

# SHROPTALK



The Newsletter of the Shropshire Sheep Breeders' Association

Summer 2019

## NATIONAL SHOW AND SALE REPORT



**THE Traditional, Native and Rare Breeds Show and Sale were held at Halls Auction Centre in Shrewsbury on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2019. The numbers of sheep entered and forward was down on the previous year particularly on the male side.**

The Show started at 9am with Les Newman, a former president of the SSBA, judging instead of acting as ring steward. Thank you to Jan Morris for taking over that role.

The Shearling Ram Class was won by Tushbrook Eagle (02XY18) from Eleanor Russell, sired by Stonegrove Conway. Eleanor also supplied the Reserve, Tushbrook Electric Shock (12XY18), by the same sire.

The Ram Lamb Class was won by Brereton (804DB19), from Mark and Sue Shimwell, sired by Brereton Stirling, with Hornpipe Flagon (271FN19) from Alison Schofield as Reserve. Flagon was sired by Hornpipe Blackbird.

Moving on to the females, the Shearling Ewe Class was won by Mark and Sue Shimwell with 735DB18, again by Brereton Stirling, with a Stonegrove Livestock entry in second place (304XP18), sired by Stonegrove Carthorse.

The Ewe Lamb Class was another success for the Shimwells with Brereton 800DB19 first and 805DB19 second, these

*Pictured above: Champion of the Shropshire Show, a ewe lamb from the Brereton Flock, with breeder Sue Shimwell, Judge Les Newman and Claire Jakeman, sponsor of the Morley Trophy and winner's sash.*

lambs being sired by Brereton Stirling and Roydon Rumble respectively.

No senior sheep were forwarded for either ram or ewe classes.

The championship went to the Brereton Ewe Lamb with Eleanor Russell's Shearling Ram reserve and also the best opposite sex to the champion. It was also the best sheep owned by a Junior Member.

In the Sales Ring prices were down across the board with shearling ewes showing the lowest fall. The figures are summarised on page 3.

The top price was 520 guineas for Alison Schofield's ram lamb, the second in the show class, sold to Sue Farquhar. The first prize shearling ram from Eleanor Russell sold for 400 guineas to Mark and Sue Shimwell.

Mr. & Mrs. Durnford's shearling ram, Fivelines Utopia (498AEA18) by Ushers Erasmus went for 380 guineas to BR & TJ Powell & Son. The first place ram lamb sold for 280 guineas to Messrs Perks and Ball.

*Continued on page 3*



**THE SSBA'S Council is delighted to announce that two Shropshire rams will take part in the next phase of RamCompare, one of the UK's most important breeding projects.**

With support from across the food chain, RamCompare is a nationwide trial involving all the main terminal sire breeds of sheep. It has enlisted a number of very well run commercial sheep farms to compare the performance of high genetic merit rams from different breeds.

The Shropshire tups will be used on a farm in Cornwall, running a flock North Country Mules. Cross-bred lambs will be monitored from the 2020 crop. Turn to page 3 for more details about the trial and what will be assessed.

"One of our long-term objectives for the breed has been to promote the Shropshire as a crossing sire and see our rams recognised again as excellent producers of lambs for the meat market," comments Pippa Geddes the Shropshire Breed Improvement Scheme Coordinator.

"The opportunity to participate in RamCompare is only open to our breed because we have flocks enrolled on Signet's Performance Recording Scheme.

"We look forward to seeing how the Shropshires compare with Charollais, Hampshire, Meatline, Suffolk and Texel rams used in the same flock. Hopefully RamCompare will be another important stepping stone towards re-establishing the Shropshire as a terminal sire."

### **The SSBA's Annual General Meeting**

will take place on Saturday  
30th November at Sandwell  
Park Farm, West Bromwich  
B71 4BG

*Please support your breed  
society by attending.*

## DON'T FORGET CHANGES TO MV SCHEME RULES

AS reported in the Spring *ShropTalk*, there have been some significant changes to the Maedi Visna Scheme rules. These have been put in place to protect the health status of accredited flocks.

### Test all added animals

It is now mandatory that all animals added to any MV Accredited Flock have to be tested between 6 and 12 months after arriving, even though they come from an MV Accredited Flock.

The SAC, which runs the MV Scheme, strongly advises that added accredited animals are tested at the time they are added to the flock. Animals will need to be tested again in the 6 to 12 month window, to prevent a breach of the rules.

Any bought-in accredited animal that is to be sold on before its 6 to 12 month individual test on purchased accredited animals has been completed should be tested prior to sale and then subject to the 6-12 month test requirement once in the new flock.

