

Superior Selections

What a week last week was for spring meat sheep genetic sales!

After what could have only been described as a flat stud selling season, despite the buoyancy of the current lamb and sheep markets, things changed last Thursday at the Detpa Grove White Suffolk sale last Thursday, and then the Ella Matta sale on my old KI stamping ground the following day - two fantastic results.

Here is the first - my full report on the Pipkorn family's Detpa Grove sale at Jeparit in the Victorian Wimmera.

Detpa Grove surges to record sale result

In a Spring selling season when stud sales have been notoriously sluggish at the best, it became apparent that many in the White Suffolk breed at least, had been waiting for this week and the Detpa Grove sale in particular.

Elders stud stock auctioneer Ross Milne stated in the introduction before the stud ram offering, "How does a stud with the reputation for quality that Detpa Grove has just keep improving, but they have."

Living up to that acclaim, the Pipkorn family's 31st annual White Suffolk sale produced their best ever overall result, with 229 head of White Suffolk stud and flock rams and stud ewes selling to a \$32,000 top and averaging \$2067 in a 95% clearance.

The 29 catalogued stud rams averaged \$6810, with 24 going to registered breeders; the other 5 snapped up by alert flock ram producers. There has only been one higher average in Detpa Grove's sales history for this draft; that being way back in 2003 when a new national record of \$35,000 was set and two rams exceeded this year's top.

The 149 flock rams also sold exceptionally well, topping at \$2600 and averaging \$1559. The only time that has been exceeded was two years ago when the flock ram draft averaged \$1621.

The sale kicked off with the offering of 59 superb quality stud ewes with 54 of these finding new homes, topping at \$1600 three times and averaging a very solid \$852. There were ten successful bidders on this draft, including two via Auctions Plus.

Long term stud supporters of Detpa Grove, the Kyle family, Ashley Park stud, Bairnsdale paid the \$1600 equal top price on two occasions in putting together a line of seven very good ewes at an \$1143 average, later adding the lot 80 stud ram, DG180207 for \$6500. Paula and Elle McDonald, Hopea stud, Dadswell Bridge also went to \$1600 for one of six ewes they purchased at a \$950 average.

The volume buyers though were Nick and Kate Wadlow, Old Ashrose stud, Hallett, SA who combined a ram delivery trip of their Merinos with calling in to inspect the Detpa Grove sale stock. Suffice to say they were blown away by the quality on offer and were delighted to be able to add 14 of these outstanding ewes to their stud, paying to a top of \$1000 and averaging a great value \$686.

After a short break, what followed was the much anticipated stud ram offering, with 30 stud breeders from four states and overseas amongst the 77 registered bidders at the sale, plus 55 more registered via the Auctions Plus network.

It was the buyer of last year's \$26,000 top priced ram, Roger Wilkinson, Camborn stud, Pooncarrie, NSW and buying through Elders Mildura who struck the first blow when he successfully bid \$6000 for DG 180275, sired by the \$20,000 (half share) Baringa Magnum 16W300. Used in the Detpa Grove stud as a ram lamb, this was the ram Roger specifically came to buy.

However, it was DG 180324 Triplet, offered two lots later that caught more than just his eye. Sired by AI sire Warburn 160048, a ram purchased in 2017 by the Shillabeer family for \$16,000, this ram certainly captured the eyes of many pre-sale. With balance, excellent type, skin and hair, plus exceptional carcase attributes, it didn't take long for the bidding action to heat right up.

Ultimately, it was again Roger Wilkinson who placed the winning \$32,000 bid. He was pushed all the way by Clive and Deb Shillabeer who were bidding on behalf of the breed's only USA registered breeder Gary Heilig, Montana, who started his stud with Detpa Grove ewes and the Shillabeers' well known ram, Wingamin 'Trifecta'.

Roger was delighted to add this ram to his impressive sire battery saying, "While I came to get the first ram, when I saw this one I couldn't let him go."

