

## Leahcim Poll Merinos soar

Another huge crowd was in attendance for the Poll Merino section of the Michael family's 28<sup>th</sup> annual sales at Snowtown last Tuesday.

With 73 registered bidders from five states and a real buzz of excitement coming from the sale shed it augured well for a positive sale outcome. This converted into very active bidding from lot 1 right through to lot 200, resulting in the second best Merino sale average ever seen at Leahcim and in this state of \$2715.

The Landmark selling team of Brian Manuel, Mark Willson and auctioneers Gordon Wood and Richard Miller had no difficulty in attracting bids, but much more difficulty in separating them, such was their rapidity.

At sale's end all 200 rams had cleared to a top of \$17,000 and averaged a wonderful \$2715. While the top was less than half of Leahcim's on-property auction record of \$38,000 received in 2012, and the average was \$274 under their previous highest average of \$2988 (in 2011 for 200 rams), it was the consistency of the strong competition that saw this SA seasonal high average achieved. 69% of the offering sold between \$1500 and \$3500.

Australian Wool Network clients from three states were extremely strong in their support with 70 rams being booked out through AWN.

These included Will Lynch, Boorana Merinos, Woorndoo, Vic who bid via phone hook-up with Rob Williams, AWN Territory manager for the South East region of SA to secure Leahcim 142699 for the sale top of \$17,000. Will has been following this ram's progress since first seeing him on display at the Hamilton Sheepvention.

The impressive 16 month old ram stood out for both phenotype and genotype with the balance of his high accuracy figures from Sheep Genetics being exceptional. Positive for post weaning (6.6) and yearling weight (8.4), fat (0.5) and eye muscle (0.9) his standout measured data placed him at plus 25.0 for yearling clean fleece weight (Merino Industry average 10.1) and plus 24.0 for yearling staple length (industry average 5.4).

With the support of their AWN agents Mark Hedley, Denis Hewitt and Pat McNeill a group of repeat buyers from the Goulbourn region of New South Wales had a huge impact on the sale. Collectively these 11 buying accounts purchased a total of 64 rams, or 32% of the total offering. Most prominent amongst them was Shane Curtis, Livestock manager for 'Kurrajong Park', Coolah with 21 rams from \$800 to \$2800 to be the highest volume buyer. Not far behind was last year's biggest volume buyer, FJ Kelly Trust, Bowning with 15 rams from \$1500 to \$2600.

Stud buying support this year was exceptionally strong, with 18 studs registered to buy, 17 being successful and collectively they purchased 28 rams at a \$4257 average. This was 57% above the overall sale average and has a major influence on achieving such a high overall sale average.

The sale's second top price of \$13,000 was amongst them. Chad Burbridge, bidding for the Superior Wool syndicate saw off the competition to secure L142965, sired by L123153, also the sire of the top

lot. This ram was also very impressive in his balance of performance figures, but added extra muscling capabilities with a breeding value of 1.5 for this trait. The Superior Wool Syndicate paid the Leahcim record of \$38,000 in 2012, their previous Leahcim purchase.

Tim Mulholland, operating for Operina Pty Ltd bid to \$9000 to purchase L143123, another beautifully balanced high performance son of L123153 to be the third highest price.

Repeat clients Paul, Jane and Henry Goerling, Lukin Springs Poll Merino stud, Boyup Brook, WA provided strong competition on these high sellers, but were ultimately successful in purchasing two top youngsters at \$6600 and \$4800.

Todd Michael, livestock manager for 'Murrayfield', Bruny Island, Tasmania took the buying to a fifth state with two purchases of \$4400 and \$3000 for their stud flock, both being from the draft of 32 young 12 month old rams to be offered.