### MELTON MOWBRAY

THE Traditional and Native Breeds Show and Sale at Melton Mowbray Market on 13th and 14th September is no longer designated an official breed society event for Shropshires. Breeders can still sell their sheep at the venue, but there will no longer be a show for our breed. Schedules and catalogues are available from Grassroots Systems' Website ([www.grassroots.co.uk](http://www.grassroots.co.uk)).

### PAY FOR SHEEP REGISTRATIONS WHEN YOU APPLY FOR THEM

MEMBERS are reminded that they must pay the registration fees for sheep *at the same time that the application to register an animal, or animals, is made.*

Payment can be by cheque, or by BACS - but if you are sending money by bank transfer please make sure you have tagged the payment so that the treasurer knows what it is for (eg "Sheep Regs" followed by your flock letters).

Invoices for registrations are not sent out unless the Registrations Clerk, Ruth Mawer, is specifically asked to provide them. It is up to the member wishing to register sheep to pay the correct amount. With immediate effect, no animals will appear as "Registered" on Grassroots' Pedeweb until the correct registration fee has been received by the breed society.

## SHROPTALK

is edited by Pippa Geddes  
[pippa@aldertonfarm.co.uk](mailto:pippa@aldertonfarm.co.uk)  
and printed by Simon Mackay  
[shropshire\\_sheep@hotmail.com](mailto:shropshire_sheep@hotmail.com)  
[www.shropshire-sheep.co.uk](http://www.shropshire-sheep.co.uk)  
Check out the latest news on our Facebook page:  
"Friends of Shropshire Sheep"

## SCRAPIE GENOTYPING AND SCRAPIE MONITORING

**SCRAPIE is a Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) disease, of the same family as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle. Both are infectious wasting diseases which affect the nervous system. The genetic makeup (genotype) of a sheep has a profound effect on which sheep may become infected.**

Scrapie genotype in sheep is stated as a pair of three letter alleles (xxx/xxx). Each letter in the allele relates to a codon position in the relevant DNA. The three codons tested in the UK and the resulting five alleles are shown below:

136	154	171
A	R	R
A	H	Q
A	R	H
A	R	Q
V	R	Q

**Key: Amino acids: A = alanine; H = histidine; Q = glutamine; R = arginine; and V = valine**

Scrapie genotype falls into one of five genotypes, called Type / R 1 to 5. (Also known as G1 to G5 in some European countries).

R1 = ARR/ARR which are most resistant  
R2 = ARR/AHQ, ARR/ARH, ARR/ARQ which are resistant

R3 = AHQ/AHQ, AHQ/ARH, AHQ/ARQ, ARH/ARH, ARH/ARQ, ARQ/ARQ which have little resistance

R4 = ARR/VRQ which are susceptible  
R5 = AHQ/VRQ, ARH/VRQ, ARQ/VRQ, VRQ/VRQ which are highly susceptible

The good news is that no Shropshire has been found with the VRQ allele, so no Shropshires fall into the R4 or R5 types.

A lamb gets an allele from each parent, so the laws of probability come into play in predicting Scrapie genotype in progeny. Eg: ARR/ARR crossed with ARR/ARQ can give ARR/ARR (50%), ARR/ARQ (50%). ARR/ARQ crossed with ARR/ARQ can give ARR/ARR (25%); ARR/ARQ (50%), ARQ/ARQ (25%).

Scrapie genotyping is *not* a test that will tell you if an animal has Scrapie or is free from Scrapie - it simply tells you which category of risk your tested animals are in.

There are several laboratories that offer genotype testing where you can sample your own sheep, including: Innovis ([Innovis.org.uk](http://Innovis.org.uk)) using a blood spot; AgriBiogen available through the Charollais sheep society ([charollais-sheep.com](http://charollais-sheep.com)) using an ear tissue sample; Eurofins ([eurofinsgenomics.eu](http://eurofinsgenomics.eu)) using an ear tissue sample; Neogen ([genomics.neogen.com](http://genomics.neogen.com)) using a nasal swab.

The SSBA does not recommend any one lab or testing method over any others. The SSBA has looked at whether we could put together a society run scheme (like the Charollais society) but our volumes are not high enough to justify it to the labs or recover the admin costs.

### Scrapie Monitoring is not the same as Scrapie Genotyping

SRUC ([sruc.ac.uk](http://sruc.ac.uk)) runs a scheme on behalf of DEFRA called the Scrapie Monitoring Scheme / Scrapie Monitored flocks ("SMS / SM"). The full rules and requirements are on the SRUC website. Essentially it is a scheme designed to show that registered flocks are free from Scrapie and eligible to export live stock.

If you want to see which SSBA members are SMS, then go to [psghs.co.uk](http://psghs.co.uk). Within the scheme there are two categories - Controlled Risk (3 years minimum scrapie free under the scheme rules) and Negligible Risk (7 years minimum).

