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Woodpark Merino • Woodpark Poll

Three successive wins at Condobolin

When Ian and Jane Menzies and their family were awarded the prestigious Don Brown Memorial Merino Ewe competition for the Condobolin district in February it was their second win in a row – and the third win in a row for a Woodpark blood flock in the competition.

As well as winning in 2014 and 2013, the Menzies placed third when the McDonald family's Woodpark blood flock won in 2012.

The result was turned around last year when the Menzies "Moonbah" flock was first and the McDonalds "North Condobolin" flock was third. The Moonbah flock was classed by Michael Elmes and the North Condobolin flock by Stuart Hodgson.

The Land this week reported the Menzies were only the third operation to win twice in a row in the 34 year history of the competition.

The Land also reported judge Tim Dalla, Collinsville stud noted a continuing improvement in type and quality in the area's flocks. The Land reported Mr Dalla said he "liked the ewes' size, balance and wool cut".

Co-judge Cameron Ritter, Dunumbral Stud, Collarenebri, said the display was a beautiful line of commercial ewes "big, bold and beautiful with plenty of wool on them".

"Classer Michael Elmes, "Moonbah", Narrandera, said the Woodpark blood flock lambs were dropped in July/August 2012 and were shorn in August last

There were 419 lambs altogether, with 286 being retained after classing,"The Land reported.

About 150 people attended the two days to visit 16 entries. Greg Alcock, Greenland stud, Bungarby, was associate judge.

Condobolin flocks lead region

THE environment across which the Merino industry spans were well represented in the Central Western Merino Ewe Competition, now in its 14th year. Organisers and followers alike Organisers and followers alike regard this prestigious competition as a "grand final" from winners and runners-up of three maiden ewe competitions – Trundle's Ted Little; Parkes Merino ewe fixture and Condobolin's two-day Don Brown

Condobolins trur-usy keen event.
What's more, the growing conditions and environment of each are significantly different – Trundle and Parkes attract commercial flocks of mixed farming and cropping country as well as dedicated wool growers on the slopes while Condobolin district flocks are an important sideline to larger cereal cropping ventures.

sideline to larger cereal coopping-ventures. However, what pulls these groups and breeding enthusiasts together is quality wood production, and that fact was borne out by 2012-drop maden ewes of lan and Jane Menzies, "Moonbah", Condobolin, which won the Don Brown and went on to be-come the central west champions.

The Menzies had won the Don Brown for the second consecutive year with their Woodpark blood flock which lambs in July/August and is shorn in August and with classing carried out by Michael Elimes, Narrandera.

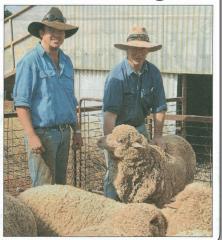
Second placing went to the Ted Little competition winners Mat and Korina Aveyard for their 2012 drop maiden ewes which were bred at "Plevna West", Trundle and are of Plevna blood.

The Aveyard flock lambs in July/August, are shorn in June and are classed by Mat's brother, Boydie Aveyard, Trundle.

Winning the "runners-up" flock competition was the Helyar family's Koyuna Pastoral Company, "Koyuna", Tullibigeal, which was placed second in the Don Brown fixture.

The Koyuna flock of Belswick-

■ Visit www.theland.com.au for more information and onlin videos.





The Menzies family's "Moonbah" ewes.

BEST OF THE BEST WITH CENTRAL WEST EWE COMPETITION WINNERS

Seemingly not content with back to back wins in the highly regarded Don Brown Memorial Merino Ewe Competition at Condobolin, Ian and Jane Menzies, "Moonbah" Condobolin, Woodpark blood flock took the ultimate flock ewe prize this year. Their flock, classed by Michael Elmes, won the "Champions League" of ewe competitions on Thursday (February 27) when it was named the overall winner of the NSW Central West Ewe Competition.

The award is presented to the best flock of the winners and runner-ups of the major ewe competitions through central NSW. It's a major accolade and an incredible compliment to the Menzies management, particularly in a year when all the competitions have been reported as being among some of the best years for the competitions.

The Menzies sheep came through in the award for the best of the winning ewe flocks from the other Central NSW ewe competitions, as reported in The Land.

Drawing a picture with ASBVs

During a decade of producing our own in-flock benchmarking and ranking progeny of our own rams against progeny of selected external link sires we have also been building up information about our sheep in the Sheep Genetics database.

Last year we sent the testing data for the entire 2012 Poll drop of 2500 rams and ewes, which was our largest delivery of information to the database. This added to the data compiled on our bloodline and individual sires in previous years.

This year we have added the information from the 2013 drop. With the information provided from our link sire usage this is delivering valuable information.

For the 2013 drop we Aled a high performance leading sire in the industry that has a great deal of progeny on the data base. His progeny run under the same conditions at home gave us even more insight to the performance of our own rams, thus giving us great linkage to our performance in the industry. All this data is revealing some pleasing information. The 2013 drop rams have performed as follows:

- 108 rams trait leaders for fleece weight (YCFW) and 437 or 64% of drop performing in top 30pc.
- 68 rams trait leaders for growth (YWT) and 314 or 46 per cent of drop in top 30pc.
- 110 rams trait leaders for Merino Production (MP) index
- 350 rams (51%) of the drop were in the top 30pc of the MP index

 A total of 665 of our sale ram team – almost our entire auction and grade sale team - are above the database industry average in the MP (Merino Production) index.

