

White River storms to stud record average

The 38th Annual White River Merino and Poll Merino ram sale at Poochera was one to be long remembered by the Daniell family with a record breaking average of \$2951 being achieved, up \$540 on last year.

Arguably of greater importance was the fact it rained throughout the sale, with 15mm being recorded from a passing storm front. In a season when only 50mm had been recorded on the property from the end of February to August, this rain brought the August tally up to equal that five month tally and certainly pleased all in attendance, creating a far more positive outlook and mood.

This allowed the crowd, described by senior principal John Daniell as “one of the biggest he can recall” at any of the White River sales, to fully appreciate the outstanding quality line-up of 185 rams penned by the Daniell family. Despite the challenging year the White River rams displayed outstanding growth and carcass development with bodyweights up to 144kg straight out of the paddock and carried appealing bright and well-nourished 20.9 average micron wools.

The only rams given any extra treatment were the top dozen that made up their field day display and show teams at the Hay Sheep Show where they had much success.

While there was arguably ‘room for more cream on top’ for the very best lead-off lots, in the end the evenness of quality was reflected in just how consistent solid the bidding and prices were. They topped at \$13,000 with another two selling at \$12,000, but from there 63% of the offering sold in the \$2000 to \$4000 range. However, there was still great value to be found for those with a lessor budget, or seeking average breakers with 23% selling between \$1000 and \$1900.

Long term White River supporters, The Lindner family, Wonga Pastoral, Morgan paid the \$13,000 top price when David Lindner successfully bid for the first Merino offered at lot 6. Sired by Dominator 143, this ram had outstanding balance, carcass attributes and very appealing wool measuring 20.7 mic, 2.6 SD, 12.6 CV and 99.9 CF. The Hams family, Broadoak stud, Whyte Yarcowie were underbidders, their flock also being rich in White River genetics.

Highly valued by White River, the next Merino ram offered and sired by their top ‘Kaloonera’ son, ‘Kal 1’ then sold for \$12,000 to Nick and Will Wadlow, Old Ashrose, Hallett. This sale offering included sons of two Old Ashrose Poll Merino rams purchased at the Adelaide ram sale in 2015, so selling a top ram into this historic stud was a highlight for the Daniell family.

The top Poll Merino was lot 2, described by auctioneer Gordon Wood as, “a massive carcass ram with elite fibre,” selling for the sale’s equal second top price of \$12,000. Bill Ryan, WF & PC Ryan, ‘Curragh’, Oakley via Hay made the long trip over to purchase the ram he’d seen at the Hay Sheep Show and then quickly departed for the long trip home again.

The first five Merino rams averaged \$8000, while the first five Poll Merino rams that preceded them averaged \$7180. Regular top end buyers at this sale had a little more stud and ram breeder buyer competition this year and with the heat on at the top end, this played out to an average of \$4618 for the first 50 rams and still \$3516 after 100 lots.

Nick Lienert, Oak Farms stud Kimba was strong with three rams (1 Poll Merino and 2 Merinos) to \$7000 and at a \$5333 average. Peter and Alex Stockman, Springvale North stud, Burra paid \$5400 for a top Poll Merino after being underbidders on the \$12,000 top Poll, while Warren Bettie, Mallee Hill stud went to \$5600 for another top Poll Merino.

The Carey family breed their own rams and Paul Carey, Talieka Pastoral, Streaky Bay got a bargain with the lot 1 Poll Merino for just \$7000. Bill Carey, Parla Peak, Streaky Bay then outlaid \$6000 for the fourth Merino offered. The regular top commercial buyers had to go deeper into their pockets, or into the catalogue to get the rams they wanted as a result.

Jindalee and Kappacoola Park, Wudinna purchased four of the best Polls, bidding to \$5200 and averaging \$4650. The Olsen family, Kaira Pty Ltd, Wirrulla were pushed to a \$5500 top and \$4917 for their three top Poll Merinos, while WG Fuss & Sons, Cummins and buying through their SAL North West agent Colin McFarlane blew most of their competition away with the purchase of eight rams (5 Merinos and 3 Polls) to \$5400 and averaging \$4600. They started at lot 8 and had finished their buying just 30 lots later.

In introducing the line-up to the crowd, that included 52 registered bidders from 3 states, Landmark auctioneer Gordon Wood said, "With record profitability in the Merino industry through both meat and wool being at record levels and the outlook for the next decade is very positive, you can bid up with confidence."

