

# Leahcim tops Classings

SALE SUMMARY

	2024	2023
Offered	105	99
Sold	83	89
Top	\$36,000	\$35,000
Av	\$5777	\$6028

WHILE not starting off at a cracking pace, there was still plenty of action during this year's Classings Classic Poll Merino ram sale, with particularly strong support coming from the west.

Earlier in the sale at the Murray Bridge Racecourse, it was potentially thought Ridgway Advance and Ridgway Poll each had the sale top price wrapped up at \$15,000, but that figure was blown out of the water when it came Leahcim's time to sell their lots at pen 91 and 92.

The first - Leahcim 232733 - sold at \$27,000 to the Whiting family's Stonewolf Poll Merino stud, Gibson, WA.

Sired by Leahcim 182185, the April 2023-drop was in the top 1 per cent for Sustainable Merino index at 166, and top 5pc in ASBVs for post-weaning weight (10.4) and yearling weight (12.5).

The non-mulesed, double poll ram also had a 17.2-micron fleece with 2.6 standard deviation, 15.1 coefficient of variation and 99.4pc comfort factor.

Jordan Whiting, who was at the sale, said they came for that ram based on its figures. They were regular Leahcim clients and would use their sole purchase within their stud.

Just when it was thought the sale top was reached, Leahcim 233079 at lot 92 went even better, selling at an impressive \$36,000 to WA stud and repeat Classings buyer Westwood Poll, with semen shares to WA stud Nepowie and Boorana stud, Woorndoo, Vic.



Nutrien's Gordon Wood, semen shares buyer Will Lynch, Boorana, Vic, vendor Alistair Michael, Leahcim, and Bill Walker, with the \$36,000 top price ram, bought by Westwood Poll, with semen shares also to WA stud Nepowie.



The \$15,000 Ridgway Poll ram with Classings Ltd's Bill Walker, Ridgway Poll's Ric and Matt Ridgway, and Nutrien studstock's Andrew Wilson. Pictures by Alisha Fogden

Bidding on behalf of the syndicate, Classings Ltd's Bill Walker said the ram was selected for its "bold crimp and huge ASBVs".

"The syndicate already have these strong traits, but were looking to enhance numbers, and that top ram certainly does that," he said.

"With 2.4 yearling eye muscle depth and 1.1 yearling fat (both top 20pc in ASBVs) - we can't get enough of that stuff on great skin and quality wool - that

is a hard combination to achieve and this ram had it."

The April 2023-drop ram, sired by Leahcim 203349, also scored 158 on the SM Index (top 5pc) and was in the top 20pc for PWT (8.7) and YWT (10.2). It also had 18.1M wool, with 2.5SD, 13.9CV and 99.8CF.

Westwood Poll's Scott Welke, Cascade, WA, agreed the carcase data and carcase shape of the ram appealed.

"His wool data is good, but we have some big

woolcutters that we need to infuse carcase traits into and he's the ram that I think will work really well," he said.

"I has been a few years since we bought a Leahcim sire - last buying one at Classings in 2019 - but our stud is heavily influence by Leahcim, and the depth of pedigree and quality of data, was why we were confident to go hard on that one."

Leahcim co-principal Alistair Michael, Snowtown, said they were two very different rams, but were chosen to be in the sale for their "good welfare traits, breech wrinkle, dags, worm reduction, and quality wools".

"Lot 91 probably had more of a wool focus - its sire 182185 sold here in 2019 to Westwood Poll for \$13,000, and he's done well for the industry since," he said.

Mr Michael said the family were pleased they returned to the sale, with their three rams averaging \$22,500.

"It's a good reward for the years of data work and what we have done to improve the sheep," he said.

The Welke family were also involved in the \$15,000 sale of lot 37 from Ridgway Poll, Lameroo, taking a semen share for their Westwood Poll stud, while the White family's Nepowie stud, Nomans Lake, WA, bought the ram.

