

Kurralea sets new National record

A new national and on-property auction sale record for the Poll Dorset breed was set at the Prentice family's annual Kurralea ram sale at Ariah Park last week, where bidding rocketed to \$28,000 for Kurralea 110011.

In partnership with absent buyers Clayton and Andrea Rowett, Ulandi Park Poll Dorset stud, Marrabel, SA, Victorian brothers Grant and Bryce Hausler were on a mission to secure this lot one ram in the Kurralea Poll Dorset offering for their Janmac Poll Dorset stud at Goroke.

The ram, which was recently awarded the grand champion Poll Dorset ram title at the Adelaide Royal Show attracted rapid fire bidding with at least four prospective buyers competing to purchase him.

The April-drop ram was one of 14 sons in the sale by Ulandi Park 080185, the supreme champion ram at the 2009 Melbourne Royal Show.

As well as being brilliant for phenotype, the ram also had excellent and balanced Lambplan figures of +12.7 for post weaning weight (PWWT), -1.0 for fat (Pfat), and +1.0 for eye muscle depth (Pemd).

Grant Hausler said they had their sights set on buying the "exceptional" ram after seeing him at the Adelaide Royal and more recently the Australasian Dorset Championships at Bendigo.

The recent downturn in the commercial prime lamb market didn't deter the partnership members from spending up on sale day with Grant Hausler saying they "paid what the ram was worth".

"Now is the time to invest in genetics to improve our flock and take it to the next level," Mr Hausler said. The Hauslers also invested in Kurralea 110452 for \$4000 several lots later.

Clayton Rowett said "The ram is just one of those standout rams that comes along only once in a while."

"We were looking for a top son of our Melbourne champion that we sold to Kurralea in 2009, and we certainly found one here. He is just too good in all facets of our selection criteria not to try to buy him, but we figured from the amount of interest in him that we may need help, so formed the partnership with the Hausler family, whom we highly respect. We are all delighted to have secured him and it is probably fitting that it took a national breed record to do so," he added.

It takes a strong underbidder to make a price like this and it was another partnership made up of a trio of studs led by Daryl Dixon, Ashbank Poll Dorset stud, Dubbo that pushed all the way to the new record, yet still missed out. Daryl gained some compensation when he was successful in purchasing another UP 080185 son,

Kurralea 110456 for \$5500 at lot 8.

The \$28,000 record breaker buoyed the average of Kurralea's Poll Dorset stud ram offering to \$3032, with all 33 selling at auction for a gross of \$100,050.

The \$28,000 price not only eclipsed the previous on-property record of \$26,000 set at Kurralea's 2005 on-property sale, but also the \$27,500 national breed record set way back in 1983 at the Melbourne Royal by the Allendale stud.

Kurralea stud principal Ben Prentice said they were over the moon with the price and it was beyond their expectations.

"We hoped he would sell well as he was the Adelaide Royal champion and there had been quite a lot of interest in him, but you can never be sure what will happen until sale day," he said.

Mr Prentice said the ram was a very correct, well-muscled and long, yet very well balanced for a ram of its size.

"A lot of rams can get to that weight but for them to be so correct and well balanced at that size is what made him a standout; he's offers the total package really," he said. Kurralea will retain a semen share in the ram for their own in-flock use.

Chris Skeer, Millicent, SA went to the second top Poll Dorset price of \$6000 in securing K110287 for another UP080185 son, while Max Whyte & Gail Cremasco, Brimfield stud, Kendenup, WA paid \$5500 for K110333, a K070542 son.

Rounding out the higher Poll Dorset buyers was Ted Rumler, Valed Poll Dorset stud, Leigh Creek, Vic who paid \$5000 for K11 0314, then picked up two bargains, K110376 for \$1500 and K110215 for \$1800.

Following the Poll Dorset stud rams was Kurralea's 16 White Suffolk stud ram offering. These sold to a top of \$7000 and in another total clearance, averaged \$2322.

The \$7000 top-priced White Suffolk ram was bought by Trent Adams, manager for the Chatsworth House property, from Hamilton, Vic.

The July 2011-drop ram weighed 130.5kg and had figures of +15.1 for PWWT, -1.4 for Pfat and -0.5 for Pemd.

The ram was the reserve junior champion White Suffolk ram at the White Suffolk Elite Show at Bendigo in mid-September.

Chatsworth House have bought flock rams from Kurralea for the past six years, but this was the first time they had bought a stud ram for seedstock breeding purposes.

"We bought a stud ram to use for breeding our own composite rams," Mr Adams said. They also picked up a back-up ram in K110290.

Chatsworth House runs 8000 to 9000 composite ewes, and also has Composite and

Southdown studs. The Chatsworth House Composites are 70pc White Suffolk, 20pc East Friesian and 10pc Border Leicester. Their composite rams are primarily sold to producers in the Hamilton district, while their prime lambs are sold direct to Woolworths.

This Kurralea White Suffolk ram will be joined to their medium framed Composite stud ewes in January/February.

Other top White Suffolk stud ram sales included K110250 to Conaparia White Suffolks at Rankins Springs, NSW for \$5250, plus K110204 for a bargain \$1400; and D & W Duffy, Tumberumba, NSW who paid \$5000 for K110256.

While the stud sections of the sale were strong, clearing the large volume of Poll Dorset and White Suffolk flock rams that were offered proved to be a little harder. Once commercial breeders filled their immediate needs, competition dropped and some of the later pens of the available flock ram lots were initially passed at auction. This was very much in line with most prime lamb breed ram sales in NSW in recent weeks.

At auction, 117 Poll Dorset flock rams sold to \$1400 and averaged \$909. Of the White Suffolk flock rams, 83 sold under the hammer for a top of \$1400 and averaged \$923.

However, over the whole sale, 249 rams sold at auction for an average of \$1286, grossing \$320,200.

The major flock ram buyer was James Osborne, manager for FS Falkiner's Burrabogie Pastoral Company, Deniliquin. A strong and long term supporter of Kurralea genetics, he bought a mix of 57 White Suffolk and Poll Dorset flock rams, paying to a top of \$1100 to average out his buying at \$914.

The McDonald brothers, Condobolin bought 10 rams to a top of \$1000 and at a \$940 average to also be important commercial buyers.

The large cross section of buyers travelled from SA, Victoria and NSW with strong representation from the Riverina.

The sale was conducted by Glasser Total Sales Management (GTSM) and Elders, with auctioneering duties shared by Michael Glasser (GTSM), and Andy McGeoch and Joe Wilks from Elders.