

SHROPTALK



The Newsletter of the Shropshire Sheep Breeders' Association

Autumn 2014

JUNIOR MEMBER TRIUMPHS AT SHREWSBURY

CHARLIE Morgan-Jones took an unprecedented four awards at our National Show and Sale (West), held at Shrewsbury Livestock Market on 26th July.

Not only was his shearling ewe selected as the Breed Champion and winner of the Morley Trophy, but she went on to take the Interbreed Sheep title and Osmonds' Trophy too. Charlie also won the Southworth Shield for the best prepared pen of Shropshires and the breed society's special rosette presented to the Junior member with the highest placed Shropshire in the showing classes.

Aged 16, Charlie is almost certainly the youngest ever breeder of a Champion at one of our National Shows. He formed his Shropshire flock just four years ago and has already successfully exhibited his sheep at local shows, alongside his family's pedigree Hereford Cattle. Charlie is going to study Agriculture

at Walford College, near Baschurch in Shropshire this Autumn.

Also taking home silverware from the show and sale was Liz Bowles, the society's President. For the second year running, she won the Royden Trophy for the Reserve Champion with a ewe lamb from her Hayne Oak Flock. Liz's mother, Pauline Bowles, took the award for the Best Opposite Sex to the Champion, with a well-grown ram lamb from the Sidedowns Flock. Both animals have high genetic merit and were sired by the American Shropshire ram, Groverman 5429.

Other show class winners included a two-shear ram, Hayne Oak Napoleon II, exhibited by Stonegrove Livestock; A shearling ram from the Millenheath Flock of Jeanette and Robert Hares; and a breeding ewe from the Hayne Oak Flock of Liz Bowles and Mike Bray.

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The Shropshire and Interbreed Sheep Champion at our National Show and Sale West was a shearling ewe bred by Charlie Morgan Jones, owner of the Church Preen Flock, based in Church Preen, near Much Wenlock, Shropshire. The winning animal is pictured with (left to right) Charlie, Fiona Wilson of Sheep Interbreed Sponsor, Osmonds, and the Judge John Simms.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2014

The SSBA's AGM will take place on Saturday 8th November at Sandwell Park Farm, West Bromwich, West Midlands.

The AGM is a great way to find out more about Shropshires and is an opportunity to meet other breeders from around the UK.

All members are most welcome and a free buffet lunch will be provided.

IMPORTANT NOTICE CHANGE OF DATE FOR ANNUAL FLOCK RETURNS

THE SSBA's Council has decided that the breed society's Annual Flock Returns will be issued in September this year (and in subsequent years).

The date by which the Returns need to be completed and sent back to the Registrar with payment for the annual subscription and any registrations made at the same time will change to **30th November**, instead of 31st January. This important change has been introduced to help breeders by moving the Returns to a quieter time of year.

If you pay your annual subscription by standing order, please instruct your bank to move the date to 30th November.

If you pay by BACS transfer, please email the Treasurer, Marion Webb (ssbatreasurer@hotmail.com), to let her know when the payment has been made and exactly what it is for (eg just your annual subscription or your subscription with registrations and/or transfer fees). In your email, please provide a breakdown of registrations made (eg number of males and females) otherwise it is very difficult for Marion to keep track of what payments have been made into the society's bank account. Don't forget to tag your payment with your name or your Flock's name. Thank you!

NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

THREE members of the current Council complete their terms of office at this year's AGM, so breed society members are needed to fill these positions. The SSBA requires people with a range of skills to help run the breed society. If you are interested, please get in touch with our Secretary Simon Mackay (01744 811124) or President Liz Bowles (01884 32983) for more information.

SHOW AND SALE WEST

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The sale of Shropshires started at 12 noon, with MV Accredited animals sold through the ring first, followed by non-accredited stock. Three new breed record prices were set in the course of the auction, which saw 89% clearance of Shropshires overall: some 70% of males forward were sold and 100% of females.

Senior Ram Record

The first price record to tumble was that for Senior Shropshire Ram, which previously stood at 680gns. Bidding was keen for the 2012-born Hayne Oak Napoleon II, by Watsdyke Shaddrack, entered in the sale by Stonegrove Livestock. The stylish ram, which had taken the red rosette in his show class, offered buyers the promise of improved commercial performance in his progeny: With a Carcase Plus index of 207 he was rated as a "Gold Standard" sire by Signet for being within the top 10% of the breed for genetic merit. He was eventually sold for 780gns to Dorian Crow of Crows Agriculture Ltd.

