

Success & Sadness at Kurralea

In a very fitting tribute to a great studmaster, the Kurralea Poll Dorset and White Suffolk studs produced their best ever sale result last Tuesday at Aria Park, NSW. Principal Jim Prentice sadly passed away on the Friday before the sale after a short battle with cancer.

However buyers from 5 states rallied to make this sale one not to be forgotten for a long while. 369 rams were offered and all sold for a fantastic average of \$1,478.59, producing a sale gross of \$545,600. This is only the second meat sheep sale nationally that has exceeded \$500,000, the other being the Kurralea 2005 sale when 378 head averaged \$1,404 and grossed \$530,725. In that sale it was the extraordinary strength of the Poll Dorset stud ram offering that was the backbone of the result, but this year's sale had strength in every section of the sale, especially the flock rams, where 321 flock rams in the 2 breeds averaged an amazing \$1,159.

A decade of drought has taken its toll on buyer confidence until this year, with the area having a wonderful season. In the stud ram offering of 38 Poll Dorsets and 10 White Suffolks, it was South Australian breeders who took home the top priced rams in both breeds. Poll Dorsets commenced the sale and the Adelaide Royal Junior Champion Poll Dorset ram, K090626 attracted a lot of pre sale interest which transferred into strong bidding. Bruce Willison and stud manager Peter Williams, Kreeside Poll Dorsets, Mt Pleasant, SA eventually won a dogged bidding duel with Max Whyte, Brimfield stud, Kendenup, WA, to secure this fantastic young sire for \$18,000. This ram was sired by K070542, the 2008 Melbourne Champion ram. Mr Willison also bought K090279, the only Kurralea Pure Gold son in the catalogue, for \$4,500.

The second top Poll Dorset stud ram price was \$7,500, purchased by repeat buyers, the Hausler family, Janmac stud, Goroke, Vic. This was for K090328, a son of the 2008 Adelaide interbreed champion ram K070143.

The Adelaide 2010 Poll Dorset champion ram went for a bargain \$5,500 to Alistair Sutherland, Konongwootong, Vic, bidding through LMB Linke Livestock; again proving the first lot is often the cheapest.

Repeat buyers made significant middle ground sales and these included Verge Pastoral, Euroa (\$7,000), Leigh Clifford, Gowan Brae stud, Millicent (\$6,500), Bramwell Heazlewood, Melton Vale, Whitmore, Tas (\$6,500) and John Pepper, Murdown stud, Tahara, Vic (\$6,000).

The 38 Poll Dorset stud rams averaged a very solid \$3,420; 57% up on the 2009 average of \$2,175.

In the White Suffolks, the lead ram was again a bargain, being snapped up by Marjo & Rick Swart, Childers, Vic for only \$2,500.

Steve and Ros Funke, Bundara Downs, Bordertown, SA and bidding via phone through Elders Aria Park agent Darren Jackson were the purchasers of the top priced White Suffolk ram at \$13,500, paying this for K090303, a wonderfully balanced, long and high performance son of Detpa Grove 060520. This is a Kurralea record for a White Suffolk ram. Underbidders were Ashley Symons and his PPH&S agent Shaun Minge, bidding for the Symons family's Pembroke stud, Telangatuk East, Vic. They were then pushed to \$11,000 before securing their second choice ram, K090244, an impressive high performance son of K040257.

Phil Graham, Doorland White Suffolks, Mt Napier, Vic was pushed to \$6,500 for K090235, another top son of DG060520.

The 10 White Suffolk stud rams averaged an impressive \$4,475, well over double last year's \$2,013 average.

The first run of 110 impressive Poll Dorset flock rams followed the stud ram offering and with the confidence emanating from a great season, they sold like hot cakes. Again the better credentialed early lots proved to be the cheapest as buyers were initially a little hesitant while the sale found its price level. The top priced Poll Dorset flock ram at \$1,700 was 72 lots into the offering, with competition increasing as buyers realised they'd have to raise their sights if they were to get their preferred numbers. This first run averaged \$1,225, with 19 of the first 20 rams selling below this figure.

The 110 White Suffolk flock rams followed and these were in even stronger demand. Only 1 ram sold under \$1,000 and while the top of \$1,600 was less than the Poll Dorset top, they averaged a tremendous \$1,255. This was higher

than last year's White Suffolk top. The sale concluded with the last run of 101 Poll Dorsets and it was not until well into the run that some of the bigger buying orders were filled and competition dropped back a little. From 321 flock rams only 50 sold under \$1,000 and all but 2 were in the last 64 offered. The overall Poll Dorset flock ram average was \$1,109.

James Osborne, representing FS Falkiner & Sons, Deniliquin, NSW has been a wonderful supporter of the high performance Kurralea rams and this year was no exception. They purchased 84 Poll Dorsets and 49 White Suffolks to put a tremendous backbone in the sale.

Angus Girle, representing Fletcher International Exports was also a strong repeat buyer, purchasing 11 Poll Dorsets and 18 White Suffolks.

Chatsworth House, Chatsworth, Vic purchased 20 rams in all; 10 of each breed including the \$1,600 top priced White Suffolk ram.

These 3 buyers accounted for 50% of the flock ram catalogue.

Springbank Unit Trust, Yass picked up 19 Poll Dorset rams, including the \$1,700 top priced flock ram.

The auctioneers, Michael Glasser, James Tierney and Warrick Barrett did a wonderful job in keeping this marathon sale moving along.

Sale Summary

Stud rams	Poll Dorsets	2010	2009	White Suffolks	2010	2009
Offered		38	28		10	8
Sold		38	28		10	8
Top		\$18,000	\$8,250		\$13,500	\$4,000
Average		\$3,420	\$2,175		\$4,475	\$2,013
Flock rams	Poll Dorsets	2010	2009	White Suffolks	2010	2009
Offered		211	193		110	93
Sold		211	193		110	93
Top		\$1,700	\$1,200		\$1,600	\$1,200
Average		\$1,109	\$854		\$1,255	\$906

Agents: Elders Wagga Wagga



Ben Prentice holds the \$18,000 top priced Poll Dorset ram from the Kurralea sale while purchaser Bruce Willison, Kreeside stud, Mt Pleasant, SA (2nd left), his stud manager Peter Williams and Kurralea's Kim Printice look on.



Ben Prentice holds the \$13,500 top priced Kurralea White Suffolk ram with his wife Lucy, daughter Maya and Darren Jackson (left), Elders Aria Park who bought via the phone for buyers Steve & Ros Funke, Bordertown, SA.



Pictured with the \$11,000 White Suffolk ram which was the 3rd top price overall are buyer Ashley Symons, Pembroke stud, Telangatuk East, Vic, his PPH& S agent Shaun Minge, and Lucy and Ben Prentice, Kurralea, Ariah Park, NSW.