

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2017

STUD OWNER C.T. MERRIMAN & SON | STUD PRINCIPAL, MANAGER & CLASSER JONO MERRIMAN

It has been a good finish to 2017. After a tough winter, a spring break came just in time for some pasture growth and to finish off the crops for harvest, fulfilling them towards their potential.

It has been a good year all round for our Koonwarra sheep with the sheep thriving in the environmental conditions here at Little Range. This has seen the 2017 May/June drop of Koonwarra lambs get a great start to life. They have really impressed us as we watched them develop into weaners.

The three outside A.I. sires used for this drop have successfully impacted the traits we were looking for while fitting into the Koonwarra sheep development seamlessly. With one of these, Claypans 323 Poll ram, now residing here at Little Range, we are looking forward to this sire's long-term impact on the Koonwarra Stud. The other two A.I. sires used were Boonook 026 Poll ram and Charinga Doc 240, a horned ram.



Buyer Ian Geppert with his two top priced rams, Lots 70 and 80, with Jono and Charlie holding the rams. Ian with his wife Vanessa and their family are repeat buyers. These two 15–16 month old rams were both paddock raised (not shedded) weighed 99 kgs and 101 kgs with April 2017 shorn fleeces. Both sired by Merrignee bred sires – KWA U-071 (purple family) and KWA W-450 (white family) – from paddock joining. Lot 70 was 21 microns with good SD of 2.9, CV 13.8, CF 99.4% and GFW taken on the April shearing of 105.3%. Lot 89 also had very good fleece figures of 19 microns, SD 3.2, CV 17.5, CF 99.4% and GFW 119.2%.

FLOCK RAM SALES

COMMENCE MID-OCTOBER 2018

There are still some rams available if required, for your upcoming joinings in 2018

2017 RAM SALE RESULTS

KOONWARRA MERINO STUD'S 40TH ANNUAL RAM SALE, held on Wednesday 20th September on-property at Little Range, saw 85 of 90 rams offered sold. This was the best clearance rate since Jono Merriman and C.T. Merriman and Son took over full ownership and management of the Koonwarra Stud in 2014.

With an increase the number of rams successfully sold from 80 in 2016 to 90 in 2017, the top price was \$4,800, reached twice for Lots 70 and 89 – an increase from \$4,500 in 2016. The average was slightly down, by \$80, to \$1,940 and additional rams were sold after the sale.

The 90 rams offered in 2017 averaged 20 microns (an increase of 0.5 microns from 2016) and their average body weight was 92.5kgs (an increase of 14.5kg from 2016).

The 2017 ram sale saw a good crowd of buyers and some interested on-lookers that were closely inspecting the rams on offer on the day. There was a lot of competition for those top rams in the sale with the 2017 sale seeing a new highest price paid for a ram at the Little Range on-property sale. The rest of the sale saw a good spread of price's.

Talking to clients about the 2017 sale their comments were that it was a very even line up of rams, which allowed them to find a lot of rams that fitted their objectives. One client remarked after the sale that he had over double the rams noted as top pick's than he needed so he had plenty of scope to choose his rams from.

KOONWARRA'S 41st ANNUAL ON-PROPERTY RAM SALE

WEDNESDAY

26th SEPTEMBER 2018

Little Range, Boorowa, 1pm

Offering **90 MAY/JUNE 2017 DROP**, paddock raised, horn and poll rams

PREVIEW INSPECTION DAY

FRIDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2018

Little Range, Boorowa, 10am – 4pm

2018 FIELD DAYS

There is no official **GSSM OPEN DAY** this year, but we've decided to display some Koonwarra and Merrignee Stud sheep on **FRIDAY 19 JANUARY**, from 10am to 4pm. We invite all clients, plus others interested in having a look at our sheep, to come along to Little Range. Our display will include 9 month old weaners, 1.5-year old Stud ewes and mixed age Stud ewes and some Sires, including Claypans 323 Poll ram.

Koonwarra Stud will again have up to 15 sheep on display at the annual **SOUTH WEST SLOPES MERINO FIELD DAY** on **TUESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER**, which is held close by in the grounds of the Harden /Murraburrah Showground. It's a great day out and one we highly recommend.



These two lamb rams (at 6.5 months of age) are both sons of Claypans 323 Poll ram. Shorn in December 2017, the horned ram cut over 5kg's and had a body weight of 80.6kg with wool on while his wool tested 18.1 microns. The poll ram, shorn at the same time, cut 4.5kg's and had a body weight of 74kg with wool on while his wool tested 18.2 microns.



Claypans Poll 323 with some of the Koonwarra ewes

COMMENTS FROM CLIENTS

Koonwarra Merino Stud was established in 1947 and has continued to maintain its established reputation for wool can handle many environments, from the Tablelands to the Western Slopes and Plains.

Koonwarra sheep offer clients the potential of big roomy ewes with a strong constitution and good bone structure with bright white fine/medium to medium wool that cuts plenty of kilograms. We have witnessed their doing ability, both in the drought years and in the better seasons, to maintain good body weights as well as fleeces that have the ability to cope with the heavy summer rain patterns.

The young rams offered annually at our on-property auction are totally paddock reared (not shedded) and we will continue with this practice, so that Koonwarra sheep are exposed to any and all conditions that the environment throws at them over the first year of their lives.

Clients, and other interested people, are always welcome to visit Little Range for a tour through the property and to have a look at the Koonwarra sheep in their environment.

We appreciate receiving feedback and have had some great chats with clients over the past six months on how the Koonwarra genetics are progressing and performing for them.

Following are some of our client's comments and feedback to Jono during the 2017 year.

EMMA WEBB, A. & G. OBERG: "The hoggets wool tested 17.6 microns and the ewes wool tested 18.1 microns. We seem

to be cutting more wool but also finer ... which is the dream. The wethers tested beautifully with the main line being 19.5 microns, 75.2 yield, 100mm length, 0.3 Vm and 35 Str. We have worked out between 8 and 9kg of wool cut across all ages of wethers. The 3-year old wethers were sold before shearing in mid-November on a locked-in contract and they went to Tamworth a week off shears, with the tops coming back at \$147/ha and an average of \$127/ha. Unfortunately, due to the size of the majority of these wethers being too big for the contract's top money, they fell into the lower price range."

D.J. & D.A. BARKER: "We had one of the best wool sales results. With some ewe classing carried out on the ewes the year before and chats about how we all thought was the best way to present our wool clip the following year, we decided to make three lines of the main clip. A very top line of the very best wools of the clip, then the good main line, then the remaining line. By doing this we were able to really type up the three lines of wool, which let the buyer, New England Wool, find for the first time that this wool fitted into their specs helping to increase the demand for our wools on the auction floor and resulting in a greater wool price."

DAVIDSON WHITE GULLY: "We had another very good lambing percentage with a 130% lambing without scanning ever being carried out on the flock."

BEREMBEE FARMING PTY LTD: "The 2017 scanning resulted in 150% across all ewes joined, with a lamb down of the singles being 90% and the twinners 120%. Now we know there is such a good conception rate within the flock, it's all about trying to work out how to increase the survival rate."

CLASSING SERVICES

Jono is available to class client's flocks and welcomes the opportunity to see client's sheep at any time in their yearly production cycle. It's very helpful and insightful to understand what type of rams clients require and to see how the Koonwarra progeny are going on our clients properties and in their local environments.



Digby very excited to be setting up for the Ram Sale



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