Mr Crow was shopping for high quality stock to re-establish a flock of Shropshires at his base near Dorrington. He set two more price records on the day, purchasing the first placed breeding ewe by Three Moors Maestro from the Hayne Oak Flock for 400gns, and a shearling ewe by Hayne Oak Nelson from the Sidedowns Flock for 450gns.

The highest priced Shearling Ram at the sale was Anne Harvey's prolific show winner, Royden Regent, by Piddington Knutt. He was sold to Heather Wilson, Osmonds Flock for 540gns. The top price made by a ram lamb was 550gns achieved by the winning Brereton animal (see picture and caption below). He had previous show winning form, having taken the Reserve Breed Championship at the Cheshire County Show in June.

The Hayne Oak Reserve Champion made the top price of all 21 ewe lambs sold. She went for 340gns to the Osmonds Flock. Charlie Morgan-Jones's Show Champion shearling ewe by Piddington Lewis sold for 350gns to D Thomas. The "Best Opposite Sex To The Champion" ram lamb from the Sidedowns Flock (see picture and caption below) achieved a price of 500gns and joins the Brereton Flock.

The number of different vendors entering stock in the sale this year was 24 - the highest number since our National Show and Sale (West) was established at Shrewsbury in 2011.

Compared with last year, the average prices for senior rams, shearling rams and ram lambs were a little lower, but the clearance percentage for males was much greater.

The average price for breeding ewes was more than twice that of 2013 and the shearling ewe price was also up by more than 40%. The average ewe lamb price was £20 lower than in 2013, but the number sold increased by 33%.

Shrewsbury Sale Results 26th July 2014

Senior Rams: top 780gns, 3 average £424;
Shearling Rams: top 540gns; 9 average £336;
Ram Lambs: top 550gns, 7 average £387;
Adult Breeding Ewes: top 400gns, 5 average £319;
Shearling Ewes: top 450gns, 19 average £267;
Ewe Lambs: top 340gns, 21 average £216;
64 head overall, average £285
19 rams sold from 27 forward
All 45 females forward sold

DIARY DATE

**NEXT YEAR'S NATIONAL SHOW
AND SALE (WEST) WILL BE HELD
ON 25TH JULY 2015**

SHOW RESULTS

Judge: Mr John Simms

Senior Ram, two shear or older

1. Stonegrove Livestock (LX12417)
2. R C Webb (PC5412)
3. M Hustinx (059UU12)

Shearling Ram

1. Mrs J Hares (TW130067)
2. L Bowles and M Bray (LX13504)
3. A & M Webb (KX28913)

Ram Lamb

1. JH and PA Bowles (BB14238)
2. M & S Shimwell (414DB14)
3. L Bowles and M Bray (LX14658)

Breeding Ewe

1. L Bowles and M Bray (LX12413)
2. J H and P A Bowles (BB12115)

Shearling Ewe

1. CO & SL Morgan-Jones (006VK13)
2. Stonegrove Livestock (10XP13)
3. CO and SL Morgan-Jones (010VK13)

Ewe Lamb

1. L Bowles and M Bray (LX14656)
2. L Bowles and M Bray (LX14629)
3. Mrs J Hares (TW140084)

Champion and winner of the Morley Perpetual Challenge Cup:

CO & SL Morgan Jones (Shearling ewe)

Reserve Champion: L Bowles and M Bray (ewe lamb)

Royden Trophy for the best opposite sex to the Champion: JH & PA Bowles (ram lamb);

Southworth Shield for the best prepared pen of two or more Shropshire sheep:

CO & SL Morgan-Jones

Junior Member with the highest placed exhibitor-bred Shropshire in the show:

Charlie Morgan-Jones



Pictured above left the Brereton ram lamb by Morley Macho that won the Halls' Trophy for the highest priced animal from a small flock. He sold for 550gns to the Pugh family (Mellington Flock) and is pictured with (l to r) Nick Hyne of Halls, Philip and Tom Pugh and breeder Mark Shimwell. Pictured above right: Pauline Bowles with the ram lamb selected as Best Opposite Sex to the Champion and Liz Bowles with the Reserve Champion ewe lamb. The ram lamb sold for 500gns to Sue and Mark Shimwell (Brereton Flock). The ewe lamb made 340gns and joins the Osmonds' Flock.

SHOW AND SALE EAST

SHROPSHIRE numbers were similar to the previous year with 33 sheep forward for the 2014 National Show and Sale (East) at Melton Mowbray on 13th September,

However, only three flocks entered sheep in the show on the Friday. Judge Carol Watson chose a shearling ewe from Alan Oliver's Sprotbrough Flock as Champion with a two-shear ram from the same flock as Reserve. Other first prize winners were the ram lamb from Robert Webb's Clipston Flock and a ewe lamb also from Alan Oliver's flock.