SMS flocks can only buy in animals from the same or a higher category of SMS member or those certified R1 Scrapie genotype by SRUC.

If you are not SM and want to export sheep (which must be ARR/ARR) or sell sheep into an SMS flock, then the testing must be done by the SRUC ([sruc.ac.uk](http://sruc.ac.uk)) and the blood sample has to be taken and sent off by your vet. This is obviously more expensive than self-testing. Forms and prices are available on the SRUC website.



There are also further details about the SMS on the society's website under the Livestock News archive section.

This is necessarily a quick run through a large and complex area. For any queries or other scrapie testing and monitoring questions, your Council contact is Peter Geddes ([peter@aldertonfarm.co.uk](mailto:peter@aldertonfarm.co.uk)).

## WHAT IS RAMCOMPARE?

RamCompare is a major new partnership which will enable the UK sheep industry to drive genetic improvement forward through the inclusion of commercial data about the quality of cross-bred lambs in genetic evaluations.

It involves a number of partners right along the food chain. Nominated Signet-recorded rams are selected from various terminal sire breeds and used on a number of commercial farms in the UK. Three years in, the project has already tested 138 rams and over 12,000 of their progeny and is one of the largest trials of its kind.

## WHAT INFORMATION IS COLLECTED?

Data on growth and carcase traits is collected from lambs under commercial conditions: fed back directly into genetic evaluations and used to produce estimated breeding values (EBVs)

The RamCompare Dataset includes:

**Ewe Records** - breed, age, weight an body condition score throughout the year.

**Lambing Records** - including sire and dam, number born, birth weight, ease of birth, deaths and fostering information.

**On-Farm Lamb Performance** - weights at around 56 days, 90 days (including ultrasound muscle and fat depth measurements) and at sale.

**Carcase Information** - carcase weight, conformation, fat class and age at slaughter.

**Saleable Meat Yield** (by weighing primal joints) and tenderness score on loins (using shear force analysis) are collected from a significant proportion of the lamb crop (about 30% of each progeny group).

**DNA Samples** for future research.

## HOW ARE THE RESULTS PUBLICISED?

RamCompare enables the performance of progeny by different high index rams from various terminal sire breeds to be compared. The data from the top 15 rams for the following traits are published:

Leading Rams for Primal Yield and Shear Force;  
Leading Rams for Scan Weight;  
Leading Rams for Muscle Depth;  
Leading Rams for Fat Depth;  
Leading Rams for Carcase Weight;  
Leading Rams for Carcase Conformation;  
Leading Rams for Carcase Fat Class;  
Leading Rams for Days to Slaughter and  
Leading Rams for Overall Carcase Merit.

RamCompare is covered widely in the farming media and it also organises open-days and events on the trial farms to publicise the results.

## SHROPSHIRE TO JOIN



The two rams selected for the RamCompare trial are 2-shear Hayne Oak 1343LX17 (pictured left) and Ushers Alexander (pictured right, as a 5-shear ram). Both are ranked in the top 25% of the breed for Terminal Sire Index. 1343LX17 was bred by Liz Bowles and Mike Bray and will be used as a natural service sire in the trial. He is by Hayne Oak Nelson, a ram that has topped the rankings for Terminal Sire Index in recent years. Ushers Alexander, by Westwood Challenger, was bred by Marion and Aubrey Webb and is currently owned by Helen and Nick Forsyth (Hodghust Flock). Ewes on the trial will be bred to him by Artificial Insemination. Alexander has been one of the leading sires on the Breed Improvement Scheme since 2014, scoring highly for Terminal Sire Index and Maternal Index.

### FUNDERS



### COLLABORATORS



### SUPPORTERS



## SHOW AND SALE REPORT *Continued*

Some 48 of the females forward sold. 380 guineas was paid for Mark and Sue Shimwell's first place ewe and also for Stonegrove Livestock's ewe (320XP19) by Stonegrove Chester. Both were bought by CG Harris & Son. The first prize ewe lamb and Show Champion went for 250 guineas to RE & JB Davies with three more ewe lambs from the same flock being sold for 200 guineas each to three different buyers.

*Report by Les Newman*

### Sale Results

Shearling Rams: Top 400gns; 6 average £312.  
Ram Lambs: Top 520gns, 4 average £331.  
Adult Ewes: Top 150gns, 1 average £158.  
Shearling Ewes: Top 380gns, 23 average £241.  
Ewe Lambs: Top 250gns, 24 average £148  
58 head average £209  
10 rams sold from 12 forward  
48 females sold from 50 forward.



