

MEDIA RELEASE

Wonderful season starting sale at Orrie Cowie

Improved wool and sheep market returns, coupled with what looks to be a substantially improved season, combined to create a wonderful sale result at the 42nd Orrie Cowie Merino and Poll Merino sale last Wednesday at Warooka. As a lead off sale for the SA Merino and Poll Merino selling season, many sheep sale analysts look to this Yorke Peninsula sale for an indication of what may follow in SA sales over the next few months. Besides the factors outlined above, the other factor for the success of the sale was the quality on offer. The auction catalogue of 80 rams was one of the best offered for several years and was a credit to the Orrie Cowie principals, Dennis and Heather Dalla.

There was very strong competition on the best sheep in particular, with a sale top of \$13,000 and a magnificent auction average of \$1,941.80 being achieved. The buying strength was widespread, but the main buying support came from Western Australia, Kangaroo Island, Eyre Peninsula and the local Yorke Peninsula areas.

The clearance at auction was 76% which was slightly disappointing, but buyers were more selective during the auction. Once this was over, they then assessed their needs and a further 37 rams sold from the passed lots, private selection pens and stud reserves at a \$734 average with a \$15,500 top.

The main auction result was \$617.80 above last year's average and \$268 above the average achieved at the stud's outstanding 2005 sale.

Top auction price of \$13,000 was paid by repeat buyers David and Winsome Kelly, Bindon, WA, buying through Elders Wongon Hills branch. This was for lot 1, OC057614, a much admired 117kg Poll Merino; structurally brilliant and carrying a terrific heavy cutting, free growing 22 micron fleece. His Merino Select ASBVs and raw measurement figures supported his outstanding visual appeal. He was from a new family line at Orrie Cowie, thus offering an outcross for the Kellys. They then picked up another top sire at lot 5 for a bargain basement price of \$1,500 to average out their spending nicely.

Purchasers of last year's top priced ram @ \$6,000 were locals David and Gavin Reade, Curramulka. This year they paid \$8,000 for lot 2; a terrific big, stud quality Poll Merino. Long time supporters of Orrie Cowie genetics, the Reads breed their own flock replacement rams from the stud sires they purchase at Orrie Cowie. They picked up 2 other top rams @ \$2,800 and \$2,200 to also round out a great day's buying.

A very strong underbidder on these top Polls was Clinton Bright, 'Seymour Park', Narrogin, WA. Having missed the top rams, he then privately negotiated with the Dalls for one of their impressive 14 month old stud reserve Poll Merinos; successfully securing OC062502 for \$15,500.

Other strong Western Australian support came from Kevin and Lyn Chambers, Boyup Brook, and K & M Norman, Ravensthorpe. Kevin and Lyn purchased a young Poll Merino for \$2,200 and then one of the young horned rams for \$4,000; this being the top price for the 14 – 15 month old autumn shorn rams. The Normans selected 6 rams from the private selection pens from \$350 to \$425.

Top price at auction in the horned Merinos was \$7,000 for the lead Merino sale ram, OC050177, another big, correct, stud quality sire, carrying terrific 20 micron medium wool. Successful purchasers were EC & LN Koehler & Sons, Radnor stud, Murray Bridge; also repeat purchasers of Orrie Cowie genetics.

Eyre Peninsula buying strength was again very good, with repeat buyers LT & VS Honner and NM & DS May, both from Elliston, being the strongest. The Mays bid strongly but unsuccessfully on several of the sale's star lots, but were successful in securing 3 high quality Merinos from \$800 to \$2,000. The Honners were the volume buyers at auction last year with 6 rams and again purchased that number this, to be equal highest volume buyers at auction this year, paying from \$800 to \$1,000.

The other equal highest volume buyer at auction was Rob Ness, Parndana, Kangaroo Island. He paid from \$1,000 to \$1,800 for 3 Polls and 3 Horns from the young autumn shorn lots. Kangaroo Island buyers accounted for the highest volume of sales on the day, with 37 rams going there. Craig Eckert, Elders Regional Wool Area Manager purchased 3 for Calana Heights, Stokes Bay (and later another 3 from the private selection pens), plus 1 each at auction for R & Y Hams, Parndana and WA & KF Florance, Wisanger. The Hams family added 23 from the private selection pens to be the dominant purchaser of rams on the day.

Bruce McCarthy, buying through Elders Clare, got in early in the first run of the 2 year old Merinos and picked out 5 top rams, paying from \$1,000 to \$4,500 and averaging \$3,020. He purchased 5 different family lines but all of similar high quality; the top lot being a 19 micron son of Magnif 222, the Dalla's very successful breeding sire of recent years.

Michael Voigt, Wilmington; another strong repeat buyer of Orrie Cowie genetics also went to \$4,500 and then paid \$4,000 for two of the top 2 year old Merino rams in the catalogue.

Local Yorke Peninsula buying support saw a group of regular supporters of Orrie Cowie genetics come to the fore. They included DJ & MG McSkimming, Minlaton (3 rams from \$800 to \$1,000); TR & SG Ball, Warooka (2 @ \$2,600 & \$2,400); CA & AM Murdock (2 @ \$2,500 & \$2,200); and EL & LA Short, Curramulka (2 to \$2,200). The commercial success these clients have in the sheep and wool markets is an indication of why they keep coming back to Orrie Cowie for their rams.

Overall 98 Merinos and Poll Merino rams cleared on the day from the auction and private sale pens for a \$1,501 average; a terrific result but certainly reflective of the quality on offer. Polls were more in demand than the Merinos overall; these achieving a 91% clearance at auction, while the Merinos cleared at a 67% rate.

In a first, the Dallas held their first auction for their recently established Redwood White Suffolk stud. They offered 31, 12 month old rams of very credible quality. They received good buying support and sold 22 to a top of \$850 and averaged a very solid \$634.09. Eight buyers were successful in purchasing White Suffolk rams, with DA & HMM Shepley, Corny Point; RJ, EG & AW Ness, Parndana; and Calana Heights, Stokes Bay all securing 4 rams to be the biggest volume buyers. The Ness family paid the \$850 top for these quality rams.

Sale Summary

Merinos and Poll Merinos

Auction:

Offered - 80 Sold - 61 Clearance - 76%
Top Price - \$13,000 Average Price - \$1,941.80

Private Sales

Sold - 37 Top - \$15,500 Average - \$775

White Suffolks

Offered - 31 Sold - 22 Clearance - 71%

Overall sale day gross of \$161,075 for 120 rams

Sale Agents - Elders Ltd

Auctioneers - Craig Shearer & Tom Penna