

RICHMOND

M E R I N O S

Flock No. 5021

WELCOME TO OUR 2023 NEWSLETTER



2023 SALE CALENDAR

TUESDAY 29 AUGUST
SOUTH WEST SLOPES STUD
MERINO FIELD DAYS
(Harden showground)

Richmond will be in attendance displaying selected sires & sale rams.

TUESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER
ON-PROPERTY RAM AUCTION

Inspections from 9.30am
 Sale commences 1pm.
 Offering 120 rams fully measured, genomics tested and pedigreed with ASBVs and raw wool data available.

WEDNESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER
PRIVATE SALES

Grade ram available by appointment from Wednesday onwards.

AT LAST A NORMAL SEASON!!! After 2 years of unrelenting rain we were beginning to think it was never going to end however the flooding eventually did stop and 2023 brought with it a perfect autumn followed by a mild winter with just enough precipitation to keep the season rolling along giving the young rams as good a start as they've had for a number of years.

It's been two of the toughest year's for sheep that I've experienced on Richmond and in many ways has been harder than a drought. Most of our country was under water for often months at a time with feet, wool and constitution being put under enormous pressure. Lambs were literally being born into water with limited feed and no possible way of getting into the paddocks to supplement them with hay or grain. The summer months then brought infestations of the deadly Barbers Pole worm which added yet another challenge however it was encouraging to once again see very little flystrike (with no chemicals used on any adult sheep) and almost zero fleece rot at shearing time.

Despite the environmental challenges the young rams have really hit their straps since the change in season and with some exciting genetic additions we are really looking forward to selecting the sale team. After relocating to higher ground at the Bribbaree showgrounds last year we are happy to resume normal operations with our on property auction. At this stage it is unlikely that we will have an open day however from August onwards we are happy to accommodate anyone looking to privately view the sale rams. Please feel free to contact us at any time prior to sale day if you're interested in a no strings attached inspection.





The top price ram held by Trevor Ryan with auctioneer Paul Dooley and purchasers Troy Rose & Ant Martin “Rotherwood” Casillis.

2022 SALE REPORT

Such was the extreme weather conditions throughout last winter and spring that at one stage we were starting to wonder if we would be able to hold a sale at all much less an on property one. Relocating the sale was the only option and a slight break in the rainfall leading up to sale day gave us just enough time for the creeks to recede so we could truck all the rams to the Bribbaree showgrounds. It was a very stressful time for all concerned however despite swollen creeks, closed roads and a mid morning thunderstorm a large crowd was able to attend resulting in our most successful sale to date. We were extremely proud of being able to present 120 white woolled rams without a sign of weather damage and all totally paddock run in one of the wettest seasons ever recorded.

The sale kicked off strongly with lot 1, a beautifully balanced, high indexing ram with both production and fibre quality selling to the Lawson family of Cookardinia for \$12,000. It didn't take long for this price to be eclipsed when lot 5 was grabbed by the Martin family's

“Rotherwood” flock for a sale topping \$16,000. A very powerfully built, deep bodied sire with a +30 YCFW and 201 DP index, he will be used in the Rotherwood nucleus flock to breed replacement rams. The sale was strong right to the end with many lots in the \$5000 to \$8000 range but also a considerable portion offering great value for \$1500 to \$2000. Volume buyers were Geeron p/ship of Forbes, the Haylock family of “Old Springfield”, Cooma and the Kitto family of Tallimba. Stud buyers were also active with the Mumblebone stud grabbing two meaty, superior woolled rams at the top end of the catalogue and Coleburra merino stud from SA also securing a young sire with a balanced set of figures and a top end fibre.

In all there was a 100% clearance with 120 rams selling to 3 states for an on property record average of \$3,737. Under very challenging circumstances we were thrilled with the result and very grateful to all those who supported the sale especially considering the difficult conditions during the lead up.

It has been very encouraging to see our entrant in the BATHURST SIRE EVALUATION perform so strongly across so many measured and visually assessed traits.

Richmond 170013 is a ET bred son of the inaugural SRS ram of the year 130579. 170013 has passed on many of his sires outstanding fibre and skin qualities to his progeny at Richmond and along with an improved set of production figures his influence as a pre potent sire across multiple traits has been significant. 170013 was skin tested as a hoggett and recorded the sought after combination of high follicle density, low primary fibre diameter and high S/P ratio. This trio of skin traits has enabled him to maintain both fibre quality and fleece weight throughout his adult life and combined with above average carcass, structural correctness and the bare breech gene he has been an influential sire in the progress of the Richmond flock.

At the hoggett stage of progeny assessment he is currently a trait leader (top 3 performing sires) in the following traits and indexes.

