

UARDRY

August 2007

Sims Uardry "Bertie" wins Riverina Ram of the Year



A Sims Uardry ram, described "as the modern type of Merino the industry is looking for" by Western Australian stud breeder, Ray Lewis, has taken out the prestigious 2007 Elders Riverina Ram of the Year.

The winning entry, Sims Uardry 6.96 ("Bertie"), faced tough competition from twelve of the Riverina's finest merino studs. However the judging panel of Geoff Davidson and John Daniell of South Australia, and Ray Lewis, could not go past the Sims Uardry ram for his scale, shape and excellent wool quality.

The ram weighed in at 94kg at 12 months of age, and tested 20.9 micron, 3.3 SD, 15.9 CV with a 99% Comfort Factor. "Bertie" (or Sims Uardry 6.96) is a half brother to the ram purchased by the Willurah stud for \$20,000 at the 2005 Dubbo National Sale.

In its 25th year, the Elders sponsored Ram of the Year competition commemorated the silver jubilee with the presentation of a bronze ram statue, as well as \$2000 and silver tray. Chris Bowman, President of the Riverina Merino Field Days, thanked Elders for their wonderful support and commitment over the years.

Chris also thanked the Black family, stud classer Ian Lilburne, manager Ben Lane and the Uardry team for their commitment and dedication.

It is the sixth time the Riverina Ram of the Year award has been won by Charles Mills (Uardry) Pty Ltd – a record so far unequalled. Pictured at left with "Bertie" is Ben Lane, Ian Lilburne and Chris Bowman. Photo: The Land

Top Young Rams for Dubbo and On-property Sales

Uardry Stud Foundation Sale - September 25

Lot 1 - Sims Uardry 6.344

March Shorn Junior Champion & Strong Wool Ram, Bendigo

Micron 20.1, SD 3.1, CV 15.4, CF 99.5%

Dubbo National Ram Sale - August 30

Team leader - Sims Uardry 6.96 "Bertie"

Riverina Ram of the Year, Aust Champion All-purpose Ram

Micron 19.8, SD 3.1, CV 15.7, CF 99.5%



More info at
www.uardry.com

Spring Ram Expo at Uardry on Wednesday, August 22

The Supply Chain and its Missing Link

It's interesting that I'm still receiving comments on my article that appeared in last year's Uardry newsletter on supply chains – not least from woolbrokers – but still not much action.

Australia's wool clip at 2.5 Million bales is at its lowest production level in over 30 years and yet it's still very difficult to run a profitable business growing wool.

Sadly, not a lot has changed in the wool industry in the last year. Australia continues to grow some of the finest Merino fibres in the world but the processing and selling of wool have not changed significantly in decades. Wool is still sold, traded and "marketed" in a commodity environment, where:

- price dominates over quality
 - transactions are adversarial
 - relationships between growers (as suppliers) and customers are almost non-existent
 - the fibre's quality is compromised by the push for trading margins
- the authenticity of supply source is lost at the point of first transaction
- Put simply, this is not good enough when the pace of change in other sectors has never been faster.

I don't know of any other industry that has been so effectively caught in a time warp. We seem so cocooned in our enshrined practices that we fail to see the potential of new practices employed so successfully in so many other industries.

Even fresh raspberries in London's department store Marks & Spencer's now have the name of the *grower* printed on the punnet to improve the quality through a supply chain. Why can't the Australian wool industry follow suit? It's not rocket science and doesn't need millions of dollars in Research and Development.

Meanwhile, in the timber industry, which is less shackled by tradition and agri-political forces, we have launched a *world first* in another chain of custody. Simmonds Lumber (another Black owned company), together with its auditor, Certisource and the University of Singapore is using DNA markers to ensure the provenance of

tropical hardwood in an attempt to stamp out illegal logging.

As you may know, there is much concern about deforestation in the tropics, not least because it is a significant generator of greenhouse gases. Previous chains of custody, supposedly authenticating the origin of timber, have been liable to abuse. DNA sampling has the advantage of being independent, state of the art technology and can be checked at any stage in the chain of custody.

