also a leader for both breech wrinkle and breech cover which are traits that we believe are consistent in our entire stud and is why we believe our sheep are well suited to non-mules flocks.

Our ram scored above average in all but one of the 26 measured and classed traits, this being staple length, even though he scored well in the fleece weight categories.

Over recent years we have been selecting for longer staples as we have adopted twice a year shearing and are convinced of the many benefits of doing so. We realise that not all our clients have the same objective and would rather continue with only the one shearing annually. With this in mind we have been retaining some family lines that are a little shorter in length with good density that are still cutting good fleece weights.

The full trial report from the SA Sire Evaluation can be found at www.merinosuperiorsires.com.au.

AMSEA Index Values and Classer's Visual Grade

Sire Code	Breeder's flock, Sire name	Number of Progeny*	AMSEA Index Values				Classer's Visual Grade ¹	
			Dual Purpose Plus	Merino Production Plus	Fibre Production Plus	Wool Production Plus	Tops % Y [^]	Culls % Y
1	Anderson Poll, 160390	42	113	92	89	99	7	-19
2	Calcookara Poll, 170400	35	105	115	110	115	8	-4
3	Challara Poll, 150245	48	99	79	90	77	2	-3
4	Flairdale Poll, 170070	39	75	90	94	88	-15	10
5	Greenfields Poll, 160079	46	70	90	100	83	-23	17
6	Gunallo Poll, 170295	26	96	110	104	114	14	-1
7	Hilton Heath Poll, 150817	51	90	105	99	110	-18	11
8	Kelvale Poll, 170004	55	106	76	83	79	4	-10
9	Leahcim Poll, 173114	39	116	103	103	102	4	-12
10	Malleetech Poll, 177141	45	94	89	92	89	-6	8
11	Moorundie Poll, NE73	29	79	106	102	108	-23	27
12	Pepper Well Poll, 177031	42	86	93	97	92	7	-20
13	Pimbena Poll, 170509	40	124	126	119	120	30	-20
14	Ridgway Poll, 170005	50	129	117	111	115	12	-10
15	Roemahkita Poll, 160018	37	108	104	105	99	-8	29
16	Wallaloo Park Poll, 172070	42	111	106	100	110	5	-1
	Average performance	42	100	100	100	100	27	22

*Number of progeny is at weaning.

2019 MULTI-VENDOR SALE RESULTS

We offered and sold all our rams at both the Hamilton and Classings Classic ram sales which was a pleasing result.

At Hamilton our team of five rams sold to a top of \$5,000 and averaged \$3,400. Altus Pastoral purchased the top priced ram with GS Carter Family Trust, Serviceton paying \$4,500 for the second top price.

Our seven rams at Classings averaged \$7,428 and sold to 7 individual clients. The Obrien Stud from Kyancutta paid the \$13,000 top price for a July drop ram bred from our ewe lamb mob which were mated at 9 months of age. Duane Simon, Mc Piggery bought another younger sire bred by our ram lamb syndicate for \$9,000 and two rams sold to \$8,000 the first to Steen Paech operating for SJ Willaston and the other to Craig Graham, Glencorrie.

This year we will offer 12 rams at Classings Classic and 3 rams at the Adelaide ram sale.

LAST YEARS SALE REPORT

The following is an abbreviation of our printed sale report.

Ridgway rises to record \$12,600

A big crowd, including 49 registered bidders from three states, gathered to witness a total clearance of 140 superb quality rams in the main auction clear to a Ridgway record on-property sale top of \$12,600 and average \$2448.

In the mini auction that followed the main sale, 32 of 42 sold to \$1100 five times and averaged a great value \$866, bringing the total clearance on the day to 172 rams at a \$2153 average.

While the sale was buoyant there was still plenty of value around, with 22% of the overall sale selling for just \$1000 or less.

There was depth of quality right through the draft with bodyweights up to 121kg and averaging 102kg. The bright, nourished, long stapled and well defined wools were a feature, with 38% of the rams being +20 or better for YCFW (yearling clean fleece weight) on Merino Select

It was two NSW buyers who set the ball rolling towards such a great result. R94, a magnificent 121kg son of White River 546 stood out for size and quality, but at lot 1, again proved the adage of "The first ram is often the cheapest."

Bill Ryan, Curragh, Oxley jumped in with a \$3000 opening bid and was able to pick this star lot up for just \$3800. In

a catalogue that ultimately saw 13 rams make \$4000 or better, this proved to be a bargain buy.

