

Amazing depth of quality at White River

A big crowd, dominated by repeat clients had a large selection of highest quality Merino and Poll Merino rams at last week's White River ram sale at Poochera. Clearly this was one of the best quality presentations by the Daniell family in their long and highly successful history, this being their 34th annual sale offering and fifth at Poochera.

The 178 rams in the main auction were wonderfully grown and rounded, reflecting the good season and mild winter the area has experienced. In line with most of South Australia the growth and demand at White River has been for Poll Merinos with a larger number of polls being offered for the first time by the Daniell family.

Other than the first 16 rams (five horns and 11 polls), the offering was totally paddock raised. Other than some summer/autumn dust penetration in the wool there was little difference in quality throughout the main auction rams and buyers competed confidently and strongly in appreciation of this depth of quality, 42 of the 50 registered bidders successful in their efforts. In a total clearance, the 178 in the main auction averaged a superb \$1831 while a further 17 mini auction rams also all sold at a \$647 average. Combined the 195 rams averaged \$1728.

The sale commenced with White River's recent "Eyre Peninsula Ram of the Year" winner, their 12th win in a row in this prestigious competition. Arguably one of the very best rams ever offered by White River, this 136kg "Kaldoonera" son went for a relative bargain at \$10,000. With a hindquarter most meat sheep breeds would be proud of and a wonderful free growing, highly defined and long stapled fleece of 18.7 microns and 99.9% comfort factor, this elite sire was purchased by Tony Wetherall, taking phone bids from the principals of Wilgunyah Merinos, Dirranbandi, Qld. However the ram is not totally lost to SA as long term White River clients, Bill and Paul Carey, Chandada, via Streaky Bay negotiated a share in the ram and were delighted to have access to such an outstanding Merino sire for their highly productive flock. Also, White River are retaining semen in the ram for their future breeding program.

While this stud sire was a relative bargain, the depth and consistency of competition on the balance of the offering saw prices at excellent levels from thereon.

Long-time Tumby Bay producers, WG Fuss & Sons, operating through SAL Northwest's Colin McFarlane purchased eight rams to \$6000 and at a \$3963 average. While they snapped up the tops of the Merino line-up, Clint and Troy Olsen, Kiara Pty Ltd, Streaky Bay did likewise with the Poll Merinos, purchasing six to \$5000 (x4) and at a \$4250 average. Pushing the Olsens all the way were Roger and Damian Mullen, Kappacoola Park, who were successful in purchasing five top Poll Merinos to \$4600 and at a \$3900 average.

At the very top of the Poll Merino purchases was Nick Leinert, Oak Farms stud, Kimba. He paid the \$5500 Poll Merino top price for a Ridgway Advance 133 son with a 19.9 micron fleece and 99.7 comfort factor free growing fleece. Nick is building up Poll Merino numbers in his stud breeding program. He later added an outstanding Moorundie Park 400 son, very similar to his top purchase.

Leith Daniell, Bellkanga Pastoral, Minlaton and John Michael & Co, Wudinna were other strong Poll Merino purchasers with four rams to \$4000 and six rams to \$3000 respectively.

While Poll Merinos have experienced increased demand and supply to match, long term Merino buyers still competed very strongly with the 87 in the main auction, averaging \$1195, 19% above the Poll Merino average. Last year, despite a top price considerably lower than the Merino top, the lesser numbers of polls saw them achieve a higher average price.

Ken Maas, WO & RM Maas, Minlaton was very strong in purchasing four top Merinos to \$3600 and at a \$3250 average. Jim and Jay Fischer, Yanac and buying through Elders Horsham purchased six from \$1500 to \$3000 for their highly productive flock, reporting on average 113% lambs marked this year. Talieka Pastoral Co, through Elders Streaky Bay paid to the sale's second highest price of \$7000 in purchasing two top Merino rams. Newton Pastoral, through Spence Dix & Co, Tintinara were back again to secure six from \$1000 to \$2200, while WL & MB Williams & Sons P/L through Elders Cummins purchased seven Merinos from \$1000 to \$1400.

By far the most important White River buyer on the day was John Reynolds, Lairg Station, Elliston and operating through Elders Cummins agent Ben Dickenson. In the main auction they purchased 39 rams (12 Merinos and 27 Poll Merinos), all at \$800. In the mini auction that followed, they added another eight Merinos and six Poll Merinos, including the \$1200 top priced ram in that section of the sale. Their 53 rams in total comprised 27% of the offering and contributed \$42,800 to the sale gross. Their purchasing average of \$808 was at outstanding value considering the evenness of the overall offering.

Also major contributors to the sale's success by purchasing volume were White River regulars DH Turnbull & Co, Cleve (13 rams including 12 Merinos from \$1000 to \$2200) and the Jones family, Eba Vale P/L, Darke Peake (10 rams, six Merinos and four Poll Merinos also from \$1000 to \$2200), both strong advocates for the success of White River genetics in their commercial flocks.

With a greater number of rams offered, principals John and Wes Daniell were exceptionally pleased with the overall result, especially as it gave Poll Merino buyers a greater selection at better value.

Sale Summary	Main Auction Merinos		Poll Merinos		Mini	Overall	
	2013	2012	2013	2012		2013	2012
Offered	87	110	91	71	17	195	181
Sold	87	110	91	71	17	195	181
Top	\$10,000	\$16,000	\$5500	\$4800	\$1200	\$10,000	\$16,000
Average	\$1995	\$2107	\$1674	\$2158	\$647	\$1728	\$2127

Agents: Elders

Auctioneers: Craig Shearer & Corey Friebel

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White River principals John (left) and Wes Daniell (right) are with the \$10,000 top priced ram at the White River sale; Elders Tony Wetherall, who purchased the ram via phone hook-up for Wilgunyah Merinos, Dirranbandi, Qld and Bill and Paul Carey, Chandada, via Streaky Bay in partnership; and Elders auctioneer Craig Shearer.



White River principals John (left) and Wes Daniell (right) are with the \$5500 top priced Poll Merino at the annual White River ram sale and purchaser Nick Leinert (second right), Oak Farms, Kimba and his sheep manager Tom Bailey.



White River principal John Daniell is pictured with the key volume buyer at the White River ram sale, John Reynolds, Lairg Station, Elliston and his Elders agent Ben Dickenson, Cummins.



Clint (left) and Troy Olsen (right), Kiara Pty Ltd, Streaky Bay were prominent Poll Merino buyers at the White River sale, purchasing six rams at a \$4250 average. They are with White River co-principal Wes Daniell.



Prominent repeat buyers at the annual White River ram sale were Leith Daniell, Bellkanga Pastoral, Minlaton (four to \$4000), Ken Maas, Minlaton (four to \$3600) and Steve and Graeme Fuss, Tumbay Bay (eight to \$6000).



Victorian repeat buyers Jay and Jim Fischer, Yanac, via Horsham were back and bidding strongly at the annual White River sale. They purchased six Merinos to \$3000 for their very successful Wimmera sheep flock.



White River principal Wes Daniell (right) is with Roger and Damian Mullan, Kappacoola Park, Streaky Bay after the successful White River sale. The Mullan family purchased five top Poll Merinos to \$4600.