## SHOW RESULTS

### Shearling Ram Class

1. Ellie Russell
2. Ellie Russell
3. Jeanette and Robert Hares

### Shearling Ewe Class

1. M and S Shimwell
2. Stonegrove Livestock
3. M and S Shimwell

### Ram Lamb Class

1. M and S Shimwell
2. Alison Schofield
3. C and K Weaver

### Ewe Lamb Class

1. M and S Shimwell
2. M and S Shimwell
3. Robert Webb

*No animals were forward in the Adult Ram and Adult ewe classes.*

**Champion** and winner of the Morley Trophy: M and S Shimwell (ewe lamb).

**Reserve Champion** and winner of the Roydon Trophy for the best opposite sex to the champion: Ellie Russell (shearling ram). **Pictured on the left.** Winner of the Southworth Shield for the best prepared pen of two or more sheep: Ellie Russell.

## BIRTH NOTIFICATIONS

MEMBERS are reminded that all lambs *must* be Birth Notified with the SSBA within 90 days of the end of lambing.

Birth Notification is simply a record of your lambs' ear tag numbers, dates of birth, litter size (ie single, twin or triplet) and parentage.

**It costs nothing to Birth Notify but it is absolutely essential, because only animals that have been birth notified are eligible for registration.**

You can Birth Notify your animals on-line yourself via Grassroots' Pedeweb, or you can print off a paper form from the Society's website, complete that and return it to the Registrations Clerk. She will then enter the records on your behalf (there is no extra charge for this).

## WANTED: GOOD QUALITY, OLD RAMS WITH THE ARQ/ARQ SCRAPIE GENOTYPE

AN OVERSEAS member of our breed society based in Australia is looking into the possibility of importing ram semen from the UK.

Correct breed type is very important and in order to meet the very stringent Australian import requirements, rams must have the ARQ/ARQ scrapie genotype. They must also be at least five years old. At the end of the semen collection period, the ram will have been slaughtered and seven body tissues examined to ensure there is no sign of scrapie in the animal. This is obviously a "big ask", but if you have a ram with the right genotype that is coming to towards the end of his breeding life, please consider making him available for this project. There are only a small number of Shropshire flocks in Australia and breeders are consequently very keen to bring in a new bloodline. If you think you may have a suitable ram, please contact Pippa Geddes (01743 741689) or email: [pippa@aldertonfarm.co.uk](mailto:pippa@aldertonfarm.co.uk).

## HIGHEST PRICED ANIMAL SOLD AT THE NATIONAL SHOW AND SALE 2019



Ram lamb Hornpipe Venom, bred by Alison Schofield and sold for 520gns.

# JUNIOR MEMBERS' NEWS

## INTRODUCING OWEN POWELL, GOBLINDALE FLOCK

I'm Owen Powell of Goblindale Shropshires. You may have seen my face in the *ShropTalk* before. I have been showing sheep now for six years and have learnt so much from all the Shropshire sheep breeders

My journey started 2013 at the national show and sale where Goblindale Shropshires began with four ewes and a ram.

Our first year lambing was fantastic, lambing down at 225% all lambed in five days - I have to say it hasn't been that good since.

I really enjoy all aspects of dealing with the sheep from the husbandry (eg worming and foot trimming) to lambing and showing. I'm hoping to take some lambs to market this year as that is something I haven't managed to do yet as I have been in school.

I had a really special show last year when the Goblindale Flock got Champion and reserve Champion Shropshire at our Local Show (Oswestry).

I would like to thank Uncle Charles and Auntie Beckie and Taid for letting me and my mum show their amazing stock and practice

my shepherding skills on them and help me grow as a person in the sheep industry. I would like to thank everyone from the Shropshire sheep society for letting us complete in The National Young Stars where I won The Best U16 Trimmed section last year. I'm going to try my hardest to do you proud again this again.

This year I had a fabulous Cheshire Show were my Breeding Ewe came first on the Tuesday in the Shropshire class and first on the Wednesday in the Any Other Breed section and then she helped me to win the Young Handlers where I qualified for the Young Shepherd of the Year final.

I would like to wish everyone a good tuppung and a great lambing and a great show season to come - and if anyone needs any help I will try my hardest to help.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, THANK YOU TO MUM AND DAD FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT !



## NATIONAL YOUNG STARS SHROPSHIRE TEAM ENTRIES

The SSBA entered two sheep teams in this year's National Young Stars Competition: In the untrimmed section the "The Orchard Graziers" and in the trimmed section "Team Shropie".

Our youth coordinator, Rosie Lee, organised a sheep camp as part of the trans competition preparation on Saturday 10th August and Sunday 11th August. This included a full programme of activities and was open to anyone who wanted to know more about the NYS event or just generally about being a junior handler, showing etc. It covered aspects of trimming, show ring etiquette, carcass identification, stock judging and public speaking. There will be a full report on camp and the NYS competition in the next edition of *ShropTalk*.