Robert Stein, general manager for Tubbo Station in the Riverina and owned by Giles Pritchard-Gordon, Darlington Point, went to \$4800 to get R234 by R721 at lot 3. However, it was the very next ram, R787, by White River 546 that took the bidding well beyond levels seen at this sale previously, before again being knocked down to Robert Stein through Elders Griffith.

Its wool measurements of 20.4 micron, 2.5 SD, 12.1 CV and 99.7 CF were backed up by very impressive Merino Select figures including 20.7 for YCFW, 7.4 for YSL, 7.1 for YWT culminating in a MP+ index of 150.5.

"We have purchased here before and these rams have done a good job for us," Robert Stein said.

"This ram has got everything that's required; correctness, he's deep sided, well-muscled, has a great surface, good skin, plus a silky white, long stapled, well defined and nourished wool," he said.



The \$12,600 top priced ram purchased by Robert Stein, Manager for Tubbo Station, Riverina, NSW.

It was a fair way back from the record top to the second top of \$5200. This was paid by Steve Kroehn, GD & JI Kroehn, Nildottie through Landmark Murray Bridge for R202, another R721 son. He was a strong bidder throughout the sale on select lots, this being one of six he purchased at a \$3283 average.

For the second year in a row it was Lynton and Suze Barrett, Lameroo, who took the top volume buying honours. They paid to \$2600 in purchasing 13 rams at a \$1792 average.

Chris and Andrew Johnson, Mt Boothby, Tintinara, buying through Elders Keith were again very strong repeat volume buyers. They paid to a \$4600 top and averaged \$2911 for nine top rams.

Three buyers purchased eight rams each to be next in

the volume buying stakes. Strongest was Colara Farms, Tintinara paying to \$3600 and averaging \$2800, with manager Aaron Freeman doing the bidding.

Ian Jolley, manager for GNB Investments and buying through Landmark Lameroo, worked on the extreme value end of the sale, paying to \$1000 and averaging just \$913, but had to wait until near the end of the sale to get his requirements, with seven of these eight coming from the mini auction that followed the main auction.

To broaden their exposure to the eastern states' market, the Ridgway family has been displaying at Bendigo and then offering a pen of 5 rams at the Hamilton Sheepvention for quite a few years. This has helped attract Victorians in particular to their sale, with several initially able to purchase top rams over there at cheap rates, thus getting to experience their breeding credentials first hand. This venture helped attract six Victorian buyers to this year's sale, collectively purchasing 30 rams.



Tim Philip, Maroona, Peter Brady, Rhymney, Hayden Price, Crowlands, Simon Brady, Rhymney and Stephen Allen, Goroke.

One of them was long term repeat buyers Peter and Simon Brady, Rhymney and purchasing through AWN went to a top of \$4000 and averaged \$2275 to be the other buyer of 8 rams.

Also buying through AWN's Kelvin Shelley were Graeme

Fagg, Mt Mercer (seven rams to \$2800 and average \$2129) and Tim Philip, Maroona (five to \$2600 and average \$2000).

Hayden Price, Ben Nevis Farms, Crowlands and buying through Landmark Ararat picked up six rams to \$3400 and averaged \$2033, while Stephen Allen, Goroke and buying through Rodwells Horsham went top shelf and purchased three to \$4000 and averaged \$3333.

Other prominent buyers included the Hampel family, GMR & J Nominees, Loxton with four top rams to \$4200 and averaging \$3100; CJ & YM Butcher, Meningie with six to \$2200 and averaging \$1800; ND & CM Smith, Loxton with seven to \$1000 and averaging \$971; and DS & HJ Piggott, Jabuk with seven to \$800 and averaging \$757.

Naturally the Ridgway family was delighted with the result with plenty of smiles post sale.

"We really appreciated the new faces in attendance, while also welcoming our many repeat clients," Ric Ridgway said.

"We appreciate you don't have to go far north of here, or to the east to find the season is still very tough for some, but it has turned around here this year for which we are grateful.

"We are in a pretty good spot in the sheep industry right now and if producers have been able to keep a majority of their breeding numbers through the drought, we are in for good times," he said.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2020

South East Merino Field Day, Keith - Wednesday 22nd July

Karoonda & Districts Merino Field Day, Murray Bridge - Friday 31st July

RIDGWAY ON-PROPERTY SALE (OFFERING 200 RAMS) KULKAMI - MONDAY 10TH AUGUST

Classings Classic, Murray Bridge - Monday 7th September

Adelaide Merino Ram Sale - Friday 11th September