

Smashing Leahcim Poll Merinos

Two hundred outstanding Poll Merino rams were presented to prospective buyers at the 27th annual Leahcim Poll Merino ram sale at Snowtown last week and those buyers were certainly appreciative of what they saw. The 12 to 17 month old rams were like peas in a pod; balanced, structurally correct, carrying elite wools with exceptional staple length and good fibre density, and supported by very good Merino carcass data. Every ram had a full set of Sheep Genetics Merino Select breeding values and measurements for 12 different criteria.

In welcoming the huge crowd that contained 79 registered bidders from all states, Leahcim principal Andrew Michael said he was 'blown away' by the dedication and passion of the many repeat buyers he had visited during the year, and was especially buoyed by the depth of knowledge on Merinos Select and Genomics that many livestock agents now had and were assisting their clients with to make better selection choices for their flocks.

The total package of wool, skins and meat combined in functionality and fertility was certainly appreciated, with 197 of the 199 rams that were paraded through the ring rapidly clearing in just under three hours. Auctioneers Gordon Wood (Landmark) and Tony Wetherall (Elders) had no trouble soliciting bids and really only had to separate the competition that remained strong throughout. They topped at \$7400 and averaged an outstanding \$2100.

With a high average there are usually several very high priced animals that contribute to that, but in this case it was built on the middle ground strength of the sale. Forty six rams sold for \$2500 or better of which only four made \$5000 or better. At the other end of the price scale, other than the two that failed to find a buyer, only three sold under \$1000. 74% sold between \$1000 and \$2400.

Stud buying support was strong with 11 studs registered to buy. Eight of these were successful, collectively purchasing 20 rams to keep the heat on at the top end. Robert Hooke, Willera Merinos, Serpentine, Vic was the first to exceed last year's \$5000 top when he successfully bid \$5200 for L133095. He later added L132313 for \$5700.

Stuart Everett, Lone Gum stud, Crystal Brook, SA was pushed to \$6750 for L132769, with outstanding figures across the board, later adding an average breaking youngster for just \$1600. However it was Bruce and Trudy Pengilly, Penrose Poll Merinos, Cascades, via Esperence who topped all bidders when they paid \$7400 for Leahcim 132464. They run 300 stud ewes in their 3500 sheep flock and selected this ram for his outstanding figures across the board, but were particularly attracted by his white, bright and well defined wool. The Pengillys also purchased two others at \$2000 each.

The Goerling family, Lukin Springs Poll Merino stud, Boyup Brook, WA were the unlucky underbidders on the top ram for the second year in a row, but they were able to pick up their second choice for \$4000 on the next lot, bred the same way and with very similar figures. Rounding out the WA buying was repeat volume buyer, Phillip Foss, Bruce Rock, WA, this year selecting seven rams from \$1600 to \$1900.

Other prominent SA stud buyers were Ian and David Rowett, through Elders Roseworthy with rams at \$4400 and \$3800, the Prime family, Nantoura stud, Wharminda (two at \$2500 and \$3800), the Schwarz family, Pindari stud Waterloo (two at \$3000 and \$3800) and the most active of all, the Woolford family, Karawatha Park stud, Kimba (six rams from \$1800 to \$3200).

Richard Bursford, Moonjaree Pastoral Co, through Landmark Cunamulla put Queensland on the buying map with two top rams at \$3200 and \$4000.

An undisclosed Elders Launceston client paid \$4400 and \$2100 for two outstanding 12 month old spring drop, ensuring all states were represented in the buyers' list.

However it was NSW buyers who provided the strongest interstate buying support, with 18 registered buyers from that state. Arguably the keenest of all was Robert Ingram, buying for the family partnership of PK & PR Ingram,

Bombala, NSW. He was in Port Moresby, New Guinea at sale time but connected to the sale via phone to Landmark's Mark Willson to ensure he got the rams he was after. Very strong on the top lots, he purchased seven rams, paying from \$2000 to \$4000 and averaged \$3200.

Australian Wool Network Goulburn agents Mark Hedley, Denis Hewitt and Pat McNeill had five buyers with them, but also orders for many others. Collectively they purchased 53 rams for 14 buying accounts and selected more the next day from Leahcim's private selection rams.

Most prominent amongst them were FJ Kelly Trust, Bowning who were the biggest volume buyers on the day with ten rams from \$1600 to \$2400. Waroo Pastoral, Goulburn with eight from \$800 to \$1400 were also very prominent, as were Markdale Pastoral Co, Binda (seven from \$1100 to \$1600) and Paspaley Pearls Props, Coolah (six from \$1000 to \$1200).

John and Bronwyn Glenn, Eromunga Trust, Moulamein, NSW and buying through Elders, Swan Hill were also prominent NSW buyers with six rams from \$1200 to \$1800.

South Australian commercial buyers were not left behind in the buying stakes with many long time repeat clients prominent in the buying. JF & GM Kuerschner, Orroroo with seven rams from \$1400 to \$2200 was a very strong and consistent buying account, as were PJ & KL Ebsary, Barunga Gap (seven rams from \$900 to \$2200) and AP & DJ Germein & Son, Port Vincent (also seven rams from \$1300 to \$1900). Kanmantoo Pastoral Co, through Elders Strathalbyn with six from \$1100 to \$300 was also a very strong bidder.

The Michael family was ecstatic with the buying support, especially from these loyal commercial locals who have been Leahcim supporters from the inception of the stud.

Sale Summary	2014	2013
Offered	199	197
Sold	197	182
Top	\$7400	\$5000
Average	\$2100	\$1881

Agents: Landmark & Elders

Auctioneers: Gordon Wood & Tony Wetherall

See photos over page



Pictured with the \$7400 top priced ram at the Leahcim Poll Merino sale are (at back) Peter Rolestone (Elders Clare) and Gordon Wood (Landmark Murray Bridge) and in front, Leahcim's Alistair Michael (holding ram) and purchasers Bruce and Trudy Pengilly, Penrose Poll Merinos, Cascades, via Esperence, WA.



Pictured with Leahcim principal Andrew Michael, Snowtown are prominent stud buyers Stuart Everell, Lone Gum, Crystal Brook (two rams to \$6750), David Rowett, Mernowie, Roseworthy, and Robert Hooke, Willera, Serpentine (two rams at \$5200 and \$5700).



Strong and loyal SA buyers from Orroroo pictured after loading their purchases were Brian McNamara, Aramaa Props (three rams to \$3600 and average \$3033), Jim Kuerschner (seven rams to \$2200 and average \$1871) and Simon McNamara (two rams for Taminga at \$2400 and \$3000).



Australian Wool Networks, Goulburn agents Mark Hedley and Denis Hewitt (left) and Pat McNeill (right) are pictured with clients Geoff Ashton, Heather and Kevin Collins, Leahcim principals Andrew and Rosemary Michael, Snowtown and Lynne and Les Hewitt. Collectively this AWN group purchased 53 rams for 11 different buying accounts and selected more the next day, including two more accounts.



Western Australian buyers who were active at Leahcim were David, Maddy and Paul Goerling, Lukin Springs stud, Boyup Brook, WA (one at \$4400 and underbidders on the top ram) and Phillip Foss, Bruce Rock (seven rams to \$1900).



Pictured after the very successful Leahcim Poll Merino sale were John and Bronwyn Glenn, Moulamein, NSW (six rams to \$1800), Jed Keller (at back), Tintinara, Tim and Tam Mulholland, Barham, NSW (one ram at \$2200) and Leahcim principal Andrew Michael, Snowtown.