

DORSET HORN & POLL DORSET

SHEEP BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION

March
2010

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Hi everyone. Some of you may already know me but for those who don't I'm Ross Sizmur. I established the Rossiz Flock in 2004 based near Okehampton in Devon and probably quite foolishly I've agreed to be the breed's new chairman of publicity!

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The AGM and Flock Viewing at the end of November now seems a distant memory and I'm looking forward to judging the competition this summer. I would encourage you to enter especially if you have never done before. Last year was the first time I've entered the Flock Competition and I never imagined for a minute that I would win. You never know what is possible and 'You have to be in it to win it!'

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After an incredibly wet November it has been the coldest winter I can remember with more snow than we've witnessed for many years. This has resulted in a serious lack of grass for the lambs growing for Mayfair and the ewes in the run up to tugging in April.

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The lack of any forage doesn't seem to have affected the lamb progress too much so far though with all fat lambs gone by the end of February, achieving prices that make the work worthwhile, some nearly reaching three figures! All the Ram and Ewe lambs have been shorn and are turned out in the 'greenest' fields!

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It's already that time of year when the Mayfair entry forms are out and several of the county show schedules have arrived. Hopefully this year the Dorset breed will continue to expand its classes at the summer shows. At many of the south west shows the Dorset class is now larger and stronger than even the Suffolk or Texel classes. Another positive sign is the Dorset starting to take the honours in the interbreed class, thanks partly to the red hot competition of the show teams in the south west. I think the next step is to spread this interest and success further up the country and with several keen breeders in the midlands, Yorkshire and Scotland I think that this is possible. So get your sheep out there and let them be seen!

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If you have any ideas for the breeds publicity then feel free to give me call. Enjoy the spring and I look forward to seeing you at Mayfair!

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Ross Sizmur
Chairman of Publicity

COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, 1ST MARCH, 2010

RAM REGISTRATION

Over the past few years it has become increasingly obvious that rams sold by breeders have not always been registered. Breeders give the buyer a pro-forma form which is part filled in and rely on the buyer to complete the form and return it to the office along with the fee for registration. This does not always happen and some rams slip through the net and are subsequently used by breeders who find they are not registered. It also reduces the revenue the Society can earn.

In future Council has decided that all breeders must register the rams they breed for sale and pay the registration fees to the Society. The registration fee can be passed on to the buyer if the breeder so wishes. Council feel that this is the best way to ensure all rams used for breeding are registered pedigree.

This does of course mean that in future all rams must be registered by the breeder for the Worcester and Carlisle Sales.

MAY FAIR

It was agreed that the upset price for rams should be raised to £275.

Applications for Membership

The following new applications for membership were accepted:

Mr Brian Dicky, Northern Ireland	Prefix:	Old Park
Mr Patrick Donnelly, Northern Ireland	Prefix:	Donrho
Mr David Hullah, Yorkshire	Prefix:	Fourways
South Week Farm, Devon	Prefix:	South Week

What happened next ?

This has been a familiar question following my original article which chronicled my thoughts after T.B. drove me to make the decision to quit cattle production here at Burton.

Contrary to common belief I haven't found myself looking for alternative employment , free-time still eludes me. The five year business plan is now half-way through and in writing this article perhaps a time to reflect how far I have got or not as the case might be.

My core business is most certainly centred around the breeding flocks with the arable acreage dovetailing into the production of forage for it (that perhaps is a bit of a joke this spring) . 2008/2009 saw us lambing 1000 ewes and ewe lambs, 2009/2010 winter season has seen 1100 ewes, no ewe lambs, through the maternity ward . Our lambing starts mid September/October (500), 3 weeks in January (350), and finally ends February/March (250), the marketing of the resulting progeny then continues for a 10 month period. One thing we perhaps never appreciate as dairy farmers is the regular cash flow of a monthly milk cheque , though perhaps the end of year accounts sometimes illustrate the negative value in a very capital intensive sector of our industry.