Demonstrating that confidence in the future was another long term White River buyer, Jim Fischer from Yanac in Victoria who also had first-hand experience in the profitability they offered. He purchased 10 Merino rams to a \$4400 top and averaged \$3400, then as adviser he purchased another 20 for his travelling partner Darryn Rethus, West Wimmera Beef, who had purchased part of Jim's property and a portion of his flock a few years ago. Darryn's 20, from both drafts were to a top of \$3400 and at a \$2495 average.

"As an example of what these White River rams do for us, we sold our 2016 drop wether lambs back in April just before we started lambing. They went over the hooks through TFI and returned us \$176/head average. We also had two shearings off them first, producing over \$100 of wool value each. That's a pretty healthy return in my book and I'm sure matches anything prime lamb breeds can do, especially when taking the self-replacing flock aspect into calculations," Jim Fischer said.

Also purchasing 20 rams was the Turnbull family. Mark Turnbull, accompanied by sons John and Nigel, bid to \$2600 and averaged \$1940, engaging in numerous bidding duels with Jim Fischer. The Turnbulls are also long term White River supporters and purchase around 20 rams each year for their Cleve based flock.

The Reynolds family, Lairg Station, Sheringa is a big volume user of White River rams, buying many from private selection pens, but selecting from the annual sale if able. Last year they purchased 23 rams at auction for a \$1270 average, but this year they didn't pick up their first purchase until lot 146. Ultimately Peter Reynolds was able to purchase 12 rams at a \$1200 average in the auction.

Julian and Adam Desmazures, Newton Pastoral, Tintinara are also long term regular White River buyers and again made the trip from Tintinara with their Spence Dix & Co agent Luke Schreiber. They purchased 10 rams from both drafts paying to \$3400 and averaging \$2400. John Michael, JW

Michael & Co, Wudinna was strong on the Poll Merino draft and was the only other buyer to hit double figure numbers, also purchasing 10 rams to \$3800 and averaging \$3140.

Max and Brenton Jones, Eba Vale P/L from Darke Peak and Whyalla Norrie went harder on price and softer on numbers this year after purchasing 18 last year. Their eight top rams this year were to \$4800 and at a \$3100 average, 58% higher than they averaged last year.

WL & MB Williams, Elliston jumped in strongly to purchase nine rams to \$2200 and at an \$1844 average, while Craig Wright, SE & DJ Wright & Son P/L, Ceduna averaged \$2933 for six rams, and Boulder Pastoral Co., Pt Kenny averaged \$2400 for their six purchases. Three buyers purchased 5 rams each and another three purchased 4 rams each.

The Daniell family was delighted with the result and thanked their many loyal clients for their support. The terrific lunch, catered for by the Karcultaby School parents raised \$800 for the McGrath Foundation.

Sale Summary

	Overall		Poll Merinos		Merinos	
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
Offered	185	185	128	103	57	82
Sold	185	185	128	103	57	82
Top	\$13,000	\$15,000	\$12,000	\$15,000	\$13,000	\$9000
Average	\$2951	\$2391	\$2854	\$2531	\$3170	\$2217

Sale Agents: Landmark and Elders

Auctioneers: Gordon Wood and Tony Wetherall



This impressive Merino ram topped the White River ram sale at \$13,000 purchased by the Lindner family, Wonga Pastoral, Morgan. Pictured with the ram are Elders auctioneer Tony Wetherall; John Daniell, White River; Conor Lamond, Elders Burra and buying agent for David Lindner, Wonga Pastoral; Landmark auctioneer Gordon Wood and White River's Wes Daniell holding the ram.



White River's Wes Daniell (right) is pictured with key volume buyers who collectively purchased 50 rams. They are Darryn Rethus, West Wimmera Beef, Nhill (20 rams), Jim Fischer, Yanac (10 rams) and John, Mark and Nigel Turnbull, Cleve (20 rams).



John Daniell, White River, auctioneers Tony Wetherall (Elders) and Gordon Wood (Landmark) are with the \$12,000 equal second top priced ram held by Wes Daniell and sold to Nick & Will Wadlow, Old Ashrose stud, Hallett who departed before the sale ended.



John Daniell, White River, Elders Wudinna's Craig Walladge, Landmark auctioneer Gordon Wood and Wes Daniell, holding the \$12,000 top priced Poll Merino in the White River sale that sold to Bill Ryan, 'Curragh', Oakley, via Hay, NSW who left before the sale finished for the long trip home.