Bert and Barb Woolford, Karawatha Park Poll Merino stud, Kimba purchased six Leahcim rams, paying to \$4200 and averaging \$3033 to be particularly prominent. Other studs participating were Pindari stud, Waterloo (two at \$5000 and \$4600), Pepperwell stud, Keyneton (two at \$5400 and \$2600), Lucernbrae Props, Callington (two at \$4200 and \$3600), Gunallo stud, Pinnaroo (one at \$6000), Calcookara stud, Yabmana (one at \$5000), Nantoura and Yanta studs (one combined at \$7000 and one each at \$4200 and \$4000 respectively), Superior Wool Merinos (one at \$4000), Lone Gum stud (one at \$3000), Pimbena stud (one at \$3400), Borung stud (one at \$2800) and Ramsgate stud (one at \$3000).

A new purchaser who made a significant impact was Max Manefield, livestock manager for Ardenside Angus, Tooma, NSW and purchasing through WISS Melbourne. He purchased 10 rams to \$4000 and at a \$3000 average. The depth of verifiable and high accuracy performance data available on these rams was a big attraction, something he is very familiar with in the Angus cattle breed.

Phillip and Kelsie Foss, John Foss & Co, Bruce Rock, WA were back again, having been prominent buyers for several years. They purchased four rams from \$2000 to \$2600 and like Ardenside they are prepared to travel the distance necessary to get rams of the type Leahcim has with full across industry performance data.

In his pre-sale welcoming address, principal Andrew Michael made special mention of a group of local region clients who have supported Leahcim since inception. These include Peter Ebsary, Barunga Gap and buying through Landmark Clare. Peter purchased nine rams from \$1500 to \$2800 and at a \$2167 average.

RA & SF McLean and Hollywood Pastoral Co, clients with AWN Crookwell group purchased five rams averaging \$1760 and four rams at a strong \$3800 average. Paul Rundle, Rundle Farming, Kulpara (five rams to \$3400 and average \$2960), Brad Jaeschke, ND & AM Jaeschke, Clare (five rams to \$2000 and average \$1400), John and Bronwyn Glenn, Eromunga Trust, Moulamein, NSW (five rams to \$2800 and average \$2540), Chelwood Farming, Clare (four rams average \$2250), AC & H Michael, Quorn (four rams average \$1300), Rob Germein, Pt Vincent (four rams average \$2025) and P & V Molo, Roseworthy (four rams average \$1200) were also prominent buyers.

In thanking all buyers and agents for their support a delighted Andrew Michael said it was a very exciting time to be involved in the sheep industry and through the use of new technology such as Genomics he felt there was no limit on the genetic progress that could be made. He hoped that next year every ram offered at their sale would have been DNA tested and have traceability for all traits.

<b>Sale Summary</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
Offered	200	199
Sold	200	197
Top	\$17,000	\$7400
Average	\$2715	\$2100

Agents: Landmark

Auctioneers: Gordon Wood and Richard Miller



Alistair Michael holds the \$17,000 top priced ram at the Leahcim Poll Merino ram sale. Also pictured are Landmark auctioneers Richard Miller and Gordon Wood and AWN Territory Manager for the South East, Rob Williams who bid on phone connection with the purchaser, Will Lynch, Boorana Merinos, Woorndoo, Vic.

*See more photos over page*



Alistair Michael holds the \$13,000 second top priced ram at the Michael family's Leahcim Poll Merino ram sale. The ram was purchased by the Superior Wool Syndicate, represented here by members Richard Harkness and Chad Burbridge.



Leahcim principal Andrew Michael (centre) is pictured with Western Australian buyers at the Leahcim Poll Merino ram sale; Jane, Paul and Henry Goerling, Lukin Springs, Boyup Brook, and Kelsie and Phillip Foss, Bruce Rock, WA. They purchased six rams in total to go to WA.



Local region buyers who have supported Leahcim for a long time include Peter Ebsary, Barunga Gap (nine rams) and Brad Jaeschke, Clare (five rams). They are pictured post sale while waiting to load their purchases, with Leahcim's Alistair Michael.