

Challara kicks off with \$4500 top price

By CLARE PUGH

A VERY strong result for the Challara on-property ram sale last week signified the beginning of what will hopefully be a positive and buoyant 2011 ram selling season.

With a strong crowd of buyers gathered to admire both the lush green Badgingarra crops and the quality sheep on hand it was good news all round as prices peaked at \$4500 with an overall average of \$1274 for 105 rams sold under the hammer.

With a total of 116 rams offered this was pretty good selling and the majority of the 11 passed in rams were snapped up after the sale with Challara stud co-principal Peter Wilkinson stating that they had already been receiving inquiry for further private selections after the sale.

Putting his hand up for both the \$4500 top and the \$3200 second top-priced rams was Des Tilbrook, CA & DA Tilbrook, Yorkrakine, who has been buying the Challara sires on and off over the last eight years.

"Every so often we buy the top rams at this sale and use them to breed our own rams from a select group of ewes," Mr Tillbrook said.

"I picked these two based on their nice plain bodies and their long crimp wool type."

"I also looked specifically at the sires and both rams are by Leahcim 080455 which has been the main leader in Soft Rolling Skins (SRS) meat and wool traits for some time."

Mr Tilbrook has been on the SRS lines for 10 years and runs a flock of 2000 ewes at his Yorkrakine property.

The top ram presented as well on paper as it did in the flesh and notable figures included having the highest wool length measurement in the catalogue at 81mm.

Additional wool figures included 21.3 micron, 15 CV, 3.3 CFW and 72.8 per cent for yield.

It was a credit to Challara



stud principals Ron, Deanna and Peter Wilkinson who had worked tirelessly to put up a team of rams which were extremely well tested and measured.

This year was the first in which the stud presented additional data in the form of the Merino Select Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBV) data system.

"We have been making a lot of headway with this data/benchmarking system and are seeing the results accompanying the visual assessment of the rams," Peter Wilkinson said.

"There are only around 30pc of Merino studs in Australia incorporating this system in their stud recording and we see it as a very important tool in which to identify the strengths and weaknesses of specific traits and genetic history."

Mr Wilkinson referred to comments by WAMMCO supply development manager Rob Davidson in the September 1 issue of *Farm Weekly*, where he stated that ASBVs for all traits would impact on the bottom line.

"They work and their is money in it", Mr Davidson said at the time.

"In our opinion it's all about the clients and providing them with as much relevant information as possible with both the wool and carcase

qualities and in the end the results speak for themselves," Mr Wilkinson said.

A strong contingent of volume buyers who return year after year were also present during the bidding and long-term local client Rubicon, Badgingarra, led the way taking home a total of 10 rams to a top of \$1700 and an average of \$1170.

Brad Eastough, Northampton, made the trip down to fill his ute with nine rams all up paying an average of \$933 and top of \$1400 while GE & HL Lethlean, Badgingarra, followed suit and also took home nine rams paying to a top of \$1100 and an overall average of \$900.

Another Northampton buyer ME & GM Teakle made the journey down the Brand Highway to secure a considerable team comprising eight rams in the top half of the catalogue paying a top price of \$2000 and averaging out at an impressive \$1562.

It was an extremely long journey for GD & G Palmer who came from Ongerup but the family made it worthwhile filling their ute with eight rams averaging out at \$1362 and reaching a top of \$1900.

Also actively bidding on several rams were PA & AJ Negus, Dandaragan, who bought seven rams at an average price of \$1035 and RE

□ Holding the top and second top-priced rams at the Challara on-property ram sale last week were Landmark stud stock auctioneer Deane Allen (left), Greg Wootton, Landmark Dandaragan, buyer of both the \$4500 top and the \$3200 second top-priced rams Des Tilbrook, CA & DA Tilbrook, Yorkrakine and Challara stud co-principal Peter Wilkinson.

sale summary

Offered: 116
Sold: 105
Top: \$4500
Gross: \$133,800
Average: \$1274

& JB Pearson, Piawanning, who bought six at a \$600 average.

Stacy Partners, Watheroo, paid very good money for its team of five rams buying to a top of \$2800 (which was the third top price of the sale) and an overall average of \$2100.

Also buying five rams were locals G & N Wilkinson, Badgingarra, who paid \$1080 on average.

Landmark stud stock auctioneer Deane Allen said it was good to see the support of so many loyal return buyers and that it was testament to the regard in which the Challara breeding was held.

"The quality and consistency of the team was excellent right the way through and this was supported by the fact that even the very last ram to be auctioned in the catalogue attracted great competition making \$1350," he said.

"The fact that the Wilkinsons have tirelessly measured and performance tested these rams to maximise their commercial value has meant their clients are getting the best possible ram for their breeding requirements."