"Initially, I was going to bid by phone, but thought I should come down and have a proper look, which is just as well, otherwise I wouldn't have seen how good he is and probably wouldn't have gone that far without being here."

Backing the outstanding phenotype was its equally impressive list of Lambplan figures, highlighted by a weaning weight EBV of 12.5, a post weaning weight of 19.94, fat of -0.59, eye muscle depth of 2.07, plus the highest C+ index of 225 and equal highest TCP index of 154 in the draft. Detpa Grove is retaining a semen share in this ram for stud use, while Roger Wilkinson said they were open to selling some semen packages if anyone was interested.

Of very similar type and by the same sire, plus being not far behind on Lambplan figures with a C+ index of 220 and TCP index of 153 was the very next ram offered, DG 180291. This ram was purchased by William Peck, Bayview Downs stud, Mundulla, SA for the second top price of \$25,000. William was the biggest volume ewe buyer at last year's sale when he purchased 15 ewes.

Denam Carter, Ridge Top stud, Albany, WA connected via phone to successfully bid \$15,000 for arguably the most appealing ram in the catalogue for phenotype in DG 180729, also used in the stud as a ram lamb. So exceptional was this ram's early growth that it didn't fit the Lambplan grids, hence the confusing and somewhat meaningless figures it was given by Lambplan were irrelevant.

Western Australian breeders have been a more prominent stud ram buying force in the eastern states than most this year, with three other WA bidders securing new stud sires. Keith Ladyman and Jill Clarke, Kantara stud, Dumbleyung and Stacey and Rob Bush, Rhos Gwyn stud, Mt Barker both purchased classy and high performance rams late in the catalogue at \$4000 each, but it was John Stephenson, Millinup stud, Porongurup, WA who was one of three buyers in this sale who went to \$10,000 to get their selection. This was for DG 180154, sired by DG 140300, with a C+ index of 214 and TCP index of 145.

Charles Rowett, North Ulandi stud, Marrabel, SA also paid \$10,000 for his preferred ram, the long and upstanding DG 180643, sired by DG 170421 and with C+ and TCP indices of 205 and 147.

A very appealing late August drop ram, DG 180811 Triplet, sired by DG 160717 Tw took the eye of quite a few lookers pre-sale, but it was Brett Shepherd, Mullinger Park stud, Kybybolite who was the most determined in his bidding and also outlayed \$10,000 to get him.

Leroy and Rohan Hull, Kattata Well stud, Pt Kenny, SA have not been afraid to back their judgement and invest in top rams in the recent past. They latched onto another exceptionally good ram in this sale, in DG 180629, the only other ram apart from the sale topper that Detpa Grove is retaining a semen interest in.

Sired by DG 160297, the growth for age of this long, deep and powerful 16 month old ram was clearly evident for all to see, his weight being in excess of 170kg. Backing up that growth were top figures that included 19.75 for post weaning weight (the highest in the catalogue) and indices of 211 (C+) and 145 (TCP). To be able to pick this ram up for \$9000 was terrific value in the context of the overall draft result.

SD Symonds through PPH&S Naracoorte went to \$7500 for DG 180833Tw, while KJ Nunn P/L, Ballarat and the Hicks family, Hannaton stud, Kaniva both purchased two rams each at averages of \$4750 and \$3250 respectively.

In the 20 specially selected rams and the 129 flock rams that followed the stud ram draft, the commercial prime lamb producers were as strong in their competition as the top stud bidders. There were many familiar names amongst the buyers; giving every indication these Detpa Grove rams are doing a great job in their paddocks.

38 of these topped \$2000 while just 23 sold under \$1000, the latter ones late in the catalogue. There were 40 successful bidders on these flock rams.

GA & R Sambell paid the \$2600 top for flock rams for a 215C+ indexing ram, one of three top selections they made at a \$2433 average.