The Federal Australian Minister for Forestry and Conservation, the Hon Eric Abetz, said the initiative "*represents a significant advance in our attempts to stamp out illegal logging in our region*". Indeed, the Australian Federal Government granted \$200 Million to the Indonesian government, a few days before our DNA Lumber launch to improve their country's logging practices and thereby benefit the world's environment.

The World Wildlife Fund is also very supportive of this world first initiative. Jana Blair, the WWF Australia Forest and Trade Network Coordinator said "*We see this technology as a very promising tool in the global campaign to stop the trade in illegally harvested timber*". For further details, see the Simmonds Lumber website www.simmondslumber.com.au and Certisource website: www.certisource.net. Merino wool from New Zealand with its supply chain continues to expand; so much so that we wonder if it will run out of merino wool grown in New Zealand. I appreciate Australian wool growers are traditionalists, as were their New Zealand counterparts, but we have to change with the times if we are to remain competitive. We can only underpin and improve the quality of Merino wool if we can reduce the uncertainty and risks that the fibre is exposed to along the processing pipeline. That is why a supply chain, from assured sources, is so important. Indeed, research from North America shows that in the retail garment industry, the authenticity of the fibre is crucial.

New Zealand's Icebreaker brand has made a great play of this in promoting the ecological strength of its Merino fibre

~ Graeme Black, Managing Director
Charles Mills (Uardry) Pty Ltd

and deservedly enjoys international success, as a result.

Isn't it time we, here in Australia, promoted the sustainable environmental advantages of our Merino fibre versus other less environmentally sustainable competitors which are so chemically dependent? Such promotion and authentication could be vouched for in the chain of custody. Buzz words like "*natural*" and "*carbon neutral*" and "*sustainability*" could all be accredited to wool, but it has to start with a chain of custody to prove authenticity. Significant topmakers and spinners are appreciating the improved quality of Merino fibre sourced through an accredited supply chain, but sadly there simply are not enough growers supplying this chain. I thus invite you to contact NewMerino to find out more and provide the missing links to a chain of custody, which has the potential to improve radically the quality and performance of our wonderful Merino fibre.

Whilst I appreciate we are celebrating our 200th anniversary of Merino wool trade with Europe and Sims Cooper's 100th year of business, let's not be hostage to history. We have to focus on the future for it to be viable. I believe supply chains have a crucial role to play in the wool industry as evidenced by their extensive use elsewhere.

The NewMerino supply chain is managed by e-wool who can be contacted on freecall number 1800 656 373. To all our valued customers, I hope the forthcoming season and markets treat you well.

Around the Station

This year we marked 101% of lambs from the special stud and general studs ewes which is great considering the dry conditions.

The 2007 drop of Uardry and Sims Uardry special stud lambs are looking particularly good, with plenty of potential for 2008.

Congratulations to James and the jackaroos for keeping the stock in excellent condition. ~ Ben Lane



Sims Uardry sire ranked first for dual-purpose EBVs in Sire Evaluation Trial

Sims Uardry semen sire, 9.72, is leading the way in the South West Slopes Sire Evaluation of 15 studs. He is ranked first for Estimated Breeding Values of both the 3.5% and 7% dual-purpose indexes, and had the heaviest actual adult clean fleece weight and the highest staple strength.

Chris Bowman attended classing of the Sire Evaluation progeny at Futter Park, Harden where the trial is located. Chris comments "it is pleasing to see the type of sheep 9.72 is producing. They are well grown, even in type and not over developed."

The Sims Uardry sire has produced good progeny not only in Australia but also in Argentina. Further information can be obtained from sally.martin@dpi.nsw.gov.au

NAB Agribusiness and Gordon Uebergang awards

We were honoured to win the inaugural Gordon Uebergang memorial award for the Best Pen of Five Sale Rams at Hamilton Sheepvention earlier this month.

Gordon was a larger than life character and agent who contributed a great deal to the Sheepvention ram sale. He passed away last year and will be sadly missed.

Angela Uebergang presented Uardry with a beautifully framed photo of the Grampian Mountains.

The rams also won the \$750 NAB Agribusiness award in the short wool section.

Which Direction for your Flock?

