

SHROPTALK



The Newsletter of the Shropshire Sheep Breeders' Association

Summer 2012

MILLENHEATH RAM TAKES TOP HONOURS AT WESTERN SHOW & SALE



Jeanette Hares with Millenheath Jimmy, receiving her rosette and prize card from the judge, George Jones.

SHEARLING ram Millenheath Jimmy, bred by Jeanette Hares of Higher Heath, Whitchurch, Shropshire was the Breed Champion at the SSBA's Western Show and Sale at Shrewsbury livestock market on 30th June.

This was the first breed championship for the Millenheath Shropshires and a tremendous achievement for a flock that was established only three and a half years ago.

Overall, a total of 18 breeders exhibited and sold Shropshires at the event, which attracted buyers from around the country and overseas. Good prices were achieved and a new record price was set for a ewe lamb. Of the 66 Shropshire females forward, 62 (94%) were sold. The clearance rate for males was lower at 73%, with 16 sold from a total of 22 rams and ram lambs forward on the day.

Four new flocks were also recruited by the breed society, and our Secretary reported that an additional four flocks had applied for membership in the previous week - which is all excellent news for the SSBA!

With sunshine luckily the order of the day, the

show classes were held outside the main market building. This year's judge was George Jones from Chirk, near Wrexham, Clwyd, a well-known breeder of Shropshires who dispersed his own "Chirk" flock just a few years ago on his retirement.

The show started with the classes for males: In the class for Senior Rams, the winner was Sue Farquhar's Piddington Kerr, a 2010 son of Sansaw Bowman. Millenheath Jimmy, by Alderton James, was the winning shearling ram; and Aubrey and Marion Webb's ram lamb, a son of Ushers Vulcan, took the red rosette in the ram lamb class. This was the largest class of the Shropshire show in which 13 animals were exhibited.

In the show section for females, a 2010-born ewe by Ushers Roger from Robert Webb's Clipston flock won the breeding ewe class. A daughter of Sidedowns Fable from John and Pauline Bowles' Sidedowns Flock was the winning shearling, while a ewe lamb by Ushers Shaun from Peter and Pippa Geddes's Alderton Flock won the ewe lamb class.

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DIARY DATE

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SSBA

The AGM will be held on Saturday 10th November at Sandwell Park Farm, West Bromwich. A free buffet lunch will be provided. Please support your breed society by attending.

NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR FLOCKS TO JOIN THE BREED IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

THE SSBA's Council has agreed to extend the financial support it provides to the Shropshire Breed Improvement Scheme (SBIS), primarily to encourage new breeders to start recording the performance of their sheep with Signet.

The breed society is now actively seeking applications from up to eight Shropshire flocks based in the UK to join the SBIS in time to record the performance of the 2013 lamb crop. If accepted onto the SSBA's subsidised Scheme, these flocks will receive a payment of £125 per year for three years, provided they commit to recording continuously over that time period and to the following additional requirements:

1. Provide timely and accurate pedigree information and weight records to Signet;
2. Use an approved Signet technician to scan at least a proportion of their lamb crop each year to determine muscle and fat depth;
3. Complete a general questionnaire about their flock management regime;
4. Agree to make their Signet evaluations available to the breed society, so that genetically superior animals can be identified.

Flocks of any size can apply, as long as they have not previously received an SBIS subsidy from the SSBA. However, in order to produce meaningful results, they should aim to breed at least 25 lambs from one stock sire over two seasons. Exceptions to this principle may be made if the stock rams concerned have strong genetic links with other previously recorded animals.

Flocks that participated in the 1st and 2nd phases of the SBIS may continue to record their sheep with Signet, and many have already indicated their intention to do so. Their results will be included in the annual Shropshire evaluation carried out by Signet.

Application forms are available from SBIS Coordinator, Sue Shimwell, 01260 270061, email: s.shimwell@btinternet.com. The deadline for applications is 31st August 2012. For more information about the SBIS, see the enclosed breed society leaflet, visit the SBIS page on the SSBA's website, or visit the Signet website: www.signetfbc.co.uk.

www.shropshire-sheep.co.uk

The SSBA's website is updated once a month by the breed society's secretary, Simon Mackay. The deadline for submitting news and amendments required for Sales Register entries is the 5th of each month. See page 4 for Simon's contact details.

