

Coolawang attains another total clearance

The biggest test for any stud is to achieve a total clearance of the stock it offers in the open market place. This reflects buyer satisfaction for its product. To continue to achieve that year after year is a vote of confidence with exclamation marks.

For Trevor, Judy and Lachie James, their exclamation mark came at last week's annual Coolawang Border Leicester ram sale when they sold their entire 116 ram offering at auction, topping at \$6400.

After last year's extraordinary sale that saw a \$3380 average on stud rams and a \$1748 average on flock rams, the James family was more than a little apprehensive and nervous prior to this year's sale. Their results at the Adelaide Royal, where they again achieved the champion Border Leicester and interbreed longwool ram awards, plus being most successful Border Leicester exhibitor for the third year in a row, certainly endorsed the quality of their sheep, but they had a genuine fear last year's extreme demand and record prices might cause clients to look elsewhere.

Those fears were clearly unfounded and while the average prices were well back on last year in line with lower lamb and sheep prices, the loyal client base were mostly still present and enthusiastic about the quality on offer. They were also joined by a few newcomers.

Buyers were still prepared to pay top prices if pushed for their choice rams, as indicated by a \$6400 high on stud rams, which was \$300 up on last year's top, and also by the \$1600 top for the flock rams which was achieved four times. However, buying averages were able to be lowered though purchases of later lots. Quality wise, these later lots did not suffer in comparison with the earlier lots, but were cheaper through less competition as buying orders were filled. Only two rams in the final 35 made in excess of \$1000.

The biggest volume buyer was long term client Chris England, The Snuggery, Kingston who purchased 15 rams at a great value average of \$747.

One of the sale's strongest top end past supporters was not present this year for reasons other than price, which opened opportunities to other buyers who have competed actively on the top rams.

The \$1600 top in the flock rams was paid four times. Fred Green, JW Green & Sons, Naracoorte was one who appreciated the quality enough to pay the \$1600 top amongst his 6 top rams, purchased at a \$1233 average. The Green family have been long-time Coolawang supporters and very successful sellers at the Naracoorte first cross ewe sale with their progeny.

PS & JA Muecke, buying through Elders Penola purchased 3 top rams at a \$1500 average and included 2 rams at the equal \$1600 top price. Buying through Elders Naracoorte, RG & JK Vogelsang also paid \$1600 ram for one of the two rams they purchased.

Amongst the repeat Coolawang clients who purchased significant numbers were JD & G Kidman, buying through Elders Penola. They picked up 10 rams at a \$760 average, while GM Butler & Sons, through Elders Naracoorte purchased 8 rams at an \$800 average.

D & SJ Decourcy-Ireland from Millicent was a multiple top end ram buyer, successfully bidding on seven rams and paying to \$1400, while Limestone Ridge Estate, Coonawarra paid to \$1500 in purchasing six rams. GT Fisher, buying through Elders Keith went to \$1300 in purchasing 5 rams at an \$1140 average.

Purchasing at Coolawang for the first time was Peter Carslake, Millicent who made an immediate and impacting buying statement. Buying through Dennis Manhood Livestock, he purchased 9 rams from \$800 to \$900 and at an \$878 average.

It was the pointy end of the catalogue; the stud ram offering that started the sale and set it off on the right note. Buyers travelled from NSW and Victoria to compete on the Coolawang rams; a sign that the stud is now receiving due recognition from the stud fraternity.

The first ram offered went for \$2800 to Rick Foster, Haven Park Enterprises, Casterton, Victoria to start the interstate buying. Kevin and Maureen Hamilton, Nerrin Nerrin, Vic and Barry, Doug and Annette Hobson, Burrumbeet, Vic purchased stud rams at \$2300 and \$2600 respectively.

However it was local buyers who paid the top price. Long time Coolawang sale supporters, Martin and Stuart Hann, Nampara Pastoral, Penola outlaid the \$6400 top price for lot 2. This visually appealing triplet son of the 2010 Royal Adelaide Show's champion interbreed long wool ram, Coolawang Victory 090040 was supported by top Lambplan figures culminating in a Border\$ index of 110.1. This ram stood second in his class to Coolawang's supreme long wool ram at this year's Adelaide Royal, with the James family retaining the champion.

The Hann family also paid the second top price of \$4800 for lot 5, another Victory son with great appeal. At the other end of the scale, Anthony Geue, Vanita stud, Kingston got arguably the buy of the day with lot 3 at only \$1500.

The James family has been moving towards offering more of their top stud rams at their on-property sale rather than rely on regional multi-vendor events, but they will still be offering two at Horsham on November 13th this year. These two rams were on display and attracted strong interest and favourable comments from many present.

The seven stud rams averaged a very solid \$3057, down just over \$300 on last year's outstanding result.

Coolawang principal Trevor James was ecstatic with the sale's total clearance result.

"It was great to sell all our rams at good prices, but at a level that was more acceptable for our clients and reflective of current commercial markets," he said.

"Obviously we are thrilled at the vote of confidence clients have given us by returning each year, and in doing so are able to average out their buying prices over the years. With current lower Merino ewe prices, an increasing number of sheep breeders are recognising the opportunity to breed first cross ewes for themselves, or the first cross ewe markets," he added.

Laryn Gogel, auctioneer for the sale agents Elders said, "The line-up was a credit to the James family. It was difficult work cataloguing them three weeks ago, such was the evenness of their quality from lot one right through to lot one hundred and sixteen. The best part is to see the number of repeat buyers who come back here year after year, and they were here again this year too."

Sale Summary	Studs	Flocks
Offered	7	109
Sold	7	109
Top	\$6400	\$1600 x 3
Average	\$3057	\$970

Agents: Elders

Auctioneer: Laryn Gogel



Elders auctioneer Laryn Gogel is with Lachie and Trevor James, Coolawang Border Leicester stud, Mundulla and the ram that they sold for the \$6400 top price at their annual ram sale to the Hann family, Nampara Pastoral Co, Penola.



Coolawang's Lachie James is present while sale sponsor Mark Diprose (right), Virbac Animal Health Territory Manager presents a pack of Multimin trace element mineral injection to Chris England, The Snuggery, Kingston for being the sale's largest volume buyer with 15 rams.