The Merino industry has had more than its fair share of knocks since the Reserve Price Scheme collapsed in 1991. By knocks I refer to the lack of direction, or perhaps scattergun approach, caused by grower desperation to make wool and sheep production profitable.

The RPS collapse saw the value of sheep and wool plummet. Growers were paid to destroy over 20 million sheep for \$1.50 to \$6.00 per head. Hopes were raised in 1992 when wool prices lifted, only to be dashed again. The big sheep with heavy wools of 22 to 25 micron that filled the bales and supplied the boat trade fell from grace quickly. They created an over supply of wool (the stockpile) and drove the market toward a more medium sheep. The SRS breeding concept appeared which saw some dramatic changes to many studs. They rushed to try something different in an industry which hadn't seen anything this revolutionary since the introduction of Vermonts in the 1890s.

In 2002 the wool market spiked again. This time with big premiums for fine wool and good prices for wool overall. Unfortunately short lived again. The fine wool push continued with sheep breeders sourcing rams from the New England, NSW tablelands and Victoria. They focused on reducing micron at any cost with total disregard for frame, wool cut, doing ability or fertility. The perception and "market intelligence" at the time told us there would be no future for any sheep over 20 microns. For many ram producers it was impossible to sell rams without reams of micron sheets.

As the wool market headed finer, this coincided with repeatedly dry years which also created a hungry fine wool type. The outcome of this is we now have a wool clip which is over supplied with both fine wool types – traditional and hungry fine. This has generally kept prices down.

It is little wonder with all the changes that many sheep producers have been confused with what direction they should have taken to remain profitable.

Underpinning all these trends has been the ever important processor and restocker markets which in general have been able to help supplement the lower returns in wool. The demand for merino ewes for both joining or for mutton has seen a swing back into the larger framed sheep.

We believe today's Merino must be profitable and balanced i.e. has good frame and carcass attributes, early maturity, mothering and doing-ability, higher fertility and cuts good weights of quality high comfort factor medium wools. This type of sheep offers full diversity in the restocker, wool and lamb/mutton markets.

The Sims Uardry stud was established in 1998 to purposely breed a balanced sheep as described above. At the same time in the Uardry stud we have removed some neck development and increased fertility. The Uardry stud continues to offer the excellent quality and wool weight for which the stud is famous.

We believe our timing is right for our clients to benefit from the best genetics available with a relevant and versatile type of sheep which can help long term profitability.

We have included several articles which endorse our product in an independent and objective manner. This may help you decide on which direction for your flock. We hope the season improves for all and see you in the Spring. ~ **Chris Bowman**

Our breeding objectives endorsed by independent sources

Australian Champion All-Purpose Merino Ram Award for the Second Year

Sims Uardry has taken out back-to-back honours, winning the Champion All-Purpose Ram for the second time at the 2007 Australian Sheep and Wool Show held in Bendigo in July.

The medium wool ram, Sims Uardry "Bertie" (6.96), lined up against 43 other rams from studs throughout Australia. The young sire weighed in at 102kg with an eye muscle area of 40mm, fat 7mm and visual score of 23 out of 25. His wool statistics are: 19.8 micron 3.1 SD, 15.7 CV with a Comfort Factor of 99.5%

Prime lamb breeder and meat judge, Col Harris said 'the young ram had excellent structure, scale, length of body, spring of rib and cover'. Wool judge, Allan Harris, commented on the ram's overall wool quality, brightness, style and handle awarding 23 out of 25.

Chris Bowman commented "we are delighted to win the competition two years running and feel it is important for merino breeders to recognise and produce merinos that have dual-purpose attributes. We decided in 1998 to develop the Sims Uardry as a modern and relevant merino, so it is rewarding to receive such positive feedback in a very commercially oriented competition."

The Uardry stud had a very successful showing at Bendigo, also winning Most Successful Exhibitor in Strong Wool Section, Champion March Shorn Ram, Champion Strong Wool March Shorn Ram, Champion Strong and Fine/Medium Wool March Shorn Ewes.

The Uardry and Sims Uardry entries in the Strong Wool section were between 19 and 21 microns.