- Yearling clean fleece weight (YCFW)
- Yearling & Hoggett CV% (YFDCV & HFDCV)
- Yearling staple length (YSL)
- Yearling staple strength (YSS)
- Post weaning weight (PWT)
- Eye muscle depth (HEMD)
- Fat cover (HFAT)
- Worm egg count (WEC)
- % progeny classed into tops
- % progeny classed into culls
- Wool character (CHAR)
- Feet & leg structure (LEGS)
- Urine stain (URINE)
- Breech wrinkle (BRWR)
- Bare breech area (BCOV)
- Dual purpose index
- Merino production index
- Fibre production index

BATHURST SIRE EVALUATION

Breeders flock, Sire number	Progeny No*	WWT (kg)	PWT (kg)	HWT (kg)	HEMD (mm)	HFAT (mm)
Blink Bonnie, 180085	54	19.9	30.4	44.5	18.2	2.1
Bogo, 170182	44	20.5	33.2	47.2	19.9	2.2
Boudjah, 180074	47	21.8	34.6	50.4	20.6	2.5
Conrayn, MVB123 (Link Sire)	50	20.6	30.6	45.0	18.6	2.3
Egelabra, 174143	51	19.6	32.2	45.1	20.8	2.9
Glenwood, 170026	52	21.4	34.2	49.2	23.1	3.3
Greenland, 170615	70	21.0	34.6	49.5	20.4	2.7
Miramooona, 140012 (Link Sire)	52	21.3	34.8	49.5	21.6	3.1
Mumblebone, 191128	36	21.7	35.0	50.5	22.3	3.3
Nerstane, 190315	55	21.0	35.2	49.7	21.2	2.5
Poll Boonoke, 160612	51	20.8	34.2	49.0	21.5	2.9
Pooginook Poll, 190311	60	21.4	35.9	52.4	23.3	3.1
Redlands Kl, 180102	49	20.3	33.4	46.8	20.6	2.8
Richmond,170013	53	20.9	35.2	50.1	22.3	3.4
Rocklyn, 190271	48	21.2	33.7	49.8	21.6	2.8
Roseville Park Poll, 190072	54	22.5	34.8	49.9	19.4	2.3
Average	52	21.0	33.9	48.7	20.9	2.7

Breeders flock, Sire number	Progeny No*	YGFW (kg)	YCFW (kg)	YFD (µm)	HFD (µm)	YFDCV (%)	HFDCV (%)	YSL (mm)	YSS (Nktex)
Blink Bonnie, 180085	54	3.1	2.3	16.1	16.9	18.4	18.3	78.0	32.7
Bogo, 170182	44	3.4	2.4	16.1	16.8	17.2	18.0	80.1	30.2
Boudjah, 180074	47	3.4	2.5	15.5	16.8	17.7	18.1	78.8	22.2
Conrayn, MVB123 (Link Sire)	50	3.1	2.3	16.2	17.3	17.2	17.3	76.2	30.9
Egelabra, 174143	51	3.4	2.5	16.3	17.5	19.2	18.7	83.8	22.9
Glenwood, 170026	52	3.2	2.5	16.8	17.8	15.6	15.9	92.2	40.3
Greenland, 170615	70	3.6	2.6	16.1	17.2	17.3	18.0	78.5	25.2
Miramooona, 140012 (Link Sire)	52	3.6	2.7	16.8	18.1	16.8	17.4	93.2	37.6
Mumblebone, 191128	36	3.5	2.6	16.2	17.7	18.2	17.8	90.9	22.2
Nerstane, 190315	55	3.7	2.7	15.9	16.9	18.4	18.9	79.7	20.1
Poll Boonoke, 160612	51	3.7	2.7	17.0	17.9	17.2	18.1	87.3	30.6
Pooginook Poll, 190311	60	3.5	2.7	16.5	17.7	17.1	18.0	90.9	30.7
Redlands Kl, 180102	49	3.6	2.6	15.3	16.3	17.3	16.9	87.7	26.5
Richmond,170013	53	3.5	2.7	16.7	17.8	16.6	16.1	93.5	36.2
Rocklyn, 190271	48	3.4	2.5	16.1	16.8	16.9	17.4	86.7	29.1
Roseville Park Poll, 190072	54	3.7	2.7	16.2	17.0	17.3	17.5	85.6	33.9
Average	52	3.5	2.6	16.2	17.3	17.4	17.7	85.0	29.5