At Saturday's sale, females were sought after with 22 of the 28 put forward being sold. Two ram lambs and the Reserve Champion ram, Sprotbrough Paradigm by Alderton Bonzo, also found buyers. The top price of 360gns was paid for Robert Webb's ram lamb, Clipston Ian by Alderton Hugo. Alan Oliver's Champion shearling ewe, also by Alderton Bonzo, sold for 290gns. The average price for shearling ewes was up by £30 over the previous year with ewe lamb prices similar to those of 2013.

Melton Sale Results

Rams (1 Two-Shear sold) : 96gns; Ram Lambs (2): Top 360gns, Av £294; Shearling Ewes (15) : Top: 290gns, Av £192.15; Ewe Lambs (7): Top 250gns, Av £115.50.

SHOW RESULTS

Judge: Mrs Carol Watson

Ram Shearling or over

1. Alan Oliver (EV4512 Sprotbrough Paradigm)
2. L & P Newman (HZ30113 Rode Murphy)

Ram Lamb

1. R Webb (PC15014 Clipston Ian)
2. L & P Newman (HZ40014 Rode Nimble)
3. A Oliver, (EV7814 Sprotbrough Pretender)

Shearling Ewe

1. A Oliver (EV6013)
2. L & P Newman (HZ30713)

Ewe Lamb

1. Alan Oliver (EV7714)
2. Alan Oliver (EV7214)

Champion and winner of the SSBA's trophy: Alan Oliver (Shearling Ewe EV6013)

Reserve Champion: Alan Oliver (Senior Ram, Sprotbrough Paradigm EV4512)

INTRODUCING COUNCIL MEMBER JACKIE LEWIS, WERN FLOCK



JACKIE Lewis from Welshpool, Powys runs a large sheep enterprise with her partner, Gwyn Jones. On their own holding of around 35 acres and another 100 acres of rented ground, they lamb 400 ewes each year and finish the progeny. They also finish around 15 store cattle annually, these being mainly native breeds.

Alongside the day-to-day farm-work, Jackie is the Bio-security Officer and Auctioneer's Clerk at Welshpool Livestock Market. She has an in-depth knowledge of the sheep industry and is the Sheep Secretary for Guilsfield Show, Bio-security Officer at Minsterley Show, a member of the Sheep Committee at Shropshire County Show and an official judge of Jacobs Sheep. In the past, she was a field officer for the Texel Sheep Society.

Jackie and Gwyn formed their flock of Shropshires two years ago, although they had purchased and used Shropshire tups on their commercial flock of crossbred ewes for a number of years before that.

SUPPLYING LAMB TO LOCAL PUBS

"We were impressed with the finishing ability of the Shropshire-cross lambs, which do so well from grass and don't require concentrates to get to a decent market weight," she explains. There are also fewer lambing difficulties when using a Shropshire tup, compared with other terminal sire breeds such as the Texel. The lambing percentage of the commercial ewes, lambing from the end of January through to April is well over 170%.

Jackie and Gwyn's Wern Flock of Shropshires was formed mainly with purebred but unregistered sheep purchased from Joyce Newby - a well known keeper of rare breeds, including Shropshire sheep, based in neighbouring Shropshire. Jackie applied to grade-up her Shropshire females - a process which starts with an official inspection of the sheep by the breed society to ensure they are of correct breed type. It will then take three generations of breeding with registered Shropshire tups to achieve full pedigree status. The flock currently numbers 24 females and Jackie may expand in the future, because she has made a long-term commitment to the Shropshire breed.

"I thought it was important to keep the bloodlines and correct breed type which Mrs Newby had developed over the many years that she has kept the breed," adds Jackie. She and Gwyn will continue to use Shropshires on their commercial ewes, many of which include some Texel blood. The couple have developed a useful year-round business supplying lamb to three local pubs and also sell finished lambs at market.



Pictured above from the left: Alan Oliver and the Champion Sprotbrough Shearling ewe, Judge Carol Watson, and the Reserve Champion two-shear ram, Sprotbrough Paradigm.



A new record was set this year when the SSBA exported 160 ewe lambs, 30 ewes and six rams to the Vanlerberghe family, based north east of Paris. The sheep were supplied by 12 different flocks and left the Assembly Centre in Herefordshire (pictured) in mid July. This is the largest single export consignment to date from our society. The sheep will join the 100 ewe lambs sold to the same buyer last year for a sheep enterprise established to graze 200ha of cider orchards.

