

Elite performance behind Woolumbool success

Evenness, consistency and reliability may not be the most exciting catchphrases but they are the basics behind the elite performance levels and increased productivity that regular commercial Woolumbool clients have come to appreciate and admire for many years.

At the Clothier family's 29th annual on-property Poll Dorset and White Suffolk ram sale there was a certain comfort in seeing so many regular faces sitting in their usual seats ready to purchase their ram requirements. That comfort is increased to excitement when the regulars are joined by a number of producers new to Woolumbool as was the case this year.

That translated into a wonderful sale result when 186 Poll Dorset and White Suffolk rams from an offering of 189 averaged \$1369, up \$85 on last year's outstanding sale result.

There is nothing artificial about the Woolumbool rams; being totally paddock reared and subjected to every available performance measurement including worm resistance. This has been the Clothier family's selection policy since the inception of their stud breeding enterprise and consequently Woolumbool has 'Gold' quality data status under the Sheep Genetics Lambplan testing system, indicating elite performance levels with high accuracies. The sale catalogue shows a vast number of shaded figures, identifying those in the top 10% nationally for the various traits and indices. Only 13 of the offering did not have any shaded figures, yet they were all still well above industry averages.

Three specially selected elite Poll Dorset rams and 10 elite White Suffolks were offered first. Scott McIntyre, Warrangure via Dunkeld is a regular Woolumbool supporter and made the most of this top opportunity. He purchased W151287, the top priced Poll Dorset for \$2600, then added the top White Suffolk, W151664 for \$3100. He then purchased another White Suffolk elite ram for \$2100, these three rams having Carcase Plus indices of 212, 216 and 202 respectively.

Four alternating drafts of Poll Dorset and White Suffolk flock rams followed and just like the evenness of the rams, the demand and prices were also very similar right through the sale. The 95 White Suffolks all cleared at a \$1377 average, while 91 of 94 Poll Dorsets averaged \$1362. A majority of the offering were spring 2015 drop, being not much over 12 months of age.

Nangwarry Pastoral Co, operating through P & L Livestock was the biggest volume buyer, selecting 28 rams from both breeds; paying to a top of \$1100 and averaging a supremely good value \$868.

Mike Newton, Miller Whan & John's Kingston agent has been supporting this sale since inception with some of his clients and two in particular continue to stand out. RL Hancock & Sons were very strong in the Poll Dorset draft in particular, purchasing 14 rams to \$1700 and averaging \$1514. All bar one were Poll Dorsets. Oliver Nominees selected eight rams, all from the White Suffolk drafts, paying to \$1900 and averaging \$1563.

The Bruce family, Boonoonar Partners and buying through Landmark Kingston was also a very strong volume buyer, purchasing 14 Poll Dorset rams to \$1800 and at a \$1511 average. I & P Hocking, through Elders Lucindale purchased 10 White Suffolks at a \$1260 average, selecting high performance levels at very good value.

Also prominent on the buyers list were repeat clients Peel Pastoral through Landmark Naracoorte (eight from \$1000 to \$1700); Struan Research Centre through PPH & S (six rams to \$1500); Hassell Trading through TDC Penola (six rams to \$1600); Stark Grazing through Elders Naracoorte (seven Poll Dorsets to \$1900); TH & YA Correll through Landmark Naracoorte (six rams to \$1700); RJ Williams through Elders Naracoorte (six rams to \$1700); and BS & DA Milstead through O’Conner & Graney (six rams to \$1900).

Sale Summary

	Poll Dorsets		White Suffolks		Overall	
	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015
Offered	94	93	95	101	189	194
Sold	91	90	95	98	186	188
Top	\$2600	\$2000	\$3100	\$3200	\$3100	\$3200
Average	\$1362	\$1264	\$1377	\$1311	\$1369	\$1284
Agents	Landmark and Elders					
Auctioneers	Gordon Wood and Richard Miller (Landmark) and Tony Wetherall (Elders)					



Pictured after the Clothier family’s great Woolumbool ram sale are Aaron Clothier with son John; Scott McIntyre, Dunkeld, purchaser of the top priced rams in both breeds and holding the \$3100 White Suffolk ram; Jason Clothier hold the \$2600 top priced Poll Dorset ram; while Elders auctioneer Tony Wetherall, Landmark auctioneer Gordon Wood, and senior Woolumbool principal Phil Clothier look on from the selling dais.



Miller Whan & John's Kingston based agent Mike Newton (2nd right) is pictured with representatives from two of his key client accounts who operated strongly at the Woolumbool sale. They are Andrew & Hugo (front) Pilmore, operating for Oliver Nominees (8 White Suffolks); & Josh and Wayne Hancock (13 Poll Dorsets and 1 White Suffolk).