Breeders flock, Sire number	Progeny No*	Yearling		Hogget		Marking		Hogget					
		TOPS (%)	CULLS (%)	TOPS (%)	CULLS (%)	BRWR	BCOV	FLROT	COL	CHAR	LEGS	FACE	URINE
Blink Bonnie, 180085	54	-13	21	-15	8	2.9	4.9	2.1	1.9	2.2	2.1	3.2	3.0
Bogo, 170182	44	-4	14	3	2	3.5	4.9	1.3	1.6	2.2	2.2	3.2	2.6
Boudjah, 180074	47	4	-2	17	-7	3.2	4.9	2.1	1.6	2.3	2.1	3.2	2.8
Conrayn, MVB123 (Link Sire)	50	-22	17	-16	18	3.1	5.0	1.7	1.7	2.6	2.4	3.5	2.7
Egelabra, 174143	51	-15	-2	-8	-3	2.8	5.0	1.5	1.7	2.7	2.2	3.1	2.8
Glenwood, 170026	52	9	-12	11	-18	2.1	4.6	1.4	2.2	2.2	1.9	2.7	2.3
Greenland, 170615	70	-7	2	-17	11	3.6	4.8	2.6	2.1	2.5	2.2	3.4	2.3
Miramooona, 140012 (Link Sire)	52	3	3	2	-6	2.8	4.8	1.8	1.8	2.5	2.1	3.2	3.2
Mumblebone, 191128	36	11	-6	3	-17	3.8	4.8	1.5	2.0	2.5	2.0	3.0	2.3
Nerstane, 190315	55	-8	0	-10	0	2.7	4.9	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.1	2.9	2.6
Poll Boonoke, 160612	51	2	-14	-5	7	2.2	4.9	2.3	2.3	2.6	2.1	3.2	2.5
Pooginook Poll, 190311	60	17	-18	-6	17	2.6	4.6	3.1	3.0	2.4	2.1	3.1	2.2
Redlands Kl, 180102	49	-2	0	2	2	3.0	4.8	1.5	1.8	2.0	2.4	3.1	2.5
Richmond,170013	53	15	-10	23	-16	1.9	4.7	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.8	2.2
Rocklyn, 190271	48	-10	15	-1	7	2.5	4.9	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.2	3.3	2.6
Roseville Park Poll, 190072	54	19	-7	17	-4	3.3	4.9	1.9	1.5	2.1	2.2	3.1	2.7
Average	52	26	26	29	26	2.9	4.8	2.0	2.0	2.3	2.2	3.1	2.6

*Progeny No is at weaning

Further assessment results after shearing for the 2021 drop will be available in Site Report released via merinosuperiorsires.com.au





QUALITY SKINS = QUALITY WOOLS

In an industry that is so dependent on production driven figures and measurements its particularly surprising that there is such limited understanding of the actual biological processes underneath the skin that directly affect what ends up in our wool bales. Most of the work in this area has been done over the years through private research. The late Dr Jim Watts was one such scientist who devoted his life to a better understanding of skin and follicle biology although sadly government funded industry bodies have never seen it as a priority.

Back in July we shared a very interesting Facebook post which was originally posted by the Pepper Well Merino Stud from South Australia that clearly showed the differences at follicle level of a good skin and an inferior skin. Hansi Graetz is the principal of Pepper Well and is a very astute student of skin types. I contacted Hansi after the original post was published and asked for his permission to use his photos in this newsletter which he kindly agreed to.

If you look closely at the top photo you can see underneath the skin the follicle bulbs are all packed tightly together in a very orderly fashion and all at a very similar depth in the papillary layer. They are able to form in this manner because the skin is soft and free from hard wrinkle forming collagen fibrils. You can also see how this orderly arrangement of follicle bulbs leads to uniform and well aligned wool fibres above the surface which in turn also leads to even fibre lengths, low CV% and higher comfort factors. In contrast the bottom photo shows messy and disorganised follicle bulbs. The follicle bulbs are at differing depths and are most likely being disrupted by hard collagen fibrils. Above the surface the fibres are clearly entangled, the style and crimp is less pronounced and besides the overall wool quality being inferior this type of wool will also retain moisture longer in the warmer months leading to fleece rot and flystrike. To the right of this photo you can also see an obvious wrinkle with what appears to be lower density and broader fibres growing out of it.

There's an old saying "A picture paints a thousand words" and this is a wonderful depiction of the comparison between a good skin and an inferior one. The take home message should be clear. If you want to breed high quality, weather proof wools then the first thing you need to do is get your skins right. By simply chasing figures and not taking any notice of your skin type you may seem to be making progress however you will be slowly but surely embedding genetic skin biology problems in your flock which will forever impede your ability to replicate large numbers of high quality fleeces.



Photo credit, Pepper Well Merino Stud