

## MEDIA RELEASE

### White River Dominates Burra Results

At last week's SA Stud Merino Field Days staged at Burra and surrounding Mid North areas, the Eyre Peninsula based White River Merino stud had a 'field day' of their own. In the 3 judging classes held at the Burra Oval on the Monday afternoon, the Daniell family's White River entries achieved a clean sweep of wins.

These wins were for the Rabobank group of 3 rams and 2 ewes, the Elders SA Merino Capital Pair of 1 ram and 1 ewe, and the Elders SA Merino Capital Ram of the Year.

With competition from 31 of the State's leading studs, it is a major achievement for any stud to win one of the classes, let alone all three. Underpinning the White River success was their individual ram winner, White River 434/04, now named 'Commonwealth 34'. The Daniells have been quietly bringing their ram along and knew from very early on in his life that he was something special. He is a son of Collinsville JC&S 001. This sire was purchased privately by White River in conjunction with East Mundulla stud in WA in 2004 for \$40,000.

It is of credit to the Daniells that they recognised the breeding potential in the ram and negotiated this purchase privately. His impact has been exceptional with a significant proportion of the top rams in the stud's annual sale last August also being sired by him.

Commonwealth 34 is a unique ram in that he not only has exceptional length of body, but also a fantastic, well muscled and square hindquarter. Even at this stage of his life, he weighs well in excess of 160kgs and truly displays dual purpose credentials.

Judges on the day were Peter Capel, Bungulla stud, Manilla, NSW, and Alistair Murray, Cappedeede stud, Hallett, SA. Mr Capel described the ram as an absolutely outstanding sheep, and for such a big sheep he had a great coverage of soft handling medium wool. The win was White River's second in a row in the Elders SA Merino Capital Ram of the Year award at Burra.

While the White River ram was the outstanding single animal, the Daniell family would not have been able to win the pair and group without outstanding qualities in its other entries. White River's supporting ewe in the pair did not have the extreme size of the ram, but was still quite big, with outstanding structure and fantastic well nourished medium wool. Mr Capel described the White river group of five as a marvellous line up of sheep with great structure and having an excellent coverage of exceptionally well nourished wool.

A significant reason behind White River's great sale results in recent years has been the exceptional depth and evenness of quality in their offerings, and this was also apparent in their Burra teams. Wes Daniell was ecstatic with White River's success. "While we had a team that we believed could be competitive, you never expect to have this sort of success. To win all three classes is just unbelievable," he said.

The group of 5 class sponsored by Rabobank was a new class this year, with the winners to represent SA in a special class at the World Merino Conference in WA in July.

SA Stud Merino Breeders Association President, Tom Ashby, said it was a very successful field day series for the Merino industry. Attendance was well up on last year, and all participating studs recorded good enquiry, plus a good number of private sales were recorded. No doubt the recent positive price lift in all wool categories has been a significant factor in this lift in buyer confidence.

White River's Wes Daniell holds White River 'Commonwealth 34'; the Daniell family's massive ram that went on to win the Elders SA Merino Capital Ram of the Year award at Burra. He also led the stud's winning teams in the pair and group of 5 class wins.