The breeding make-up of the flocks are still following the original determined lines emphasising the use of our terrific breed's ability for different purposes. Although the pure bred Poll Dorset flock as yet hasn't grown, surplus ewes are put on contract to the Aberdale rams to produce very prolific females for the commercial breeder, others are mated to the Lleyrn to give a half bred that has been very successful as recipients in any embryo programme. Initially we give 700 ewes the opportunity to lamb in the autumn of which 500 hopefully do, the remainder then get an opportunity to lamb during one of the later periods thus helping to keep our barren rate low, this year we achieved under 3%.

During the January lambing we include the registered Suffolks and here we are starting to see the results of myo-max in the offspring, now we have to retain these benefits and return to a jet black head which could be alot harder.

Finally, now as I sit here writing these notes the spring lambing is drawing to a conclusion . Wool -shedding is not a buzz word yet but this flock is creating alot of interest. This year we will have lambed 180 1st cross wool-shedders to a Katahdin ram, these 2nd crosses have been very active on birth and I look forward to seeing them lamb themselves in the future.

The thinking behind this flock at present is to find ways of reducing labour input whilst increasing the sheep output from the farm, whether we get to outside lambing as yet that is for debate.

In the future this spring lambing season will start to see some White Dorpers as the females from an embryo programme join the flock. This breed whilst having a lot to offer also has to be understood, the nutrition of the wool-shedders is very different from the Poll Dorset and a mile away from the Suffolk ewes, a challenge going forward.

No doubt some of you are asking what are you doing with the Poll Dorset flock? Whilst the support it had during the sales of 2009 was greatly appreciated it was not an excuse as a breeder to sit back. Genetics have been added to our strong team of stud rams by the purchase from Northern Ireland of Hilltop Lloyd (L20) and Bennachie Legal Aid (L7), a high index sire from Scotland, the emphasis continues to be breeding high performing Poll Dorsets that have the type to compete in any show ring in the future. Driving this forward will also include my continued interest in bloodlines from the southern hemisphere, but may be that's another story.

Wishing you all a successful and enjoyable season working with the sheep industry's wonder breed.

David Rossiter
Huish Poll Dorset

With very many thanks to David Rossiter for this article and we shall look forward to the next instalment!!

2010 EBLEX BRP Progressive Flock Awards for the Dorset Horn/Poll Dorset breed

This is an annual award made by EBLEX/BRP, based on Signet data indicating flocks which have made the greatest genetic improvement over the past 12 months.

First Place	R M Eglin & Son Ltd., Bramain Flock, Warwickshire
Second Place	J & B Stratton, Stratasys Flock, Somerset
Third Place	C H Trace & Son, Gortleigh Flock, Devon
	G & A Lanford, Garlandhayes Flock, Somerset

Clwb Defaid Dorset Cymru / Welsh Dorset Sheep Club



Geraint Roci Jones being presented the Cornella Cup by past President David Mathews and President Martin Bradley.

Members enjoyed a belated annual dinner due to the inclement weather and finally managed to gather at the Grannell Hotel Llanwnnen on the evening of Friday the 29th of January 2010.

Chairman Rowland provided us with an entertaining and comprehensive précis of the previous year's highlights and made arrangements for a proposed forthcoming visit to Northern Ireland.

It was a particular pleasure to welcome immediate past President Mr David Mathews and Mrs Mathews to the dinner. Mr Mathews very kindly donated a silver trophy entitled 'The Cornella Cup' for the highest number of points gained in Dorset classes at Welsh shows. Geraint 'Roci' Jones was the proud first recipient of this annual award. Llongyfarchiadau / Congratulations Geraint and many thanks to Mr Mathews for his generous gesture – no doubt the Cornella Cup will be the focus of keen competition for many years to come.

Club members would wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Rowland for being re-elected as the Chairman of the society. Welsh members are very appreciative of the sterling work both Rowland and Geraint undertake on our behalf and indeed the association nationwide, travelling in excess of 10,000 miles annually on Dorset business. Diolch yn fawr bois!

Best wishes to all for a successful showing and breeding season.

MAY FAIR ENTRY FORMS

As mentioned previously May Fair entry forms have only been sent to those breeders that have entered May Fair in the past three or four years and those that I have an e-mail address for.