This year we also added eye muscle and fat cover measurements for our leading 260 rams.

Of those 260 rams, 160 performed in the top 30pc of industry for eye muscle (EMD) and 103 topped 30pc for positive fat.

In all two thirds -66pc - of rams tested had positive fat, a great trait that has a positive correlation with number of lambs weaned (NLW) – ie ewes are providing more colostrum leading to higher lamb survivability.

Those traits are important because of those correlations and they talk about the traits we need to breed profitable sheep.

Positive fat also has significant correlation with higher conception rates, greater staple strength and length, and shows generally a ewe with more resilience to the seasonal vagaries.

We started doing ASBVs to give people the ability to select for the traits they need, measured in an independent way. This information shows the flock's balance, performing well in the traits the industry needs at the moment – growth, fleece weight, eye muscle, fat.

This information is layered with information from other sources, including sire evaluations, ewe competitions and wether competitions, which develops a picture of our bloodlines for others and gives us information to have in mind when assessing the physical attributes of our sheep.

Woodpark sale 2013

- By Cara Jeffery, The Land - Thursday, September 26, 2013



The decision to offer an extra 15 rams proved to be the right one for Woodpark Poll Merino principals Stephen and Carol Huggins at their annual sale at Jerilderie showground on Monday.

Initially they had 120 rams catalogued but client demand saw them bolster the sale ledger to 135 rams which resulted in 134 rams sold under the hammer for a top price of \$4500 to average \$1807.

The top price of \$4500 was paid by first time Woodpark Poll buyer Rod Miller, Glenpaen Merinos, Brimpaen near Horsham.

The ram, WP326, was sired by Woodpark Poll 10-0015 – the stud's leading 2010-drop ram – and had a fibre diameter of 17.6-micron, standard deviation (SD) of 2.6 micron, coefficient of variation (CV) of 14.8 per cent and comfort factor of 99.7pc.

Mr Miller, who has been breeding Poll Merinos for four years, said he had been looking for a good Poll Merino ram for a while, and one that would be suitable to join to maiden ewes in early December.

He selected the ram for its structure and its safe wool type for his heavy rainfall area.

"It is pretty unforgiving country for wool growing, so we need suitable wools to handle the wet," Mr Miller said.

Volume buyer Burrupa Partnership, Tatyoon, Vic, paid to \$3800 for six rams that averaged \$3117.

The ram Burrupa Partnership bought for \$3800 had a fibre diameter of 21.1-micron, SD of 3.3-micron, CV of 15.2pc and CF of 99.3pc.

Major buyer was Brynavon Pty Ltd, Callawadda, Vic, which secured 17 rams for a top price of \$3400 for an average of \$2024.

The Walters family, Middleview Merinos, Dalgety, bought two rams for \$3000 and \$2600.

Rowan and Sarah Houston, "Budgewah", Hay, secured six rams for a top of \$2900, twice, to average \$2400.

Michael and Jane Corkhill, Grassy Creek Merinos, Reids Flat, bought two rams for \$2800 and \$2000.

D.J. Boland and J.L. Peavey, Giffard, Vic, purchased seven rams to \$2700 for an average of \$2057.

L.J and A.J. Gunn, "Dalriada", Holbrook, bought seven rams to \$2500 for an average of \$1543.

A cross-section of stud and commercial buyers from NSW, South Australia and Victoria competed for rams.

The sale was conducted by Elders and Landmark with Ron Rutledge and Peter Godbolt sharing auctioneering duties.



Woodpark wethers go to school



Stephen Huggins and students at Yanco Agricultural High School with Woodpark blood wethers the students will be using in their schools wether challenge entry at Dubbo this August.

We have been really thrilled to have Agriculture students from Yanco Agricultural College in the Riverina use four teams of Woodpark blood wethers in their learning programs.

The students will use the wethers for their entries in Schools Wether Challenge at the Rabobank National Merino Show & Sale at Dubbo on August 23.

The Year 9 & 10 Animal Management Challenge class will be responsible for caring for and preparing the wethers for the challenge which will be judged on wool and meat value.

Yanco Agricultural College Animal Management teacher – and passionate Merino producer - Ellie Quinn coordinated the wethers' delivery and will oversee their future management.

The students really have a reputation for cosseting their animals and the wethers will no doubt thrive for the few months in the students' care.

It is a privilege to be able to help the students out and we are looking forward to seeing the results of their work in a few months.

Meanwhile, Stephen was the Over Judge at the school's Merino Junior Judging at its Open Day in March.

The students are keen participants in junior judging competitions at local and royal shows and frequently come home decorated in ribbons for their efforts.

Stephen really enjoyed spending time with the students and helping them build their skills in sheep assessment through the competition. The eventual winner was Lawson Thomas of Mulwala.