SHROPSHIRE BREED IMPROVEMENT SCHEME RESULTS FOR 2014

THE final Signet evaluations for the Shropshire Breed Improvement Scheme in 2014 were released on 1st September. This season, 19 Shropshire flocks participated, recording the performance of 699 ewes and 1,012 lambs, including 640 that were scanned by ultrasound to determine fat and muscle depth in the important loin area, which produces high value lamb chops.

The breed average figures have moved forward for all recorded traits, with the primary index that measures Growth, Carcase and Maternal Traits (known as the Carcase Plus Index) increasing by 14 points to a score of 135. Some 29 of the 49 rams used by SBIS flocks last season were rated above the 2014 breed average score for this index.

Heading the list of Top Stock Sires is Ushers Alexander with a tremendous index of 264. This son of Westwood Challenger was the highest ranked ram lamb in 2013 and was

retained by his breeders, Marion and Aubrey Webb. Five of the top ten stock sires used to produce the 2014 lamb crop have the Ushers Prefix (see table below). The ram with the highest score for Terminal Sire Index, based purely on Growth and Carcase Traits, is Hayne Oak Nelson, a son of the American ram Groverman 4529.

This season the Ushers flock also produced the ram lambs with the highest Carcase Plus Index (253) and Terminal Sire Index (251). Both lambs are by Ushers Tiger, still one of the top performing rams in the breed. There are, however, only 3 index points between the first three lambs, with Hayne Oak LX14661 in 2nd place with index scores of 251 (Carcase Plus) and 250 (Terminal Sire). The full SBIS reports can be viewed and downloaded from the Signet website: www.signetfbc.co.uk. Click on the "Latest Reports" section and then select "Shropshire".

EBLEX recently asked Signet clients in England what impact they thought performance recording was making to their business. Over 95% of responding sheep breeders felt that commercial interest in recorded stock has increased in the past 10 years. Between them, the respondents were selling nearly 1000 rams per year.

GROWING INTEREST

Most now had over 50% of their buyers asking for Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs). In this survey, nearly 70% of those rams were sold off farm and 30% by auction.

"With nearly 700 flocks annually recording their lambs there is a vast choice of breed and type of recorded ram available to the commercial producer and the difference between the average ram and the highest EBV recorded ram is increasing every year," says Sam Boon, EBLEX's Breeding Specialist.



Above left: Alderton Sherlock, bred and owned by Pippa and Peter Geddes, was unbeaten in the show-ring this season and received the Signet Performance Award for the best ram lamb with above average genetic merit at Burwarton Show. He has an index of 201 for carcass plus maternal traits, putting him well within the top 10% of the breed. Above right: Ushers Windy, bred by Aubrey and Marion Webb and owned by Jeanette Hares, was also shown successfully in 2014: 1st at Stafford County, Champion at Cheshire County, 2nd at Royal Three Counties and 2nd at Burwarton, where he received the Signet Performance Award for the best ram with above average genetic merit. His Carcase plus index of 222 puts him in the top 5% of the breed and in 6th place on the top sires list for 2014. Thanks to EBLEX for the winners' £25 vouchers and RAS Rosettes for the sashes.

SHOW CHAMPION FROM MOST PROLIFIC EWE



The winner of the Sansaw Sidedowns most prolific ewe competition this year is BB158C, bred by John and Pauline Bowles and owned by their daughter, Liz Bowles. BB158C is 11 years old and has produced a total of 11 registered progeny to date, including Hayne Oak Nelson (pictured above). Nelson was Champion Male in the Any Other Breed section at this year's Devon County Show. He is currently ranked 5th on the SBIS top stock sires list for the primary index (Carcase Plus Maternal Traits) and highest overall for Terminal Sire Index (growth and carcase traits).

SBIS TOP TEN STOCK SIRES 2014

(Carcase Plus Index/Terminal Sire Index shown in brackets after each ram's name)

1. Ushers Alexander (264/240)
2. Ushers Apollo (257/246)
3. Ushers Vulcan (248/236)
4. Alderton Hugo (238/212)
5. Hayne Oak Nelson (235/265)
6. Ushers Windy (222/232)
7. Hilltop Hamish (210/243)
8. Hayne Oak Olympus (208/215)
9. Ushers Tiger (208/215)
10. Shebdon Albert (201/178)

Breed Average Scores:

Carcase Plus Maternal Traits Index: 135

Terminal Sire Index: 139

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