Photo Weekly Times

'Russ fleeces all the opposition'

by Brian Clancy



Photo Weekly Times

Russell estimates that since introducing Sims Uardry sires to his flock five years ago, his wool clip has increased in value by \$18,000 this year. Even though there were less sheep to shear due to drought conditions, significant gains were made by cutting more wool on a per head basis to increase the overall return.

'Western District wool producer Russ Matthews was more surprised than anyone when he won the champion commercial fleece at the Australian Fleece Competition at Bendigo last week.

The surprise was that his 15.9 micron was classified as ultrafine but produced from ewes bred from Sims Uardry rams.

Mr Matthews's 6.8kg fleece, despite a clean yield of 66.7 per cent affected by a dusty drought, gained near maximum points for weight, hauteur and style. It was valued at \$63.

Mr Matthews, who also runs his own Salony Merino stud at Pura Pura, said he introduced Sims Uardry blood five years ago to lift fleece weight and add size, length and stretch to his Merryville-type ewes.

Apart from last week's victory, which netted Mr Matthews \$500 of veterinary product, he believed the Sims Uardry bloodline had turned his venture – shearing 4000 sheep including 2000 breeding ewes – into a profitable business.

He said his last clip averaged \$1370 a bale, and his lambs were maturing early.'

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Uardry Success at 2006 Dubbo National Show and Ram Sale

Uardry achieved the highest average of \$12,000 for two young March shorn rams.

This was more than double the second highest average and supports Uardry's decision to sell young March shorn rams at Dubbo which present clients with younger rams and thus a longer useful life.

Keen competition from several interested bidders saw the Champion Strong Wool March Shorn Ram, Sims Uardry 5.128, sell for \$14,000 which was the second top price recorded on the day. The 19 micron ram (pictured top) with a comfort factor of 99% was purchased in partnership by Russell Jones' Darriwell stud of Trundle, and Peter L'Estrange's Belswick stud of Condobolin.

Uardry's second ram, judged the Champion All-Purpose Ram at Bendigo, Sims Uardry 5.889, sold for \$10,000. The two-tooth 18.3 micron ram (pictured) weighed 115kg with a comfort factor of 100% was purchased by the Hyfield Jaloran Stud, Wagin Western Australia. Kevin Keatley, principal of Hyfield Jaloran said he 'selected the ram on his strong head, conformation and his wool which would handle higher rainfall.'

Rams in Demand at On-property sale - top price of \$15,000

Rams sold to a top of \$15,000 and averaged \$1,340 for 112 rams at the 2006 Uardry Stud Foundation Sale. The first run of twenty March shorn selected two-tooth rams averaged \$4,225 which follows the successful sale at Dubbo – a combined average of \$4,931 for twenty two two-tooth rams.

The top priced ram was purchased by the Fraser family of the Murrumbucca Stud, Cooma for \$15,000 (pictured right). The ram, Sims Uardry 5.277, who was the Junior Champion Ram at the Australian Sheep and Wool Show created a lot of interest and attracted spirited bidding.

The Frasers also outlaid a further \$5,800 for Lot 12 and \$5,400 for Lot 20 for their Murrumbucca Stud.

Great support was received from return buyers, the Orr family of Parkes who purchased Lot 6 for \$9,000. Laurie and Lyndsay Picker from Binda purchased Lot 2 for \$7,500. Bill Kilpatrick from Great Western, Victoria purchased 2 rams for an average of \$3,300. Keith Turner of Hay purchased Lot 9 for \$2,800. Booabula Stud, Wanganella purchased Lot 5 for \$2,400. Andrew Scott of Pyramid Hill, Victoria purchased Lot 16 for \$2,000.

First time buyers included Stuart Croft from Drumborg, Victoria who purchased Lot 3 for \$7,500. Ian Koch from Moculta, South Australia purchased Lot 7 for \$6,500. The Crouch Bros of Condobolin purchased Lot 4 for \$3,500. Doug White from Wilby, Victoria purchased 2 rams for an average of \$2,600.

Volume buyers included Trevor Henwood of Carrathool purchased 7 rams to a top of \$1,600. Jock Munro, Rankin Springs purchased 6 rams to a top of \$1,000. Ben Cruikshank, Ganmain purchased 6 rams to a top of \$900. Fareham Past Co, Girilambone outlaid \$10,200 for 17 rams. Dan Dowling, Booligal outlaid \$5,000 for 8 rams.