Mr Welke said they had bought from Ridgway Poll before and the genetics worked well.

"It was a good fleece-cutting animal, very safe, and with some positive carcase data, and I think I have the perfect ewes to build an animal with both," he said.

Ridgway Poll's Matt Ridgway said the ram, which they have collected semen from, had attracted a lot of interest at recent field days.

"He had a lot of good traits that are hard to combine - high fleece weight, low fibre diameter and a positive in

fat, with a nice, white crimp wool, which tested really well too," he said.

The April 2023-drop was sired by Ridgway 210542 - a ram the stud sold at the 2022 Hamilton, Vic, Sheepvention for \$6000 - and was in the top 1pc for yearling clean fleece weight (40.4), top 5pc on the SM Index at 162, and top 20pc for PWT (8.8) and yearling fibre diameter (-2.1). It also had 17.5M wool, with 2.7SD, 15.3CV and 99.7CF.

Ridgway Poll sold six rams in total, averaging \$7666.

Ridgway Advance, Senior, sold the other ram that made \$15,000, to Eyre Peninsula stud Calcookara, Cowell.

Their two spring-drop rams made \$15,000 and \$12,000 to Wallaloo Park, Vic, while 21 of their 25-ram offering sold, averaging \$5966.

Overall, 26 studs from SA, Vic and NSW participated in the Classings Classic, including five new studs, with 83 rams sold from the 103 offered, averaging \$5777.

There were 90 registrations from across Australia, plus another nine operating on AuctionsPlus.

Opening the sale, Mr Walker said it was important the industry continued to attract the next generation.

"Kids need to think that Merino breeding can be easy by delving and associating with the right genetics as to breed animals that can survive without mulesing, be productive among all measured traits and of high fertility, and today's sale team in my eyes net all of these demands," he said.

Nutrien was the duty agent, with Nutrien's Gordon Wood, Elders' Tony Wetherall and Quality Livestock's David Whittenbury sharing the selling rostrum.

- ALISHA FOGDEN

## Another Classic Classings Classic

Classings P/L appreciate the support of all stud entries, sponsors, underbidders, purchasers, agents, service providers and the patient desk crew in making Classic '24 yet another Classic!

	OFFERED	SOLD	TOP	AVERAGE		OFFERED	SOLD	TOP	AVERAGE
LEAHCIM S.A.	3	3	\$36,000	\$22,500	HANNATON VIC.	2	2	\$5,000	\$4,000
POLL BOONKE NSW	1	1	\$11,000	\$11,000	STOCKTON VIC.	2	2	\$5,000	\$3,500
SWM S.A.	2	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	TS STUD S.A.	1	1	\$3,500	\$3,500
FOREST SPRINGS VIC.	8	8	\$10,000	\$9,500	BENEFIELD S.A.	2	2	\$4,000	\$3,250
MERNOWIE S.A.	4	4	\$10,500	\$8,250	NANTOURA S.A.	2	2	\$3,500	\$3,250
RIDGWAY POLL S.A.	6	6	\$15,000	\$7,666	RAMSGATE S.A.	3	2	\$3,000	\$3,000
RIDGWAY ADV S.A.	25	21	\$15,000	\$5,966	BORUNG S.A.	3	3	\$3,000	\$2,500
GUNALLO S.A.	8	8	\$11,000	\$5,312	HENDOWIE S.A.	2	1	\$2,200	\$2,200
KIANDRA S.A.	3	3	\$10,000	\$5,200	BADERLOO S.A.	3	3	\$2,000	\$2,000
HYNAM POLL VIC.	5	3	\$9,000	\$5,083	PEPPERWELL S.A.	1	1	\$2,000	\$2,000
COLEBURRA POLL S.A.	1	1	\$4,000	\$4,000	LUCERNBRAE S.A.	4	3	\$2,000	\$1,866
SOHNIC VIC.	4	4	\$5,000	\$4,000	FLAIRDALE S.A.	2	2	\$2,000	\$1,750



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