EASTERN SHOW AND SALE

THE breed society's second show and sale in 2012 will take place on Friday 7th and Saturday 8th of September at Melton Mowbray Livestock Market. Show classes will commence at 2pm on Friday afternoon and the sheep will be sold through the auction ring the following day.

It's not too late to enter stock in this event, as the closing date for entries by post is 27th July, or 3rd August if entered on-line. Schedules are available from www.grassroots.co.uk/melton.html, or from Melton Mowbray Market 01664 562971.

Restriction On Entries Per Flock

Each SSBA member can enter up to two males and 15 females. All females must be fully registered two weeks before the closing date of the sale. Males must be birth notified and eligible for registration.

Minimum Weights For Lambs

Male and female lambs must weigh at least 50kg and 45kg, respectively. They will be weighed on arrival at the market.

Breed Inspections

All animals will be inspected by a breed society inspector prior to the showing classes. Inspection cards will be displayed on the pen fronts after inspections have taken place

Showing Sheep

All males entered in the show and sale MUST be shown.

Show classes for females are optional. SSBA rosettes and prize cards will be awarded to 6th place in all classes.

Upset Prices

The minimum upset prices are as follows:

Ewe lambs: 100gns; Shearling ewes 150gns; Ram lambs: 140gns; Shearling rams: 200gns; Older ewes and rams: at vendors' discretion. Vendors may set higher reserve prices for their animals if they wish.



Some of the exhibitors in the ram lamb class (left to right) Alison Schofield, Jeanette Hares, Robert Webb, Aubrey Webb, Anne Harvey, Marion Webb, Liz Bowles, James Thompson and (just partially visible) Claire Jakeman.

Western Show & Sale Report - continued

Standing Reserve to the Shropshire Champion, Millenheath Jimmy, was Sue Farquhar's senior ram, Piddington Kerr. Best Opposite Sex to the Champion was awarded to the Alderton ewe lamb.

Millenheath Jimmy was also the Reserve Interbreed Sheep Champion at the event. The overall Champion for the second year running was a Grey Faced Dartmoor bred by Liz Dawson of Criggion, near Shrewsbury.

LIVELY SALES ACTIVITY

The Shropshire sale was well supported attracting a large crowd around the auction ring. Sales Officer Claire Jakeman had been asked by two overseas buyers to purchase stock on their behalf for subsequent export to Germany and Northern Ireland, which added to the demand for good quality sheep.

The Show Champion, Millenheath Jimmy was once again in the limelight, making the highest price of the day (520gns). He was sold to Natural England for their Stoke Flock at Parsonage Down National Nature Reserve near Salisbury, Wiltshire.

The highest price for a ram lamb (440gns) was achieved by Ushers KX17612 who won his show class earlier in the day. With very high Signet performance figures that put him in the top 5% of the breed, he was sold to Paul Stead & Val Tew, Timberline Flock, Banbury.

The highest priced female sold was a ewe lamb from the Hayne Oak flock sired by American ram Groverman M432382 through Artificial Insemination. This was the first animal with US bloodlines to be offered for sale in the UK. Her show style and unusual breeding attracted great interest from buyers. She was eventually purchased by Claire Jakeman for a breed record price of 430gns.

Purchases for the overseas buyers included Shearling ram Piddington Logan who goes to Peter Roos in Germany and a Morley ram lamb (107KD12) which was purchased for the Northern Irish buyer, James Kiernan. These

animals had been chosen by the buyers in advance from the catalogue. Eight females were also purchased for Mr Kiernan, including animals from the Alderton, Clipston, Hayne Oak, Piddington, Roydon and Watsdyke Flocks.



Above: Nick Hyne from Halls with Clive Davies (right), winner of the Halls Trophy.

Sale Prices (with numbers sold in brackets):

Adult Rams: Top £500 Average £446 (2);
Shearling Rams: Top £520, Average £470 (5);
Ram Lambs: Top £440, Average £259 (9);
Adult Ewes: Top £200, Average £185 (5);
Shearling Ewes: Top £250, Average £200 (25);
Ewe Lambs: Top £430, Average £161 (32).

