

Kolindale tops at \$2000 at Esperance

By **CAITLYN BURLING**

WHILE the wild and woolly weather blustered about outside the ram shed, the best kind of wool was inside at the Kolindale Esperance ram sale.

Once again making the annual trip to Esperance from their Dudinin base, the Ledwith family presented 93 outstanding Merino and Poll Merino rams for local clients to fill their quotas.

Almost all of the 18 registered buyers took home two or more rams, with bulk buying the order of the day to ensure 84 of the 93 rams were snapped up to gross \$86,150, resulting in a significant lift from last year's average of \$899 to \$1026.

Most of the nine rams passed in were snapped up at the conclusion of the sale, after buyers reassessed their breeding needs and helped make the Ledwiths' ram trailer a bit lighter for the trip home.

To assist buyers with their selections, stud principal Luke Ledwith provided ASBV's for every ram in the sale team for the first time this year, supporting the visual assessment of the rams with quantitative data.

Even though there were fewer Poll Merino rams in the sale, they were still in demand from buyers to gross \$27,050 and

average \$933, with 29 of the 34 finding new homes including the \$2000 top price ram of the sale.

Many buyers of Poll Merino genetics had this one circled in their catalogues but it was long-time clients Rod and Peter McCrea, RN & IK McCrea, Salmon Gums, who placed the \$2000 winning bid.

The McCreas were keen pursuers of Kolindale wool traits and liked the ram from their initial inspection, displaying figures such as 5.4 GFW, 17.7 micron, 2.7 SD, 15.3 CV and 99.7 per cent comfort factor.

The fact that the ram filled the pen from end to end also bode well for the Kolindale sire, as Peter McCrea said they were looking for the ideal combination of size and wool traits.

"He's quite a big sheep and stands very well," he said.

"We really liked the wool on him and on the whole, all his figures were very good.

"He had a long staple and a stylish wool that is well suited to what we are chasing."

The McCreas breed their own rams, so the top sire will go over their nucleus flock and ideally reproduce progeny that mirrored the ram's traits of -0.1 YEMD, -1.1 YGFW and -0.3 YFD.



□ Kolindale stud principals Luke (left) and Matthew Ledwith hold the \$2000 top-priced Poll Merino ram, along with Elders Esperance livestock agents Graeme Alexander and Michael Forward and buyer Peter McCrea, Salmon Gums.

The McCrea family's sire battery was boosted by another three Kolindale rams, one Poll Merino for \$1400 and two Merinos for \$1500 and \$1600 to finish their bidding.

The Merino portion of the sale accounted for 59 rams, 55 of which were purchased under the experienced hammer of Elders auctioneer Don Morgan to gross \$59,100 and average \$1075.

A larger selection of a very even Merino sale team meant

the \$1700 top price was hit twice by the same buyer, Elders Ravensthorpe agent Peter Bower on behalf of the Belli family, Phillips River Grazing, Ravensthorpe.

Four Merino rams were knocked down to the Phillips River account but it was the two with the bigger size and quality wool traits that were worth the extra coin.

"The Belli family have been using these genetics for over 20 years," Mr Bower said.

"Essentially it comes down to the size and wool quality and both of these rams ticked those boxes."

The first Merino rams to make \$1700 measured 5.8 GFW, 17.7 micron, 3 SD, 16.9 CV and a 99.5pc CF, while the second impressed with 4.3 GFW, 17.1 micron, 3.8 SD, 22.2 CV and 99.4pc CF.

Most of the Merino line-up was battled over by two volume buyers who were both paying excellent values to fill their requirements.

Landmark Brindley and Gale representative Peter Gale once again had a strong presence at the sale, chasing Kolindale Merino genetics on behalf of his client Simon Fowler, Chilwell, Esperance.

Mr Gale tallied up a whopping 19 Merino rams and was still looking for more at the conclusion of the sale, paying a top of \$1450 and \$892 average.

Vying for a similar amount and creating competition on the Merino pens was Michael Ietto, Shalimah, Grass Patch, who ended up with 17 Merino rams for a top of \$1600 and an \$1141 average.

Another Grass Patch farmer paying good values was GL & AM Harris, who purchased

five Poll Merinos for an average of \$1330, while Elders stud stock agent Russell McKay was purchasing on behalf of Mark Tink, Camlyn Grazing, Ravensthorpe and rounded up a team of four after paying an average of \$1475.

PM & MD Barrett, Jerramungup, purchased four Merinos and two Poll Merinos for a top of \$1200, while Darren Wiech, DD & EM Wiech, Ravensthorpe, selected six Poll Merino rams to an average price of \$733.

Elders auctioneer Don Morgan said it was an impressive yarding from the Ledwith family, which was reflected in the overall sale result.

"The rams came up well and were very even from beginning to end," Mr Morgan said.

"Good wool matched with good carcase traits on every ram is a credit to the Ledwith family who should be congratulated on the presentation of the rams.

"A bit of rain about the place might have helped everyone along too, with many of the lots that were passed in being sold straight afterwards."



□ With one of the two \$1700 top-priced Merino rams were Kolindale stud connection Matthew Ledwith (left), Elders Esperance livestock agent Graeme Alexander and buyer Elders Ravensthorpe agent Peter Bower. Mr Bower purchased the two equal top price rams on behalf of the Belli family, Phillips River Grazing, Ravensthorpe, from stud principal Luke Ledwith.

KOLINDALE ESPERANCE RAM SALE

(Under the hammer results)

	offered	sold	top	gross	average
Poll Merino	34	29	\$2000	\$27,050	\$933
Merino	59	55	\$1700 (2)	\$59,100	\$1075
Total	93	84	\$2000	\$86,150	\$1026