Focus on improving sheep lifts profitability

John Metcalfe of "Cumbagunda" Deniliquin first purchased Uardry rams in 2003 with the sole objective to increase the size and length of body in his sheep, while maintaining wool weight and quality.

John believes the future for merinos lies in producing soft wools for processors, big framed CFA ewes for restockers and wether lambs for the meat trade. The Metcalfes have appreciated the diversity of merinos, particularly when crops struggled during the drought. John sold maiden ewes for \$100 in January, CFA ewes for \$61.50 in May, and prime wether lambs for \$66 to Fletchers International at the Hay June Sale.



Queensland State Sheep Show

Congratulations to Peter and Linda Hacker of the Roselea stud, Muckadilla who took out the Supreme Champion with their poll ram, and the Reserve Champion Ewe. It is pleasing to see the Uardry genetics coming through in their stud.

Our thanks to Will Roberts, President of the Australian Stud Merino Breeders, for the display of Uardry stud ewes and sire he purchased in 2006 for his Victoria Downs stud, Morven.

Duncan Ferguson, manager of the Barcaldine Downs stud, Barcaldine had a well presented team displaying excellent wool quality. Barcaldine Downs have had a successful run with the 8.12 Sims Uardry family.

Well done to Steve and Wendy Picone of "Listowel Downs" Blackall taking out the Uardry trophy for Best Pen of Five Flock Ewes (from 20 entries) for a second year.



Congratulations to Dan and Natalie Dowling of "Merritop" Booligal whose perseverance throughout the drought was rewarded with the Most Successful Exhibitor in the Flock Section at the June 2007 Hay Sheep Show.

The Dowlings won Champion Ewe Hogget, Champion Pen of Ewes, Champion Pen of Five Ewes North of Lachlan River and placed second for Pen of Five Medium Wool Ewes and Pen of Five Merino Ewes.

Important Uardry Events:

Uardry Spring Ram Expo

on Wednesday, August 22 at Uardry previewing two-tooth sale rams

Dubbo National Ram Sale

on Thursday, August 30 offering two March shorn stud rams

Uardry Stud Foundation Sale

on Tuesday, September 25 offering 120 selected (top 5%) two-tooth rams

Flock ram selections

commence in October with 1,000 rams to select from & ready to work

Uardry Dohne Sale

on Thursday, October 11 at "Uardry" offering 100 two-tooth Dohne rams

Date Set for Reunion

April 19 and 20, 2008 is the date set down for the Uardry reunion of jackaroos and staff. Write it in your diary now!

The weekend will include informal lunches and bus tours around the property, as well as a formal dinner at the Waradgery Club on Saturday night.

There will be plenty of time to catch up with old mates, meet with the Black family and current staff, and see how things have changed since your day.

Our biggest challenge will be to contact people. If you are able to assist with details of past employees please phone Chris Bowman or e-mail contact details to Ali Lane at ali.lane@uardry.com

Congratulations to Uardry Jackaroos

- James Armstrong winner of the Pennefather Junior Judge of the Year competition. James prize includes a 3 week hands-on classing trip to New Zealand with merino industry identity and sheep classer, Gordon McMaster.
- Frank Archer who placed third in the Pennefather Junior Judge competition.
- Hugh Macdonald won the 2007 Don McNeil Junior Judging Award at the 2007 Hay Sheep Show, and John Porter third.

The 2007 Uardry Team

From left to right: Alex Corlis, Jason Southwell, Ben Lane, Hugh Macdonald, James Armstrong, Hamish Ross, John Porter, Will MacAlpine, Frank Archer, and Chris Bowman.

We are taking enrolments for the Jackaroo Training Programme for 2009 and 2010, please contact Ben Lane or the Uardry office.



General Manager Chris Bowman 0429 935 101 **Manager** Ben Lane 0427 206 239 **Classer** Ian Lilburne 0428 505 252

Representative Jason Southwell 0429 039 521 **Qld Representative** Boyd Webb 0408 587 012

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