

Big reward for Ridgway's quality

Ric, Gail, Matt and Rachel Ridgway penned an outstanding quality yarding of Poll Merino rams for competition on Monday (14th August) on property at Kulkami in the SA Mallee and were rewarded with a 22% lift in average in their main auction.

Auctioneer Leo Redden, representing sale agents Landmark said during pre-sale formalities, "There has never been a better time to be in sheep and wool, but also there has never been a bigger gap between income from average genetics and superior genetics. Measurement for productive traits is paramount to identify those superior genetics and you have some of them before you today."

The big crowd with 48 registered bidders appreciated that quality and bid up strongly, resulting in a 98% clearance rate, reaching a top of \$5200 and averaging \$2133 in the main auction of 128 rams. That was a lift of \$600 in top price and a \$395 lift in average from last year, reflecting the increased confidence in the sheep industry at present and appreciation of the quality on offer in this sale.

The strong demand flowed onto the mini auction of 42 rams, penned to allow buyers to top up their numbers, with 35 of these clearing to \$1200 and averaging \$711.

Overall 161 rams sold which was 24 more than last year.

Duane Simon, representing McPiggery and buying through Landmark Lameroo bid up strongly on the first two lots (R129 and R355) and secured them for \$5000 each. Standouts for both phenotype and genotype, they attracted strong competition from several bidders. He added R252 at lot 12 to his buying list for \$4400, with his three top selections averaging \$4800.

He looked to have a mortgage on top price honours until well into the catalogue when lot 66 was offered. Not having quite the classic outlook, style and balance of the first couple of rams, Ridgway tag 5 was a bit of a sleeper. However it was its standout wool and carcase performance figures that attracted the competition and ultimately saw it knocked down for the sale's top price of \$5200 to regular Ridgway clients, Glen and Jeffery Hampel, GMR & J Nominees, Loxton.

The ram's wool measurement figures were 20.8 micron, 2.6 SD, 12.5 CV and 99.8 CF, being sired by R721, renowned for consistently breeding well-nourished, bold crimping and long stapled wools. Its Merino Select figures were the most impressive feature, having the highest Yearling Clean Fleece weight in the catalogue at +32, the highest Yearling Staple length of 17.9 and the third highest MP+ index of 162.4. Buying through Landmark Loxton, the Hampels purchased four rams at a \$3150 average.

Underbidders on the three top priced rams were Craig and Josh Graham, Glencorrie P/L, Maitland and although feeling a little like bridesmaids they were nevertheless successful on three other outstanding and high ranking rams at \$4800 and \$4600 (x2), averaging \$4667 through Wardle & Co.

Robert Stein, general manager for Tubbo Station in the Riverina and owned by Giles Pritchard-Gordon, Darlington Point added NSW to the buying list by also bidding strongly on some of the top rams early in the catalogue, before being successful on two rams at \$4200 and \$2600, buying through Elders Griffith.

Victorian buying strength has been significant for many years now, with six individual buyers from that state successful in purchasing a combined total of 28 rams. Most prominent among them were Stephen Allen, Goroke through Rodwells Horsham with six to \$3200 and averaging \$2400, and

Simon and Thomas Brady, Rhymney through AWN Livestock with six to \$3400 and at a \$2333 average.

Bigger volume buyers are always an important component in making a sale with substantial numbers successful and at this sale two stood out. Rob McCarthy, Yalpara Station, Orroroo sought numbers to a budget and despite the very strong top end he was able to purchase 17 rams to \$800 and average just \$713 in extremely good value buying.

Lynton Barrett for LJ & SL Barrett, through Quality Livestock purchased 11 rams, being prepared to chase to higher values, paying to \$2500 and averaging \$1809.

Both have been regular volume buyers in recent years.

Kangaroo Island has been a good support region over the years with Jeff Buick, and Mitch and Ros Willson joining this year's buying list. Both purchased through Landmark Kingscote, with Jeff selecting four rams to \$3000 and averaging \$2750, while Mitch and Ros purchased two at \$2800 and \$2000.

Bill Walker, Classings Ltd rushed back from classing in WA to purchase six rams in total for three separate clients; A/c Chalk (three), Wilkatana Station (two) and Dunn (one).

The Johnson family, Mt Boothby Pastoral, Tintinara and buying through Platinum Livestock were again strong bidders with six rams to \$2800 and averaging \$1883, while Steve Paech, SN & CA Paech through Landmark Murray Bridge also purchased six to \$2400 and at a \$1600 average.

The value of underbidders was highlighted by Andrew Hall, Manora. While he purchased just two rams to \$2400 and \$1200, he was an underbidder on many of the earlier lots.

Other prominent buyers included GL & SL Auricht, Pinnaroo (5 ave \$2780); Booderoo Partners, Coomandook (five ave \$1940); CG, GM & TM Philip, Maroona, Vic (5 ave \$1580); EL & LA Marrett, Peake (5 ave \$1440); Mallee Produce, Lameroo (5 ave \$1440); and Paul Carey, Murray Bridge (5 ave \$1240).

Senior principal Ric Ridgway said post sale, "Naturally we are delighted with that result. It was great to get a good boost at the top end of the sale and such a solid average, but the most pleasing aspect was that all our clients here today were able to get good rams within their budget."

Also on display and admired by many were Ridgway's rams reserved for the Classings Classic ram sale in September.

Sale summary

	Main Auction		Mini Auction		Overall	
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
Offered	128	128	42	33	170	161
Sold	126	123	35	14	161	137
Top	\$5200	\$4600	\$1200	\$750	\$5200	\$4600
Average	\$2133	\$1737	\$711	\$657	\$1823	\$1627

Agents: Landmark Lameroo

Auctioneers: Leo Redden and Richard Miller

See photos over page...



Pictured with the \$5200 top priced ram at the Ridgway sale are Landmark auctioneers Leo Redden (left) and Richard Miller (right), Matt Ridgway (holding the ram) and purchasers Jeffery and Glen Hampel, GMR & J Nominees, Loxton.



Landmark auctioneers Leo Redden (left) and Richard Miller (right) display the top quality wools on these two Ridgway rams purchased for \$5000 each by Duane Simon, McPiggery, Lameroo and held by Ridgway's Ric and Matt Ridgway, with Michael Lawrence, Landmark Lameroo in the centre.



Ridgway principal Ric Ridgway is with Rob McCarthy, Yalpara Station, Orroroo who was the biggest volume buyer at the Ridgway sale, purchasing 16 rams.



Ridgway principal Ric Ridgway discusses the sale outcome with repeat client Jeff Buick, Penneshaw, KI. Jeff purchased four rams to \$3000 in this year's sale.



Matt Ridgway is with Robert Stein, Tubbo Station, via Griffith after he loaded the two rams he purchased for \$4200 and \$2600.



Ridgway principal Ric Ridgway is discussing the Merino Select figures on one of the six rams purchased by Stephen Allen, Goroke (right). He paid to \$3200 and averaged \$2400 to be the most prominent of six Victorian buyers at the sale.



Ridgway principal Ric Ridgway (2nd left) is pictured post sale with AWN Livestock Technical Manager Kelvin Shelley, Highton and Thomas and Simon Brady, Rhymney, Vic who purchased six rams to \$3400 and averaged \$2303.