They were one of a regular group of buyers who operate at this sale through Simon Mulraney, PPH&S, Naracoorte who collectively purchased 36 rams this year. Again the biggest volume buyer of the sale was amongst them. Peter Irving, Irving Bros purchased 20 rams to \$1800 and at a \$1470 average, adding to the 25 he purchased last year.

Craig Bennie was another of this group, purchasing four of the tops, plus one from the stud draft; his five averaging \$2050.

Also operating on the very best rams was A, B & L Mann through Elders Boort, purchasing four rams at a \$2350 average.

Denholm Green through Landmark Mortlake purchased seven, including two from the stud draft, paying to \$2500 and averaging \$1964.

J & M Kilpatrick through Rodwells Stawell also went to \$2500 for one from the stud draft, then added another eight flock rams; their nine purchases averaging just \$1672 courtesy of a couple of later average breakers.

S & G O'Halloran, through Driscoll, McIlree & Dickinson purchased eight flock rams to \$1400, but also took the first steps towards establishing a stud by purchasing four stud ewes at \$600 each, plus a great hind quartered stud ram that had also been used by Detpa Grove as a ram lamb, DG 180188Tw for just \$3000.

Also prominent with eight flock ram purchases was Prospect Rural through Elders Warracknabeal, paying to \$2400 and averaging \$1925, while D & L Stewart, through the same agency operated at the high value end of the sale, picking up seven to \$1200 and averaging just \$1014.

Elders Jeparit manager Peter Gebert has been assisting the Pipkorn family at every one of their sales and upon his imminent retirement both David Pipkorn and Aaron Zwar, Elders Warracknabeal paid special tribute to Peter in short speeches before the ram sale.

Sale Summary

54 of 59 stud ewes sold to \$1600 (x3) ave \$852

29 of 29 stud rams sold to \$32,000 ave \$6810

149 of 159 selected and flock rams sold to \$26600 ave \$1559

Agents: Elders Warracknabeal

Auctioneers: Ross Milne and Matt O'Connor

Photo Captions:

1. Pictured with the \$32,000 top priced ram at the Detpa Grove sale are purchaser, Roger Wilkinson, Camborn Station, Pooncarrie, NSW and Detpa Grove co-principal David Pipkorn.
2. Detpa Grove principal David Pipkorn holds DG180291, the ram purchased by William Peck, Bayview Downs stud, Mundulla for the second top price of \$25,000.
3. Detpa Grove principal David Pipkorn holds DG180729, the ram purchased by Denam Carter, Ridge Top stud, Albany, WA for the third top price of \$15,000.
4. Key stud ewe buyers at Detpa Grove were Paula and Elle McDonald, Hopea stud, Dadswell Bridge (six ewes to the equal top of \$1600) and Nick and Kate Wadlow, Old Ashrose stud, Hallett who were the volume buyers with 14 ewes to \$1000.
5. Detpa Grove stud principal David Pipkorn holds DG180811, the impressive young ram that Brett and Will Shepherd, Mullinger Park stud, Kybybolite purchased for \$10,000.
6. Detpa Grove stud principal David Pipkorn holds DG180643, the ram purchased by Charles Rowett, North Ulandi stud, Marrabel, SA.
7. PPH & S Naracoorte agent Simon Mulraney is pictured supervising the loading of his clients' ram purchases onto Irving Bros truck. Collectively Simon's group of clients purchased 36 flock rams at this sale with Irving Bros being the biggest with 20 rams.
8. The Pipkorn family and fellow Elders agents paid tribute to Peter Gebert, Elders Jeparit on his pending retirement. Peter has assisted with every one of the 31 Detpa Grove sales. He is pictured at the back (second left) and is with Ross Milne, Elders stud stock, and Ron and Barb Pipkorn, (and in front) David, Sophie, Michelle and Jordan Pipkorn and Aaron Zwar (2nd right) Elders Warracknabeal.





