

Sale ends on top note at Ridgway

Vanessa Binks – Stock Journal
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A LATE lot attracted a bid-ding war at the Ridgway ram sale on Monday, resulting in the Kulkami based stud's best top price in years.

Catalogued at lot 79, the \$9500 ram was knocked down to long-time client Duane Simon, Lameroo, who said he was reluctant to leave the sale without it, despite already securing the ram he came for.

"I was not there to buy this particular ram, but its positive fat and muscle with a really good skin and quality wool, can be hard to find," he said.

"We are trying to maintain our quality wool, and also the carcass, so we can have an easier doing animal."

The 100-kilogram top ram was sired by Mumblebone 212384 and carried fleece measurements of 19.5 micron, 2.9 standard deviation, 14.8 coefficient of variation and 99.7 per cent comfort factor, with 29.2 yearling clean fleece weight.

Its carcass traits were 1.2 eye muscle depth and 0.4 fat and 144 on the Sustainable Merino Index.

Mr Simon had initially attended the sale to buy lot 3, which he paid the \$5000 second-highest price for.

Sired by Ridgway 210542, this ram had 19.8M wool with 3SD, 15.2CV and 99.8CF, with 25.2YCFW. Its carcass traits included -0.4 EMD and -0.1 fat, with 155.3SM.

Mr Simon picked out the ram for its wool and size.

"It had a really good year-ling weight and wool cut. So this combined with the make and shape, and feet being in the right position, as well as beautiful skin on white crimped wool made it a great ram," he said.

Mr Simon said the stud's quality wool, as well as muscle and fat improvements, offered a modern Merino which was crucial for his sheep operation.

He picked up four rams in total, averaging \$4425.

Overall, the Ridgway family offered 127 rams and sold 88, averaging \$1569 - a \$27 increase on their 2023 sale.

Positive feedback at recent field days led stud co-principal Ric Ridgway to believe it was the stud's best line-up ever presented at an on-property sale.

"Unfortunately, we did not have the buyers here today, but the evenness and consistency from the start to the finish of the sale was there. So we cannot fault the day really," he said.

Mr Ridgway believed the line-up showed off the stud's hard work in clean fleece weight.

"Our sheep are cutting a lot of wool. The figures are showing it and it has resulted from the selection of sires we have used over the past few years. We are even getting it through the ewe flock," he said.

"It is related to staple length as well, we have not got any thicker in the sheep."

Co-principal Matt Ridgway believed buyers that operated at the top end of the sale went for rams with higher wool cut and better carcass traits.

"Yearling eye muscle and fat, combined with wool traits performed well in the sale. They were trying to target both markets equally," he said.

The Ridgways were not expecting lot 79 to get the top price, but being a Mumblebone son, it had desirable wool traits which drew the attention.

Volume buyers included CM&JP&ND Smith, through Nutrien Ag Loxton, with 10 rams to \$1200, averaging \$1020, while S&Y Brady through Australian Wool Network, Geelong, Vic, bought nine to \$2200, averaging \$1155.

GL&SL Auricht, through Nutrien Ag Bordertown, secured six rams to \$3000, averaging \$1466, while MJ&SM Pfitzner, through Nutrien Ag Loxton, jumped on six lots to \$1200, averaging \$1100.

The sale was conducted by AWN and Nutrien Ag-Byrne Ag Lameroo and Karoonda.



The \$9500 ram with Ridgway's Ric Ridgway, buyer Duane Simon and his daughter Billie Simon-McMahon, and Nutrien's James McNally, Karoonda. Pictures by Vanessa Binks



Duane Simon, Lameroo, holding the \$5000 ram with daughter Billie Simon-McMahon, Nutrien's Gordon Wood, AWN's Tom Simmons and Ridgway's Matt and Owen Ridgway.