

Kolindale's increased offering pays off

By **TONY HUGHES-OWEN**

ONE can only declare the Ledwith family's annual Kolindale Merino and Poll Merino ram sale at their Dudinin property on Monday as an outstanding success when comparing it with last year's result.

This year 303 rams, or an extra 103 head, were offered and of these 300 sold at auction, this being 129 more than last year when 171 of the 200 head offered, were sold.

One would have to assume that with such an increase in both the number offered and the number sold the average price would be somewhat less than last year, but not so.

Those 300 head sold this year averaged a very impressive \$1123, up by \$64 on last year's average of \$1059 for 171 sold.

So why the big increase in numbers sold and how come such a result?

Along with the increase in the Kolindale stud flock stud breeding, numbers were boosted with the purchase of ewes and sires from the Lewisdale stud dispersal sale in 2011, and rams of pure Lewisdale blood were indicated as such on the pen cards.

And the result came about no doubt through a lot of hard work by all involved with the Kolindale stud eventuating in 58 potential buyers registering for the sale, up from 34 registrations last year.

A total of 53 were buyers on the day and among them were loyal Kolindale clients, a good number of them who have been buying from the stud for decades.

There was also a very



□ With the Poll Merino which topped the sale at \$3600 when sold to the Carribber stud, Southern Cross, were Elders Narragin representative Paul Keppel (left), Kolindale co-principal Luke Ledwith, buyer Richard Steel, Carribber stud and Carribber stud classer Kevin Broad, local Elders representative Darell Shaddick and sale auctioneer Dennis Roberts.

pleasing roll-up of past Lewisdale ram buyers and the event also attracted a number of first-time buyers.

The overall average wasn't a case of a number of very high-priced rams up front.

After the first 100 had been sold the average was \$1543, after 200 sold it was \$1312 and after 300, \$1123 - it was a case of solid bidding right throughout.

The top price on the day was for the fourth ram offered, a Poll Merino which went at \$3600 to first-time buyer to Kolindale, Richard Steel, JR & W Steel & Son, Southern Cross.

Mr Steel and his son John, run the Carribber Poll Merino stud and they saw the Kolindale line-up at the

Dowerin GWN7 Machinery Field Days last year.

They were impressed and the need for fresh genetics, after a recent good sale of their rams at Merredin, brought the Steels to the sale where they were assisted by Elders stud consultant Kevin Broad.

The current wool test on the ram showed a 19.7 micron, 3.3 SD, 16.8 CV and 99.4 per cent comfort factor.

The Merino ram penned before the top Poll, became the second top-priced ram and the top-priced Merino at \$3200, when sold to Ashley and Leah Starceвич, Cramphorne Farms, Muntadgin.

Breeding rams for their own commercial flock, Mr Starceвич has been a regular buyer of top rams from the Kolindale and Lewisdale studs.

His choice this year had a current wool test of 19.2 micron, 3.4 SD, 17.7 CV and 99.8pc CF.

Mr Starceвич went on to purchase another Merino a few lots later for \$1800.

The next highest price was \$2700 for a Poll Merino ram

bought by Simon Hill, C & M Hill, Gnowangerup, one of the first-time buyers to the stud.

Mr Hill was the losing bidder on the \$3200 top-priced Merino ram and went on to buy another Merino at \$2500, one of three Merinos in a total of 12 head, all at prices well above the \$1000 mark.

Another to go home with 12 head was Kolindale client of eight years Peter Leach, MG & M Leach, Corrigin, who went to a top of \$2000, all his purchases coming from the Merino offering.

Other long-term regular clients buying in the higher-priced bracket, included the Orchard family, GC & DM Orchard, Wickepin, who have been on Kolindale since the stud was first registered in 1963 and this year they went home with seven up to \$1900 for a Merino, the balance being Polls.

Clients of 22 years, Barry and Brenton Hardie, Denabling Grazing Co, Narragin, bought seven from the Merino offering up to \$1800 and Kevin and Barbara Couper, KJ & BI Couper, Hyden, clients of 24 years, went home with six, being three of each at up to \$1900 for three.

Also in from Hyden and again long-term clients, Mitch Mouritz and his father Kent, RBY Mouritz & Co, also bought six from both sections at up to \$2300 for a Poll.

Tony and Marie Di Russo, AA Di Russo & Sons, Hyden, clients of Kolindale for 38 years, were buyers of 10 this year, all Merinos up to \$1900, except for one Poll at \$1800.

Commenting on the sheep industry after the sale, Mr Di Russo said that for many, the last 20 years hadn't been the best for sheep producers generally, but their sheep were part of the family's farming enterprise and over the years on the Kolindale blood they had bred up a flock they are very proud of and one which they could never replace and were sticking with breeding pure Merinos.

KOLINDALE ON-PROPERTY SALE

(Under the hammer results)

	offered	sold	top	gross	average
Poll Merino	217	214	\$3600	\$237,350	\$1109
Merino	86	86	\$3200	\$99,650	\$1159
Total	303	300	\$3600	\$337,000	\$1123