

Callowie's overdue reward

Richard and Jacquie Halliday and family have battled the elements and struggled through adversity for several years, powered only by their over-riding passion for the sheep industry and to breed high quality Poll Merinos.

After a couple of average sales it was very pleasing to at last see them receive some overdue reward at their annual on-property ram sale on Monday.

They sold 43 of 49 rams to a top of \$3500 and at an average of \$1195. This was a 27% lift in average, a 26% lift in clearance and a top price of more than double last year's \$1700 top.

The Hallidays have stuck to their breeding objectives of constitution, conformation, covering, carcase and consistency. The first four of these were visually evident for all to see, with Landmark auctioneer Richard Miller saying, "The depth of quality in this catalogue is outstanding. We are paid by the kilo and these rams display both vital ingredients of wool cut and carcase in spades."

The Merino Select figures supported this with eye muscle breeding values all positive except for one ram and were up to 2.0. They also had the ideal fat cover range to indicate both carcase quality and natural doing ability, while all but one was positive for yearling clean fleece weight. Visually their wools were very long stapled with density, real bale filling and money making genetics in today's market.

With 40 people in attendance, including 12 registered bidders who mostly have appreciated the Callowie quality for a long time, there was a more positive feel pre-sale.

Bruce Bridgart, Wynarka was arguably the most astute bidder, kicking off the sale with an opening and winning \$2000 bid on the very impressive lot 1 ram, C142. He waited until lot 43 to place a second opening bid of \$1200 for an equally impressive C24. He bid value and was able to get them both uncontested.

The dominant buyers in the sale were Ricky Miles and Ben Dunstall, Cove Station, Dinyarrak, just over the border in Victoria. Long term Callowie clients; they were again the biggest volume buyers with nine rams at a \$1789 average. Buying through Stuart Kyle, Westech Ag Kyle Livestock, their purchases included the two highest priced rams in the sale at \$3500 and \$3000.

The consistency aspect included in the Callowie mission statement was supported by the fact the top price was paid for lot 47, just four from the end of the offering. Despite its position in the sale, most buyers found Callowie tag 6. Being positive (6.0) for clean fleece weight and eye muscle, while being slightly negative for fat, this big, long ram with very appealing 19.9 micron, 99.5% comfort factor and long stapled wool, triggered a bidding duel between Cove Station and another long term and loyal client, Keith Nutt, Orroroo, before Cove Station came out on top.

However, Keith Nutt was strong enough to outlast the competition on four other rams, bidding to \$2400 and averaging \$1550.

There were more bidders to ensure the increased clearance and the stronger middle ground that ensued. It was perhaps fitting that the other stronger buying account with eight rams to \$1400 and at a \$925 average was Pitlochry Station, Kingston, represented by principal Rex Anderson and his

manager Robert Giles. Along with Cove Station and Keith Nutt, Pitlochry has stood by Callowie right through their roller coaster ride.

There were still plenty of value rams though with 18 selling for \$800 or less. These will soon be out working for sheep producers who will no doubt appreciate the value they were able to achieve. These included Steve West, Stawell, Vic (six ave \$683), CJ & DG MacKereth, Kingston (five ave \$740), KD & AM Dinning, Mundulla (four ave \$725) and MA Hannaford, Apsley (three ave \$1267).

A very pleased Richard Halliday said that they were now shearing every eight months and while conceding, "this is not for everyone", he highlighted lamb raising ewe figures that saw them receive a return of \$2 a week/ewe over the whole year from such animals under this policy. He also announced that they would be offering 70 rams next year to allow greater selection options for loyal clients and prospective new buyers who may have considered 50 or less rams as not enough to choose from.

Sale Summary	2017	2016
Offered	49	42
Sold	43	26
Top	\$3500	\$1700
Average	\$1195	\$942

Agents: Landmark Bordertown

Auctioneer: Richard Miller