

Upward and onward at Bundara Downs

It was all smiles at the completion of the Bundara Downs White Suffolk and Poll Dorset ram sale last Friday at Western Flat.

In this major volume sale servicing the prime lamb industry, 277 rams cleared to a top of \$3400 and averaged \$1134.

Certainly optimism has greatly increased from last year with a much better season on top of continuing buoyant lamb markets and outlook, culminating in a 13% increase in both rams sold and average price on last year's result when 246 rams averaged \$997.

It was the White Suffolk stud ram, BD 157553Twin that attracted most interest and bidding to top the sale. This big, powerful and structurally correct son of BD 122261 was the second highest individual ram from both breeds in a catalogue full of high performers. It was purchased by Stuart Staude, Bordertown, through Spence, Dix & Co's Kym Lovelock for \$3400 for his Riddick stud. With a post weaning weight ASBV of 17.96 combined with +2.08 eye muscle, it was certainly a standout ram.

The eight catalogued White Suffolk stud rams averaged \$2088, up \$150 on last year's top price. The Illoura stud, Moorlands selected BD 157127 for \$2100, and Anthony Ferguson, Anna Villa stud, Weetulta selected BD 157828 for \$2000 to be the other registered stud buyers. However it was the first of the 191 catalogued flock rams, BD 156814 that made the sale's second top price of \$2400. This ram was purchased by Trevor and Kath Pietsch, Bordertown for their ram breeding flock. All other rams from both breeds went to commercial prime lamb breeders.

Ten specially selected White Suffolk rams averaged \$1680, while all 191 flock rams offered cleared at a \$1002 average. Thus there was a total clearance of 209 White Suffolks at a \$1078 average.

In the 76 strong Poll Dorset offering, there was stronger commercial competition until orders were filled right near the end, with 65 of 76 averaging \$1305.

PJ Leach & Sons, Mundulla paid the \$2000 top price in the Poll Dorset section for one of three select flock rams they purchased at an \$1867 average. Steve DiGiorgio, Lucindale and buying through PPH&S agent Richard Harvey selected nine Poll Dorset rams at a \$1344 average, and Harlock Pastoral, Penola, with six rams to \$1600 and at a \$1200 average certainly put strong competition into the top end of the Poll Dorset offering.

However it was Ben Stark, Stark Grazing, Naracoorte who was the dominant Poll Dorset buyer. He purchased 20 rams to a top of \$1900 and at a \$1425 average, consistently seeking out the highest performance rams under Lambplan. Stark Grazing produces 10,000 lambs per year from Poll Dorsets over first cross ewes produced from their self-replacing Poll Merino flock.

Last year's volume buyers over the whole sale were again very prominent. Leon Schwarz, Muston Creek, Hamilton, Vic was accompanied and aided by son Tim and his Landmark agent Robert Lovell in purchasing 32 rams this year at a \$1234 average. In this tally were 23 White Suffolks and nine Poll Dorsets. Muston Creek targets the 24kg and over lamb market on hooks.

However the top volume buyer this year was Bruce Creek, buying for Balquhidder Station, Parawa and KI. Through SAL's Will Nolan they purchased 40 rams at a \$750 average to put a really solid floor in the market. Included in their purchases was one Suffolk, the balance being White Suffolks.

The Funke family added 11 Suffolk rams to their catalogue for the first time, with only three clearing at \$700 each in this debut offering. As producers who favour this breed become aware of their availability the demand should increase in future years.

P & J Clark, Naracoorte was the only other buyer to purchase a double figure of rams, selecting 10 White Suffolks at a \$1050 average. These four main volume buyers collectively purchased 37% of the overall rams sold.

Other prominent buyers included A & M Belluzo, Western Flat (eight rams ave \$750), R Crouch & Co, Kaniva (seven rams ave \$986, TG & D Mulraney, Edenhope (seven rams ave \$914), Karwin Nominees, Field (six rams ave \$1150), TJ, WC & MJ Fiebig, Keith (six rams ave \$1033) and SR & HM Graetz, Willalooka (six rams ave \$817).

Agents: Elders Bordertown & SAL Naracoorte

Auctioneers: Tom Penna and Ronnie Dix (Elders) and Laryn Gogel (SAL)

Sale Summary

White Suffolks

8 of 8 stud rams sold to \$3400 and averaged \$2088

10 of 10 specially selected rams sold to \$2000 and averaged \$1680

191 of 191 flock rams sold to \$2400 and averaged \$1002

Poll Dorsets

2 of 2 stud rams sold to \$1700 and averaged \$1650

10 of 10 specially selected rams sold to \$1700 and averaged \$1440

53 of 64 flock rams sold to \$2000 and averaged \$1267

Suffolks

3 of 11 rams sold at \$700 each

Overall

277 of 296 rams sold to \$3400 and averaged \$1134



Bundara Downs co-principal Greg Funke holds the impressive \$3400 top priced White Suffolk ram at their 20th annual on-property production sale. Also pictured are Elders Bordertown manager Brenton Henriks, SAL manager Laryn Gogel, Naracoorte, purchaser Stuart Staude, Riddick stud, Bordertown and his buying agent Kym Lovelock, Spence, Dix & Co, Bordertown.



The biggest volume buyer at the Bundara Downs ram sale with 40 rams was Bruce Creek, Balquhider Station, Parawa and KI, pictured here during bidding with his SAL buying agent, Will Nolan.



Tim and Leon Schwarz, Muston Creek, Hamilton were very prominent buyers once again at the Bundara Downs ram sale with 32 rams at a \$1234 average. They are pictured with their Landmark agent Robert Lovell and joint sale agent representative Laryn Gogel, SAL Naracoorte.



Ben Stark (2nd left), Stark Grazing, Naracoorte was the dominant volume buyer of Poll Dorset rams at Bundara Downs with 20 at a \$1425 average. He is pictured with Greg Funke, Bundara Downs, his son Sam (9 years), jackeroo Jock Williams, assistant manager Craig Altmann and Elders agent Dean Coddington.



Pictured with the \$2400 second top priced ram at the Bundara Downs ram sale are Elders Bordertown manager Brenton Henricks, purchaser Trevor Pietsch, Bordertown, Ros and Steve (holding ram front) Funke, Bundara Downs and purchaser Kath Pietsch.