SHOW RESULTS & TROPHY WINNERS

Senior Ram Class

1. S Farquhar
2. R T Davies & Co
3. J Thompson

Shearling Ram Class

1. J Hares
2. E Bowles & M Bray
3. Stonegrove Livestock

Ram Lamb Class

1. AL & ME Webb
2. Stonegrove Livestock
3. J Thompson

Breeding Ewe Class

1. R Webb
2. E Bowles & M Bray
3. M & S Shimwell

Shearling Ewe Class

1. J & P Bowles
2. S Farquhar
3. J Ballard

Ewe Lamb Class

1. P & P Geddes
2. E Bowles & M Bray
3. M & S Shimwell

Champion and winner of the Morley Trophy: J Hares (Shearling Ram)

Res Champion: S Farquhar (Senior Ram)
Winner of the Roydon Trophy for the Best Opposite Sex to the Champion:
P & P Geddes (Ewe Lamb)

Winner of Southworth Trophy for the best prepared pen of two or more sheep:
J & P Bowles

Winner of the Halls Trophy for the highest sale price achieved by a Shropshire from a small flock:
R T Davies & Co (Senior Ram - 500gns)

BREED STANDARDS: THE TEETH

“Teeth should be even, upright and sit well on the pad, not protruding beyond the edge of the pad (overshot or bulldog mouth), or be set too far back (undershot or parrot mouth)”



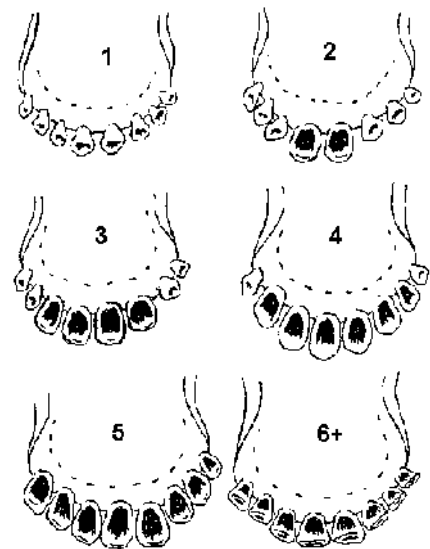
Note: Young lambs' teeth may look suspect, particularly if initially reared inside. Splayed or slightly overshot teeth can come right once lambs are outside and pulling at grass.



X Overshot Jaw



X Undershot Jaw



Age of Sheep

Under 1 year: no broad teeth
1 to 2 years: 2 broad teeth
2 to 3 years: 4 broad teeth
3 to 4 years: 6 broad teeth
4 to 5 years: 8 broad teeth
Over 6 years: worn teeth

MORE PICTURES FROM THE SHOW AND SALE



Above: The highest priced ram lamb Ushers KX17612. Below: Pauline and Liz Bowles put the finishing touches to the highest priced female: a US-sired lamb from the Hayne Oak flock based near Cullompton, Devon.



BREED PROMOTION AROUND THE UK



The SSBA's stand at the NSA's South Sheep event, Upper Lambourn, Berkshire on 13th June.

The SSBA's breed stand has already appeared at several shows and technical events this year, including the Balmoral Show in Northern Ireland in May, South Sheep (pictured above) in June and the National Sheep Association's Sheep 2012 at Malvern in July. The high genetic merit Shropshire ram, Morley Malik, was also exhibited at this event on the EBLEX stand (pictured below). This was a marvelous opportunity for the breed to be promoted as a terminal sire.

The breed society would like to thank all those who have kindly helped to take the displays to these events and gather enquiries: Pat Delaney, Dessy Henry, Claire Jakeman, Barry Hodson, Simon Mackay, Dolway McCorry, Giles McCorry and Pat Finnegan at Balmoral; Monique Hustinx and Liz Bowles at South Sheep; Sue Farquhar, Claire Jakeman, Richard Spencer, Harvey Clay, Monique Hustinx and Peter Tavernor at Sheep 2012. We have received many serious enquiries for Shropshires and 15 new flocks have been formed this year so far.



SCRAPIE MONITORING GUIDANCE NOTES FOR BREEDERS

By Simon Mackay

EXPORT sales of Shropshire sheep have grown significantly in recent years and the breed society is keen to encourage more of its members to supply the overseas markets. However, breeders who wish to export livestock, embryos or semen must ensure that their flocks meet specific requirements relating to freedom from Scrapie, a fatal brain disease that affects sheep and goats.