CUTTINGS

EDUCATION ON THE SLATE

The education theme continued at Woodpark in May, when we hosted final year agriculture students from Charles Sturt University on May 15.

The students inspected a sample of our 2013 drop rams and maiden ewes and Stephen discussed our management and breeding techniques. He explained how we use both physical assessment and other available information including ASBVs and genetic information to complement each other in breeding and selection decisions.

The students were also interested in the impact of biosecurity issues and wider commodity markets on management and the business.

The visit was part of an annual tour of different sheep breeding operations by the students.

NUTRITION NOTES FOR KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

Our information sharing and networking group the Woodpark Knowledge Network hosted leading animal specialist San Jolly at a workshop at Woodpark Poll's home base at Eurolie, east of Hay on May 16.

We invited San, co-principal of South Australia's Productive Nutrition to visit and speak with clients after Stephen attended a workshop she spoke at in Hay last year.

One of the key messages that we took away from the Hay workshop was that there was little advantage for us in terms of feed conversion benefits to a shorter than usual shearing interval.

The talk at Eurolie San's message reaffirmed that prem shearing doesn't influence ewe body weight after shearing.

We felt the information was so valuable we wanted to offer our clients and neighbours the chance to access it.

San discussed the different types of feed and their varying actions to an engrossed audience. Discussions included calcium lock up in sheep pre lambing. The informal nature of the workshop meant the participants were easily able to tap into San's knowledge.

The information was powerful and San's easy no-fuss delivery and broad knowledge on any topic made it easy to absorb. She backed up her discussion with research and reports, delivering excellent quality independent information.

Several people said they could see how the information would both save money and add returns to their sheep program.

WOODPARK SHEEP GO WEST

This year we travelled to Broken Hill for its big AgFair field day and the Wilcannia field day for the first time, at the suggestion of local clients.

The AgFair field day is a fantastic day for livestock producers. Held every two years it usually attracts a crowd of several thousand local landholders and community members with its focus almost totally on livestock production and pastoral production.

The event saw some welcome wet weather and visitors were interested and focused in their discussions. We really enjoyed seeing the region and speaking with people so dedicated to livestock production and thoroughly enjoyed the two day event.

In a similar vein we also took a small display of rams to the Wilcannia field day on the June long weekend. Although only small and in its second year it was again an interesting trip to a region which has had a very variable season, some parts of the area really missing out on rain again.

ANNUAL RAM SALE MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 130 POLL MERINO RAMS

800 MERINO & POLL MERINO RAMS
AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE SELECTION IN DAYS FOLLOWING OUR RAM SALE

TEMO	RA SIRE EVALUATION RESULTS. SPI	AMSEA Indexes Values				
Ram Code	Breeders Flock, Ram Number	No. of Progeny	Fibre Production +	Merino Production +	Dual Purpose +	F10% + SS
#1	****	11	95	105	98	105
2	****	22	102	108	107	108
#3	****	11	n/a	92	88	n/a
4	Woodpark Poll, 100015	22	109	108	111	109
5	*****	29	104	106	108	101
6*	Link Sire	24	100	100	103	99
7	****	27	101	100	93	103
8	****	22	104	89	91	93
9**	****	26	97	106	103	104
10	****	29	90	94	105	85
	Average performance	22	100	100	100	100

WOODPARK POLL'S 10-015 TOPS EVERY INDEX AT TEMORA SIRE EVALUATION

Our sire Woodpark Poll 10-015 had a wonderful result when his progeny were assessed in the independent Temora Sire Evaluation results released late in 2013.

The ram topped every index of the sire evaluation at Temora, amongst company representing some of Australia's major studs and sires.

The indexes were Fibre Production +, Merino Production +, Dual Purpose +, F10%+SS

The evaluation is conducted through the Bluechip Livestock Young Sire program.

The nine other studs in the evaluation included some major studs, one link ram and another ram which was also common to other sites.

The FP+ index is based on a wool focussed production system. The range was from 95 to 109 (with our Woodpark Poll 015 the highest at 109).

The MP+ index is based on a balanced wool and meat production system where

surplus progeny are sold as hoggets. It ranged from 89 to WP Poll 10-015s index rating at the top with 108.

The DP+ index is based on a meat focused reproduction system where surplus progeny are sold as lambs and some ewes joined to terminal sires. These rams would deliver a high increase in meat traits and reproduction.

The DP+ ranged from 88 to the top of 111, which was again 10-015's level again.

The Fine 10% + Staple Strength index has a moderate emphasis on fleece weight and fibre diameter and moderate emphasis on staple strength. Its range was from 85 at the bottom to our 10-015s index-topping 109.

The results speak to us of the balance we have been building for so long.

Please contact us if you would like a copy of the results.



Woodpark Events 2014

July 18-20: Australian Sheep and Wool Show, Bendigo

> August 2: Nyngan Ag Expo

August 4 & 5: Hamilton Sheepvention

Hamilton Showgrounds, Hamilton

Friday August 15: Elders Riverina Sheep Expo - Deniliquin

Thursday, September 4: South West Slopes Merino Field Day

St Clement;'s Retreat, Galong.

Monday September 22: Woodpark Poll Merino Annual Ram Sale