

Challara ram off to Boyup at \$2900

By **MAL GILL**

REPEAT buyers ignored the wet and wild weather and came from as far afield as Boyup Brook, Southern Cross and Northampton for the Challara Poll Merino ram sale at Badgingarra last week.

There were also seven new buyers registered on the day and a new client bought 13 top private-selection rams on the Sunday before the sale.

The weather may have deterred potential buyers - there were 26 registered buyers, two fewer than at last year's sale - with some regular clients unable to make the sale.

But those who did brave the conditions were rewarded with a larger selection of rams than last year and showing exceptional wool growth - a Challara hallmark - since their March shearing.

Challara stud principals Peter and Ron Wilkinson believe the standard of rams they offered last week was their best ever.

But the increased offering of 161 rams, saw 137 sold at auction at prices generally down from last year.

Of the 142 Poll Merino rams offered, 124 sold at an average of \$1124, down from last year's \$1304 average.

The Merinos did better, with 19 offered and 13 sold at an

average of \$1134, up \$110 on last year's average.

Wayne Girando, Girando Family Trust, Boyup Brook, made his trip of more than five hours worthwhile by taking home the top-priced ram.

Mr Girando paid \$2900 for lot 35 which had wool tests including 20.5 micron wool, 15.6 per cent CV, 56.4pc yield and EMD (Eye Muscle Depth) of 35 millimetres.

He also bought two other Merino rams, lot 148 for \$1200 and lot 168, the final sale of the day, for \$1150.

"I was only going to buy one ram today," Mr Girando said after the sale.

"I've been buying Challara rams for about five years now, mainly for the wool.

"They produce good white wool and it stands up to the wet weather down where we are, they can handle the wet.

"They are very fertile too."

Mr Girando said he started buying Challara rams when he farmed a lease block near Badgingarra but had bought a property at Boyup Brook and been farming there for three years.

He mates 1400 Merino ewes back to Merinos and 400 back to White Suffolks.

Glen Tappscott, GJ & TA Tappscott, Morawa, who purchased nine of the higher-



□ Landmark Badgingarra agent Greg Wootton (left), Landmark auctioneer Terry Norrish, purchaser Wayne Girando, Girando Family Trust, Boyup Brook and Challara stud principal Peter Wilkinson holding the \$2900 top-priced ram at the Challara stud's annual on-property ram sale at Badgingarra last week.

priced Challara Poll Merino rams to a top of \$2300, also praised the Challara wool quality.

"It's a good free-flowing wool style that suits us, and their progeny are very good too," Mr Tappscott said.

"They are good paddock-run sheep and they respond well.

"I've been buying these rams for three or four years now."

The top priced Poll Merino was the first sale of the day and went to LH Hunter and Co,

Kojonup, for \$2700.

Its wool tests included 19.5 micron, 17.4pc CV, 67.2pc yield and scanned 40mm EMD.

Volume buyer Alan Harris, Lancelin, bought 14 rams to a top of \$800.

Mr Harris said he was restocking his flock and has been a long-time supporter of Challara.

"We have been buying from them for years - they have good bloodlines, good on the fly side, the lambs put on weight quickly

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CHALLARA ON-PROPERTY RAM SALE (Under the hammer results)

	offered	sold	top	gross	average
Poll Merino	142	124	\$2700	\$139,350	\$1124
Merino	19	13	\$2900	\$14,750	\$1134
Total	161	137	\$2900	\$154,100	\$1125

and they are a good length," he said.

"They also handle wetter conditions well."

Other volume buyers included JF & MM Brennand & Sons, Southern Cross, who went home with 10 rams to a top of \$2000 and K & M Eastough, Chapman Valley, with eight rams to a top of \$1400.

GA & PA Martin & Son, Badgingarra, also bought eight rams, to a top of \$1400, and PJ & AJ Clohessy, Walkaway, bought seven to a top of \$2200.

Landmark auctioneer Terry Norrish was upbeat about the sale.

"I thought it went pretty well, there were more rams on offer than last year and more

opportunity to buy, plus a good spread of buyers," Mr Norrish said.

Mr Wilkinson thanked those who turned up for their support and said a large number of private selection rams were available.

"I really appreciate the people who turned up today to support us, but there were a number of regular buyers who weren't here and that was disappointing," he said.

"(And) I'm also a little disappointed that our sheep seem to be very under-rated by buyers.

"We take pride in presenting genuine paddock-run rams which we think are pretty good – none have been shedded and they've all had 500mm of rain

on their backs.

"But that isn't showing in the MerinoSelect figures.

"The actual raw data performance of the rams looks better than the MerinoSelect data is showing.

"We have the depth of breeding and proven results, to us that is more important than the figures that (MerinoSelect operator) Sheep Genetics is giving to us.

"We had a producer from Young, New South Wales, look at our sheep on the Friday after Dowerin (field days) and he was very impressed, but his assessment hasn't been reflected today."

Mr Wilkinson said he and his father had been muscle scanning for 15 years and now scanned twice a year and were achieving their best results,

getting more wool cut and better growth rates.

"Due to a larger proportion of syndicate sire matings, our linkages are low, resulting in ASBVs that did not reflect the true quality of our rams," Mr Wilkinson said.

He quoted their low paddock worm burden as an example.

Mr Wilkinson said because it was below the minimum required by Sheep Genetics for a worm resistance score, the lack of worm resistance information reflected badly on sale day.

As in previous years, Challara supported YouthCare Moora by donating the proceeds of the sale of the lot 45 ram.

It was bought by Dennis Martin, GA and PA Martin and Son, Badgingarra, for \$1000.

Flock No: 4357 & 1418



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