Scrapie has been present in the UK's sheep flock for over 200 years. It causes a general change in temperament or behaviour, which often occurs weeks before more specific symptoms develop. In most cases, only a single animal will show signs of the disease. Symptoms include increased nervousness or depression and loss of coordination. Affected animals may show trembling of the head or a change of gait, but the most typical signs are continuous rubbing or scratching and the tendency to nibble or grind their teeth when rubbed firmly on their backs. Skin initially appears normal, but self-inflicted damage occurs as itching persists.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

Signs of Scrapie must not be ignored because it is a notifiable disease. It is, therefore, a legal requirement to report any suspected cases to your AHVLA (regional animal health office) or at least to inform your own farm vet. It is also important to take steps to tackle the disease early before it becomes a flock problem.

Most cases of Scrapie occur in sheep aged between two and five years old. Although rarely seen in sheep less than one year of age or over five years old, age alone cannot be used to rule out the presence of Scrapie. At present, there is not a practical test available that allows confirmation of diagnosis in the live animal, nor is there a vaccine or a cure. The disease is always fatal.

REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPORT

Unless sheep are of the ARR/ARR (most resistant) Scrapie genotype, animals for export to other EU member states must originate from a holding that has evidence of being Scrapie-free for at least the last three years. For exports to Austria, Denmark, Finland and Sweden there are additional requirements and flocks must be certified free from Scrapie for a longer time - up to seven years for some countries. More details can be found at: www.archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/animaltrade/traces/pdf/6227nfg.pdf

Currently there are two different routes to meeting the EU health requirements, if the animal for export is not of the ARR/ARR genotype. These are:-

1. The Scrapie Monitoring Scheme (SMS) run by SAC. This allows you to demonstrate when exporting sheep, semen or embryos for breeding to other EU member states that the origin is a holding that has been monitored for at least the last three years and has been free from Scrapie over that time period.

There is an annual fee for membership of the SAC scheme (currently £48) and a fee may also be required by your own vet (Official Veterinarian) who will be required to sign your application to join the scheme and your annual renewal form. Periodically, SMS members will also be required to send the head of a cull ewe to a government laboratory so that the brain can be examined for any signs of Scrapie. There is an additional cost involved in this (about £60 - £70). Heads can also be submitted for examination via the fallen stock collection scheme.

2. The second route - Scrapie Monitored in compliance with Annex VIII EC Regulation 999/2001 - requires the Official Veterinarian to take a lot more responsibility, because the vet has to check the

flock's compliance of the rules. It can be very difficult for breeders to understand the requirements fully so that they provide all the evidence required by the vet, to make his or her job easier. The vet is naturally going to charge for this verification service, and the cost will vary from practice to practice. Once the vet has checked the compliance and is happy that the flock in question is Scrapie free, then an official "Certificate of Compliance" will be issued.

DEFRA has so far been unable to confirm to the SSBA whether or not animals certified by the SMS and animals that have achieved compliance by private certification (option 2 above) can be mixed together at an Export Gathering Centre, or can travel together on the same vehicle.

Additionally, the EU authorities are reviewing the current Scrapie monitoring procedures and it is possible that a two-tier system may be introduced, with some holdings being deemed to have a negligible risk of classical Scrapie, and others categorised as a controlled risk.

The SSBA will keep its members informed if the EU Commission agrees any changes to the current regulations. In the meantime, if any members would like further information about Scrapie Monitoring, please contact either Simon Mackay, or the SSBA's Export Officer, Sue Farquhar.

TWO INTERBREED RESERVE CHAMPIONS



Shropshires got off to a flying start in the show-ring this season at two major shows: Anne Harvey's shearling ram, Roydon Raffles (pictured above) won the Shortwool and Down Breeds Championship at Cheshire County Show and went on to be the Reserve Interbred Sheep Champion (Rare Breed Sheep Section). A shearling ewe from Sue Farquhar's Piddington Flock (pictured below) took the Shropshire Championship at the Three Counties Show and was also the Reserve Champion in the Interbreed Terminal Sire Class. Congratulations to both breeders!



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