The entry forms are available to download from the Website, but if you require entry forms to be sent to you please let me know as soon as possible. **ENTRIES CLOSE ON TUESDAY, 6TH APRIL and please bear in mind it is the Easter bank holiday weekend prior to this.**

AMENDMENTS TO 2010 FLOCK BOOK

Mr Alec Steff, Waggoners Flock, T65 is MV Accredited

GREAT YORKSHIRE SHOW 13TH TO 15TH July 2010

Entries are requested from Breeders for the above show. Last year Poll Dorset sheep were judged in the any other breed classes. The Chief Steward made a promise that our own classes could be brought back if we have at least five breeders there. This means only two more of you need to enter to achieve this!

I would hope a lot more do so to help promote our breed further north. We entered for the first time last year and thoroughly enjoyed the experience collecting a few tickets along the way. Don't worry if you can't get time off work as long as the sheep turn up before 4p.m. on 12th July and you are there to take them away after 4p.m. on 15th July other members of the Society are willing to look after your sheep and show them on your behalf.

Cathryn Pritt (Thornbank Flock)
Member of publicity committee

Schedules are available from 8/3/10 from Yorkshire Agricultural Society, Regional Centre, Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate HG2 8NZ.

Telephone 01423 541000 Fax 01423 541414 E-mail info@yas.co.uk
www.yas.co.uk

AgriLIVE, Smithfield

2nd & 3rd December, 2010

Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire

Individual Breed Classes (Pure breed or sired by pure breed)

Breed Classes with 5 or more entries forward at the show will be maintained for judging.

Furthermore, any breed with 5 or more entries forward in the any other breed classes will create a new separate breed class for judging.

“DORSET SHOW CLASSES”

If any members know of any shows where the Dorsets are not represented with their own classes and think it would be worth while asking for Dorset classes, even small local shows, please let me know which shows and name and address of Secretary etc. and I can then write to them to ask for Dorset classes. Normally shows insist on at least 3 breeders showing in order to have breed classes, otherwise they are transferred to the “Any Other Breeds”. It will almost certainly be too late for this year, but if we write now we could get our case looked at for 2011.

I have received an e-mail from a Ahmed Faraz from Pakistan who is looking for 200 young Dorset sheep for breeding purposes. If any members would be interested in this, please let me know and I will pass on his details.



Sheep in the Snow



Rams in the Spring

SHOW RESULTS

HELSTON ANNUAL EXHIBITION

Pair of Butchers Lambs, British Sired

1. & Reserve Champion: A & C Kingdon (Poll Dorset)

Pair of Butchers Lambs, Continental Sired

1. & Champion: A & C Kingdon (Beltex x Poll Dorset)

Pair of Breeding Ewe Lambs, British Sired

1. & 2. & Reserve Champion: Mr M Care (Poll Dorset)

TRURO PRIMESTOCK SHOW

Pair of Butchers lambs, (pure or crossbred British, over 45kg.)

1. A & C Kingdon (Poll Dorset)

Pair of Butchers lambs(pure or crossbred Continental, under 45kg.)

2. A & C Kingdon (Beltex x Poll Dorset)

Pair of Butchers lambs(pure or crossbred Continental, over 45kg.)

3. A & C Kingdon (Beltex x Poll Dorset)

WADEBRIDGE PRIMESTOCK SHOW

Pair of lambs, British Sired, under 45kg.

1. A & C Kingdon (Poll Dorset)

Pair of lambs, British sired, over 45kg.

1. & Reserve Champion: A & C Kingdon (Poll Dorset)

Pair of lambs, Continental sired, under 45kg.

1. & Reserve Champion: A & C Kingdon (Beltex x Poll Dorset)

DISCLAIMER

*The Dorset Horn and Poll Dorset
Sheep Breeders' Association produce
this newsletter in good faith and
cannot be held responsible
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therein.*

DORSET HORN & POLL DORSET SHEEP BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION

Agriculture House, Acland Road

Dorchester, Dorset

DT1 1EF

Tel/Fax: 01305 262126

e-mail: mail@dorsetsheep.org

website: www.dorsetsheep.org

Breed Secretary: Marguerite Cowley